

St Andrew's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105933
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	308986
Inspection dates	13–14 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Varma
Headteacher	Mr Mike Platt
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Vicars Hall Lane Boothstown Worsley Manchester Lancashire M28 1HS
Telephone number	0161 7902113
Fax number	0161 7992975

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average sized school serves an area of relatively high social advantage. Most pupils are White British and none of the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Investors in People Awards. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school in which pupils achieve well. A key factor in its success is the visionary leadership of the recently appointed headteacher. Many parents comment on this favourably in words such as, 'he has been instrumental in injecting renewed enthusiasm into both staff and children making this already good school an even better and happier one.' This, accompanied by strong principles that every pupil's individual progress and enjoyment matters, enables the school to give pupils a good quality of care, guidance and support.

The good relationships that exist between staff and pupils and the positive attitudes to learning that are evident lead to pupils' good personal development. A strong sense of well-being enables pupils to become confident learners, secure in the knowledge that their interests are valued. As a result, they make good progress. In the 2007 national tests, Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards in reading and mathematics. However, standards in writing for the more able pupils, although above average, were not as high as those achieved in reading and mathematics. The school recognised this and has put in place a wide range of additional opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in the subjects they study, the impact of which is beginning to be seen.

Pupils' enjoyment of learning is good because teaching is good and the activities provided by the good curriculum meet their interests well. However, because provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is limited, pupils' ICT skills are not as developed as they should be. Good partnerships with support agencies and high quality intervention by teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and thrive on their success.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives the school a strong sense of purpose and direction. He is well supported by a hard working leadership team that has a good impact on the work of the school and has helped it to make good progress since the last inspection. Staff have a clear understanding of how their defined roles and responsibilities benefit the whole school and all its pupils. However, subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in checking the quality of provision, and its subsequent impact on pupils' achievement, within their areas of responsibility. Governors give good support to the school and fulfill their statutory duties well. Consequently, the school provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Foundation Stage with skills that are somewhat above average for their age. They settle into their new surroundings happily and become successful learners who work together well and show positive attitudes in all their activities. They make good progress and, by the end of their Reception year, achieve standards that are higher than average in all areas of learning. This is due to the well planned provision, good teaching and good personal support they receive. Children enjoy the challenge of activities, whether teacher led or those they choose for themselves. Daily sessions focusing on letters and sounds help to boost their early reading and writing skills well. The outside learning area is used effectively to encourage childrens' social development and skills across all areas of learning, although children in Reception use this for only part of each day, and this limits their opportunities for investigative learning out

of doors. There are good links with parents, who appreciate the welcoming ethos and good information about their childrens' progress. Leadership and management are good. Effective teamwork between teachers and skilled teaching assistants is a key factor in the good progress of all, including vulnerable children and those with additional needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision to support the development of pupils' ICT skills.
- Develop the role of subject leaders in checking the quality of provision within their subjects and its impact on pupils' achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well in their academic and personal development. Good progress from the Foundation Stage continues in Years 1 and 2 so that, by the age of seven, pupils reach standards which are well above average in reading and above the national average in mathematics and writing. In Years 3 to 6, emphasis on the basic skills of reading and mathematics ensures good achievement for all pupils. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, they reach well above average standards in reading and mathematics, particularly so at the higher level 5. However, standards in writing for the more able, whilst above average, were not as high as those in reading and mathematics in the 2007 national tests. The school identified what it needed to do to bring about improvement and the impact of the strategies introduced is beginning to pay off. The quality of writing seen in lessons and in pupils' work shows all groups of pupils are making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and find their lessons and activities to be, 'interesting and fun'. They form happy friendships with their peers and good relationships with the adults in the school. Older pupils readily take on responsibilities as monitors and play leaders. The school council is growing in influence and is proud of its achievements, particularly its mini-enterprise activity to provide healthy snacks at playtime. Pupils work well in teams and with partners in learning activities. This and their good basic skills combine effectively to contribute to their future economic well-being. Behaviour is good and most pupils show good awareness of the consequences of their actions. They have a developing understanding of world faiths and cultures, which is preparing them suitably for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils take good advantage of the plentiful opportunities to be active, through a wide range of sporting activities, and to develop expressive and performing arts in lessons and through after-school clubs. They particularly enjoy opportunities to perform to an audience in school and local events. Parents say they are kept well informed about their children's progress. They support the school well through the very active Parent Teacher Association and in ensuring that good attendance is sustained. This reflects positive relationships between home and school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good because teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to the challenges set for them. In the best lessons, pupils are fully engaged and their achievement is very good. Occasionally, when the pace of learning slows, teaching is less effective and pupils do not progress at the same good rate. Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate clearly how pupils should use their learning skills and they provide the resources needed to enable good achievement. In the classes where it is given, pupils use helpful guidance from their teacher's comments to help them improve their work. Good planning ensures that the work set fits pupils' learning needs effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and work closely together to support them in all aspects of their learning. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons and thrive on their success. Homework is used effectively to promote good achievement. Pupils agree that the homework given is useful and helps them to progress in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum that meets the needs of pupils well. It is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' basic English and mathematic skills effectively. However, a lack of readily available computers limits the opportunities pupils have to develop or apply their ICT skills frequently enough. An exciting range of visitors to the school helps pupils to develop their skills and knowledge, and supports their personal development well. Chances for pupils to gain first-hand experiences through visits to places of educational interest are good. Opportunities for stimulating further work are followed up well in the classroom to promote effective learning. Extra-curricular sporting, musical and creative activities promote pupils' fitness, health and enjoyment and are very popular.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's commitment to good quality care is demonstrated in how well each pupil is known to staff. Consequently, all are treated with respect as individuals, while at the same time learning their responsibility of care for each other. In some classes pupils are guided well through their marked work in how to improve further. However, though the school is working hard to develop this, it is not consistent across all classes or in all subjects. The guidance and support given to those identified as gifted and talented or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, adding great value to their learning. Pupils feel safe, secure and confident and they have a strong respect and trust for their teachers. A parent was pleased at how well she and her children had been welcomed as newcomers to the school and this sentiment, repeated often by parents, is reflected in the good pastoral aspect of the school's work. Procedures for child protection, for safeguarding pupils and for assessing risks are in place and national guidelines for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership is good and the school is well managed. The headteacher has a clear vision of what he wants pupils, staff, governors and parents to achieve. He has, in the short time he has been in the school, succeeded in boosting parental confidence and staff teamwork. This is reflected in comments from parents, such as, 'the school is moving in a very positive direction'. Effective partnerships with other schools and outside support agencies help the school with its work. They make a strong contribution to enabling those pupils with learning difficulties to make similar progress to other pupils. All staff take good care of pupils and make a strong contribution to the smooth running of the school. However, the involvement of subject leaders in checking the quality of provision within their areas of responsibility is underdeveloped. The leadership team has a clear knowledge of the school's needs, has identified the correct priorities for improvement and set in place good action to achieve them, giving the school good capacity to improve. Governors contribute well to this process. Their clear understanding of the school's work and their support for the headteacher's high aspirations enable them to give the school good guidance and challenge.

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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?	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	2
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	2
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

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit very much. Now I would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

Yours is a good school, for instance:

- the staff take good care of you all and teach you well
- your attitude to lessons is good and it is clear that you enjoy school
- we were impressed with how well you are doing in mathematics
- the school works well in partnership with other schools to make your learning exciting and interesting, for instance, in planning trips and special events
- the staff provide you with good opportunities to enjoy activities after school.

To make the school even better, the staff need to:

- give you more opportunities to practise your ICT skills
- become more involved in checking on how well you are doing in your work.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will carry on working hard and help the teachers so that St Andrew's can become an even better school.