

All Saints Church of England Primary School Marple

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106102
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	309028
Inspection date	11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Sarah Drake

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	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Hooton
Headteacher	Mr Mike Harding
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Brickbridge Road Marple Stockport Cheshire SK6 7BQ
Telephone number	0161 427 3008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector investigated the following issues: the standards achieved and pupils' progress; the quality of teaching and learning, especially the use made of assessment information; the capacity of the leadership to move the school forward. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data; the school's own assessment records; policies and minutes; observation of the school at work; interviews with senior members of staff, pupils and two governors; the questionnaires returned by parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small school serves a socially mixed area on the edge of the Peak District to the east of Stockport. The great majority of pupils are White British but there is an increasing number belonging to a variety of ethnic groups for whom English is an additional language. The proportion eligible to receive a free school meal is much smaller than average. Broadly average numbers have learning difficulties and/or disabilities but the proportion varies greatly between different year groups. Above average numbers have a statement of special educational need. More pupils than is usual leave or, more often, join the school partway through their primary education. In the school year 2005/06 the school had a different headteacher for each term with the current headteacher taking up his post in April 2006.

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. It provides its pupils with a good standard of education. Under the leadership of its outstanding headteacher, it also gives them vibrant experiences that are likely to remain with them for the rest of their lives. For example, when the whole school takes part in 'brain gym' exercises on the playground. This is enhanced by the surroundings of hills, trees and bird song; creating a sense of well-being and community that sends pupils and staff, back to lessons with a spring in their step. No wonder that parents describe the school as, 'a happy, positive place with well motivated staff and thriving pupils,' where, 'Its emphasis on a community approach and having respect for others is shown in all the children.'

In response to an interesting curriculum and good quality teaching, pupils of all ages achieve well. By the end of Year 2 standards are broadly average and by the end of Year 6 they are generally above average. The school's small size means that the abilities of one or two pupils have a big impact on the overall results achieved by any year group. Children's skills when they join the Reception class vary but for the past two years have been below those expected for their age. After a four year rising trend and two years with significantly above average results at the end of Year 6, in 2007 results fell to broadly average, as predicted by the school leadership. More than a third of the group had learning difficulties and/or disabilities, some of who joined the school during Key Stage 2 and not all reached the nationally expected standard. Pupils of all abilities who attended regularly made good progress but, despite the school's best efforts, a significant minority in this year group had the equivalent of one day's absence a week which severely affected their ability to achieve. Most pupils attend well.

Good relationships abound, fostered by good quality care, guidance and support. Many pupils say that one of the things they most enjoy about All Saints is that its size and mixed-age classes mean that everyone knows each other very well. Pupils feel at ease in school and know that if they seek help, it will be forthcoming. Pupils generally act safely, for example when moving gymnastics apparatus, and behave well but, on occasion, boys' play can become a little boisterous. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that they generally act as helpful young people who are sensitive to others' needs. School councillors carry out their responsibilities with thoughtful confidence. The Super-grounds committee has helped to make the play areas more interesting. The Eco-team bakes healthy snacks to raise funds to purchase plants for the vegetable patch.

Over the past year the school has moved forward apace. An impressive assessment system now clearly highlights for all staff those pupils who are not making as much progress as expected, and those who are racing ahead. Sharply focused identification of pupils' learning difficulties leads to good quality support. This is the case in lessons, for small groups or on a one-to-one basis and helps pupils to enjoy their learning and achieve well. Teachers value pupils' efforts and use praise effectively, but when marking their work do not all provide sufficient guidance about what each pupil should do next to improve it. Where teaching is of particularly good quality, excellent use of time and resources together with probing questioning ensure that even the most able pupils are offered challenges that spark their interest and imagination.

The school's burgeoning partnership with the church and wider community enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' horizons. Links with France, Finland, Uganda and Slovenia fully justify its International School status and mean that, in the words of staff, 'The children know they have friends all over the world.' A whole-school project, inspired by one teacher's working

holiday to Sri Lanka, formed the basis of pupils' work in many subjects and led to a highly successful open day for parents. Similarly, the church week held in the past two Septembers, makes links between subjects, renews the sense of community for the coming year and has led to a number of regular volunteer helpers in school. Last year's focus on reading was successful in raising standards for younger pupils and the current emphasis on writing is beginning to have effect. The introduction of thinking skills to the curriculum leads to mature debate among older pupils and contributes well to supporting their future economic well-being.

Good quality leadership and management, in this school where everyone 'wears many hats', ensure that all staff are clear about their roles, responsibilities and the systems that underpin all its actions. Of prime importance is the quality of pupils' learning. Procedures are in place to promote health and safety and child protection. The school has a highly accurate view of its provision. The information available through monitoring pupils' progress is now being used in lessons. All classrooms now have interactive whiteboards to help engage pupils' interest. The comprehensive improvement plan is a working document that guides all actions. Governors are becoming more closely involved in school life so that they are able to challenge as well as support the leadership. Sufficient time is provided for staff to enhance their skills whether through formal training or by observation of others' work. Staff are encouraged to experiment, buoyed up by the headteacher's phrase that, 'We mustn't fear failure as long as we learn from it.' There is a confidence and palpable joy throughout the school community. The school has very good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children join the Reception class with some pre-school experience but with relatively weak skills, particularly in writing and their knowledge and understanding of the world. They settle swiftly, helped by the home visits made in the first half term by senior staff and a governor to make sure that all is well. Within the bright, well organised classroom they make good progress so that the majority enter Year 1 with the skills expected for their age. Very few achieve above this level. Staff give clear guidance to children about what is expected, present work in interesting ways and carefully monitor children's growing skills. Although there is a secure dedicated outdoor area, this is not sufficiently well developed or exploited as an extension of the classroom where children can continue to explore all areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently provides clear guidance for pupils about how to improve their work.
- Develop the Foundation Stage outside area.

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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?	1
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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I really enjoyed my recent visit to your school and would like to thank you all for your warm welcome. Special thanks should go to the past and present school council members who so kindly gave up some of their lunch time to talk with me and help me understand what it is like to be a pupil at All Saints. They told me that yours is a good school but could be even better - I agree with them.

One of the really good things about your school is the way that everyone gets on so well together and is keen to get involved with activities and take on responsibilities. Another is all the interesting ways that you have to learn things, like the church week, your Sri Lanka topic and your links with people in other countries. It's also good that you have so many links with people closer to home. I'm impressed that the Eco-team has highlighted the problems which exist in the local area. The way your morning is divided into three sessions with a free play time and then brain gym really seems to help you concentrate - I enjoyed joining in! Your teachers plan lessons carefully, explain things clearly and give you good help and support so that you make good progress in your learning.

I know that you all have very good ideas about how to improve your school and have already helped with, for example, making the grounds more interesting. I also know that your headteacher and other teachers have clear ideas about what needs to be done and have already improved, for instance, your classrooms by installing the interactive whiteboards. I have suggested that they concentrate particularly on making sure that, when marking your work, your teachers all give you helpful guidance about how to improve it. I have also asked them to make the Foundation Stage outside area a more inviting and useful place for the youngest children to develop their skills in all areas of learning.

Your job will be to continue to enjoy working hard and to make sure that you attend school regularly so you don't miss out on your learning.

With my very best wishes for the future.