

St Saviour's CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109154
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	309902
Inspection date	24 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Alex Baxter

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Hollin
Headteacher	Ed Harker
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Spring Lane Larkhall Bath BA1 6NY
Telephone number	01225 313928
Fax number	01225 339210

Age group	3-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy and personal development; the degree to which teaching, learning and the curriculum meets pupils' needs; provision in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and how effectively relatively new leaders and managers, including governors, bring about improvement. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, a school assembly and observations of pupils at lunch and play. Evidence was also gathered from teachers' assessments, pupils' work and discussions with pupils, staff, governors and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in equal 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

Children's attainment on entry broadly matches that expected for their age. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or with English as an additional language are below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties generally matches that found nationally. There is part-time Nursery provision, currently for 51 children. The school holds the following quality marks: Active Mark, Investor in People Award, Children's Rights Charter Mark and a School Achievement Award. There have been several changes in staff in recent terms and these include a relatively new headteacher and a currently acting deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Saviour's is a good, extremely caring school. Relatively new leaders and managers have been diligent and effective in sustaining pupils' good achievement and above average standards through a period of continuing staff change. Governors too have been much changed, but are working well with the staff to bring about further improvement.

Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and enjoyment of school are outstanding and benefit from the high quality care, guidance and support provided by the school. This quality of assistance is much appreciated by parents and in turn encourages their willing support of the school. One parent reflected the views of almost all those who responded in the questionnaire when writing, 'The whole school's committed approach to child-centred learning is really impressive. We have seen the growth of our own child's confidence, resilience and 'thoughtfulness' that have resulted from this ethos.' As a result, these excellent links with parents and with outside agencies, and increasingly other schools and the local community, also contribute to the pupils' good overall personal development and well-being. Attendance is satisfactory and shows the school's strengthened efforts to improve attendance. Even so, not all pupils attend as regularly as they should.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides well considered and respected leadership. With full support from colleagues, he is taking good advantage of the improved stability in staffing and governance to develop more effective team approaches to leadership and management. Together these factors have brought more expertise to bear in securing good self-evaluation and are moving it forward with an increasing momentum. The accurate identification and implementation of strategies to improve learning is bringing more consistently good teaching across the school. These include, for example, the emphasis on identifying specific 'learning questions', namely those that will move learning forward, and sharing them with the pupils. These in turn are lifting aspirations of what pupils can achieve whilst nurturing and celebrating valued strengths in pupils' enjoyment of school. The school is well placed to continue this improvement into the future.

All those associated with the school are proud of its current achievements and are optimistic about the future. Their well placed confidence is beautifully illustrated by the sound of laughter and abundance of smiling faces emanating from pupils in all parts of the school. The pupils' exuberant enjoyment of school, promoted so well by all staff, is a key ingredient in the pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' views confirm this. One pupil said, 'I like this school because the teachers are fun to be with', and another added, 'Everyone is so caring.' .

Teaching and learning are good. Across the school, planning is increasingly linked to pupils' differing needs and teachers are raising the challenge offered to pupils. These strategies are accelerating progress, but have not been in place long enough to help all pupils, particularly some potentially higher attainers, to reach their full potential. Pupils with learning difficulties receive consistent, additional support and make good progress to achieve the precise targets set for them.

Teaching and provision are good in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes.) Close co-operation between staff and parents and close relationships between adults and children are significant strengths, which promote the children's well-being. Children generally make good progress, but do even better in developing self-confidence and in speaking and listening. Good teaching, learning and excellent pastoral support continue through the school

and promote the pupils' enthusiasm in learning and enjoyment of school. As a result pupils' make good progress. Whole class discussions led by the teacher often begin in a lively fashion and are enriched by the use of interactive whiteboards. Occasionally, though, they continue for too long and result in some pupils losing interest. When this happens the pace of learning slips. Standards are above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics by Year 2. In particular, pupils' speaking skills are improving impressively throughout the school. However, occasional inconsistency in teachers' expectations and the challenge offered to pupils mean that some pupils with more ability do not always reach the standards of which they are capable in literacy and numeracy.

There is a well planned curriculum, including for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. It is enriched by a good range of clubs, regular visits out of school and includes a developing 'Breakfast Club'. These have a beneficial impact on the pupils' personal development and well-being. Despite some recent improvements, insufficient maintenance and enhancement of the some of the school's facilities, both indoors and outdoors, and the range and quality of resources for learning, at times limit pupils' opportunities to learn by following their own lines of enquiry.

Acts of collective worship are special occasions, which enrich the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These events, especially the weekly 'Celebration Assemblies' when pupils' efforts are praised, are much appreciated by the pupils and promote the school's welcoming Christian ethos. Pupils' have a 'voice' and freely express their ideas knowing that they are valued. Pupils make good contributions to the life of the school community. They understand and adopt healthy, safe lifestyles and happy, healthy lunchtimes are a notable feature of the school. All pupils conduct themselves sensibly and considerately. Their good academic skills and social awareness prepare them well for the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Very close links with parents help children make a good start in the Nursery. Children who transfer into the school's Reception classes are warmly welcomed, settle quickly and continue to make good progress. Most children make outstanding progress in aspects of their personal development and in their communication skills. In particular, excellent care, guidance and support and good teaching ensure that children make very good gains in acquiring self-confidence, enthusiastic attitudes to learning and in speaking and listening. Most children reach or exceed early learning goals set for their age on entering Year 1. Good leadership ensures that teachers and their assistants provide an appropriate balance between adult led and child initiated learning. Children experience a good range of stimulating activities, including the use of interactive whiteboards. However, the relatively limited resources in Reception classes do not always facilitate sufficient independent learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement and standards of some potentially higher attaining pupils, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Enhance the quality of indoor and outdoor facilities and increase the resources for learning so that pupils have more opportunity to learn by following their own lines of enquiry.
- Improve pupils' attendance.

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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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1

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

25 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Saviour's C of E Infant School, Larkhall, Bath BA1 6NY

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I noticed too how you and many of your parents felt the same welcome on entering the school in the morning. Everyone was so friendly towards each other, making me soon realise why you enjoy school so much. I found St Saviour's to be a good school with several strengths and could sense that you and your parents quite rightly feel the same. These are the main things I found.

- Yours is a very caring school where fun and laughter help you to learn just as you would in a happy family.
- You are taught well and most of you make good progress and reach standards that are better than in many schools. Many of you have particularly good speaking and listening skills.
- Your outstanding behaviour and the way you so warmly mix with each other reflect your enthusiastic learning and the excellent care provided by all adults.
- Your headteacher is a fair and very approachable leader. He works very closely with all the staff, governors and parents to make sure that you learn well and enjoy a good range of learning activities. They are working hard to help you learn even more.

To help the school to become even better I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do these things: enable some of you who find learning easier to do better in writing and solving problems in mathematics. I have also asked them to improve the facilities and equipment so that you can learn more often by finding things out for yourselves. I also want the teachers to help some of you to come to school more regularly.

Thank you once again. Please keep trying, enjoy your time at school and good luck in the future.

With best wishes

Alex Baxter Lead inspector