

Salcombe Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113405
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	298552
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Lavender
Headteacher	Sue Warne
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2006
School address	Onslow Road Salcombe TQ8 8AG
Telephone number	01548 842842
Fax number	01548 843921

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. The pupils are taught in three classes with two or three year groups in each class. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has gained a Healthy School award. The attainment of children on entry to Reception is broadly in line with that usually found, although relatively few are below and a significant proportion are above expected levels. The school has been through a challenging and uncertain period since it was given a formal notice to improve at the time of its last inspection in July 2006. There have been many staff changes and significant remodelling of the buildings. The headteacher took up her permanent post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with Section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

This is a satisfactory and improving school with some significant features which are good. With good leadership from the headteacher and strong support from the local authority, the staff have quickly become an effective team responding well to the previous weaknesses. One parent commented, 'The whole school has found renewed enthusiasm, energy and motivation which has certainly encouraged the children'. The headteacher expects a lot of pupils and staff. Consequently, pupils' achievement has improved and is now satisfactory. Most pupils have made good progress over the last year beginning to close the gap following previous weaker progress. Teaching has also improved and is now satisfactory with a number of good features. Teachers have much better systems for matching work to the needs of different pupils and they are beginning to strengthen pupils' understanding about what they need to do next to improve. The school has good systems for checking its own performance and a clear and accurate view about its strengths and areas in need of development. It is well placed to maintain the recent good progress and improve further.

Standards in English and mathematics rose in national tests in 2007 having been below average for several years. Standards are now average. They are above average in English and broadly average in mathematics. Standards in science have not risen at the same pace and remain below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' personal development and well-being, including behaviour, are good. Although spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong overall, there are weaknesses in aspects of pupils' cultural development. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to gain an awareness and understanding of Britain's cultural diversity beyond their local environment. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils find their lessons interesting. The small classes enable teachers and their assistants to know their pupils very well. This contributes to the good levels of care and pastoral support for pupils. Academic guidance is improving but recent developments intended to help pupils be really clear about their short term targets and how they can improve are not securely established. This means that their overall care, guidance and support remain satisfactory. Provision and achievement in the Foundation Stage are good.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has established a culture of continuous improvement and introduced effective systems to check on the work of the school and the progress being made by pupils. This has had a significant impact on improving standards and the quality of provision for pupils.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led well. Teaching is good and consequently the children settle quickly into school and make good progress throughout the Reception year in all six areas of learning. By the end of the year in the summer of 2007 standards were above national expectations, with almost all the children attaining or exceeding the expected learning goals for their age. The children share a class with Year 1 pupils but careful planning and the deployment of teaching assistants ensure they receive good levels of individual attention. At times the normally broad range of learning experiences is limited, with relatively few opportunities for the children to learn through free play or move independently between the classroom and outdoor areas.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science whilst building further on the recent improvement in standards in English and mathematics.
- Make sure pupils are clear about their short term targets and understand how they can improve their learning.
- Ensure there are more planned opportunities for pupils to gain a greater understanding of the cultural diversity of modern Britain. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils of all abilities have made significantly better progress in the last year than in the past and are now achieving satisfactorily. However, not all pupils have fully caught up to their potential following slower progress in previous years. The achievement of those with learning difficulties is satisfactory and some individuals make good progress as a result of carefully planned support. Standards are now average except in science where they remain below average. This summer pupils in Year 6 substantially exceeded the very modest targets set for them a year earlier in English and mathematics. The school has revised upwards the targets for the current Year 6. This reflects rising expectations and the good progress these pupils made during Year 5. The school understandably focused on English and mathematics over the past year. This meant less attention was given to science, both in the classroom by teachers and in systems to track pupils' progress, but weaknesses in science are beginning to be addressed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Helped by small classes, which means that each individual is well known to the staff, pupils are developing well as mature young people. The pupils enjoy school considerably and tell inspectors that lessons are more fun than they used to be. One commented, 'It's really good here now.' Nevertheless, attendance is only satisfactory as a proportion of families take holidays during term time. Behaviour in classes and throughout the school day is good and pupils are very thoughtful and supportive of one another. They have a good understanding about healthy eating and lifestyles and value the school lunches being made from local produce. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident about approaching an adult for help. Many take on responsible roles around the school. The school council makes a good contribution to school life and has a high profile. Pupils have a good knowledge of local cultural traditions and are involved in a number of festivals and events. However, their knowledge of different cultural values and practices across Britain is very limited. Improving literacy and numeracy skills are supporting satisfactory preparation for the next stages of education and the workplace.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. It is satisfactory but there are a number of good and developing features which are helping pupils to learn better. All teachers

are making more effective use of assessment information when planning work for their pupils. They frequently set work at many different levels to accommodate the wide ranging needs of pupils in classes with up to three year groups. Classes are small and classrooms are large enabling substantial individual attention for each pupil and providing lots of space for different activities. In a few lessons the pace becomes slow and some groups of pupils become bogged down whilst the teacher works with another group and their progress slows. At the end of some lessons opportunities are missed for reinforcing or assessing what pupils have learnt and this also slows their progress. Pupils are developing an understanding of how they learn, for example through the display in one class entitled 'Do you speak learnish?' However, pupils are not consistently confident when explaining what it is they are learning about.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school is embracing new national guidance to help curriculum planning, especially for English and mathematics. It has also reviewed the cycle of topics in other subjects to ensure they fit the present class structure. The introduction of new and imaginative material for the personal, social and emotional curriculum has contributed to pupils' good personal development. More computers are being installed. This is improving pupils' access to information and communication technology and supporting them in their work across the curriculum. The use of specialist teachers for art, French and physical education provides good quality experiences in these subjects. The many enrichment activities and visits in the local area extend pupils' experiences and enjoyment. However, extension of these experiences is limited by the lack of links further afield, for example with urban communities and different faith groups, through visits, visitors to the school, twinning or electronic links.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support continue to be satisfactory overall with strengths in care and personal support. Academic guidance has improved as teachers have better access to the data recording each pupil's progress, but new approaches in explaining targets and next steps have yet to become firmly established in all classes. Pupils appreciate the new 'conferencing' sessions recently introduced, during which they talk to their teacher about their progress, but they are not all clear about their learning targets, what they mean or how to achieve them. The school implements all statutory procedures designed to safeguard its pupils with regular training for staff. Good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities means that they are able to take part in the full range of school activities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher quickly established a clear sense of purpose and direction. Initial difficulties in delegating leadership roles because of staffing uncertainties required the headteacher to take the lead on establishing a clear plan for improvement and ways of checking the performance of the school. More recently she has been able to successfully share responsibilities with other staff as they gain experience. She is supported well by the senior teacher. One key feature in raising standards, alongside the improvements in teaching, has been the effective use of information about the performance of individual pupils and groups. It is systematically collected

and shared. It is used well to set challenging targets, inform planning, and deploy staff to provide additional support for specific pupils. However, the tracking of pupils' progress in science is less well established. A good plan details how the school intends to improve further and staff are clear about what is expected of them. The chair, who is one of several recently appointed governors, has quickly grasped a good understanding of his role and the issues within the school. Governors have improved their committee structure and they are beginning to hold the school to account in a more robust fashion.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Salcombe Church of England Primary School, Onslow Road, Salcombe TQ8 8AG

Thank you for making me and my colleague feel so welcome when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing some of your work. Yours is a satisfactory school in which some important things are quickly improving. There are several things that are good but also some that need to improve. Here are some of the highlights.

- You are now making much more progress in your work than you did in the past, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- You behave well and are thoughtful about how to look after yourselves and each other.
- Your teachers plan carefully to make sure work is not too hard or easy. You tell us your lessons have become much more interesting. Your large classrooms make it easier for your teachers to set up different things for you to do and think about.
- You like going on visits and taking part in special events in school such as the art exhibition.
- You feel safe in school and know that all the staff take good care of you.
- The headteacher has lots of ideas about ways to make your school even better and the staff and governors are keen to help her in this.

I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on these things to make the school even better.

- Help you to make more progress in science whilst keeping up all the good work you are already doing in literacy and numeracy.
- Make sure you are clear about your short term curriculum targets and understand how you can improve your learning.
- Think about ways you can get to know more about life and people's customs in other areas of Britain.

I feel sure you will continue to work hard to help make Salcombe Church of England Primary School a really good school.

Yours sincerely

Martin Kerly Lead Inspector

Annex B

14 September 2007

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Martin Kerly
Lead Inspector