

All Saints Interchurch VA Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 110859 |
| Local Authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 310443 |
| Inspection date | 20 February 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Sue Hall |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 200 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Wendy Hart |
| Headteacher | Mrs Rachel Voss |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 September 2003 |
| School address | County Road March Cambridgeshire PE15 8ND |
| Telephone number | 01354 659000 |
| Fax number | 01354 658770 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the achievement of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1; whether teachers challenge those of all abilities and if the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is rigorous enough to identify areas for further improvement. Evidence was gathered from discussions with staff, governors and pupils, brief lesson observations, a scrutiny of documentation and samples of children's work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in as much detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school with joint Anglican and Catholic affiliation. It draws pupils from a wider area around the town. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. However, with high levels of family turnover, in part because of seasonal work in the area, the school believes these figures underestimate eligibility. The proportion of pupils who need additional support is below average as is the proportion speaking English as an additional language. Around 3% of pupils come from Eastern Europe and are at various stages of learning English.

The school holds an International School's Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, and Clean Air Gold Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils really enjoy their time here and think it is a happy and interesting place to be. Parents generally appreciate the quality of care and education provided and several commented on the warm and friendly ethos that helps their children thrive. As one carer notes, 'The school has a happy relaxed atmosphere while at the same time the school instils good values into the children.'

Children enter the Foundation Stage with a wide range of early experiences. Some are initially quiet and lacking confidence, but others have good skills and are keen to learn. While school assessments indicate children's attainment on entry is slightly below expectations for their age, inspection observations indicate such assessments may be a little modest and overall their initial skills are largely average. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most achieve the targets expected of them, with a good number exceeding such goals. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress. In Years 3 to 6, the rate of progress increases and pupils throughout this key stage make good and sometimes very good progress. At the age of 11, standards are above average as they have been in national tests for the last five years. Boys and girls of all abilities, including those who need additional support, achieve well.

The very small numbers of pupils from Eastern European backgrounds enter the school with little or no English, but a wide range of abilities. With only limited assistance from agencies outside the school, the staff consider their needs a priority and have allocated additional support from within school. This has enabled these pupils, including those quickly identified as able, gifted and talented to make good progress.

Pupils' personal development is good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite and friendly to everyone, whether they are adult visitors or new to the school. In a whole-school assembly, with an audience including family and friends, the older children confidently presented their ideas on how to stop bullying. This is typical of the school's firm stance on behaviour issues, with initiatives such as 'Good Friends Week' making a positive impact. Pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and many enjoy the award winning school meals. The pupils participate in church and local events including work for charities. These factors, taken together with a well-planned series of activities supporting Personal, Social and Health Education, help the pupils make a positive contribution to the community, and prepare them well for their future. Attendance has recently improved and the school monitors absence issues well.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, although somewhat variable. Occasionally, lessons do not take account of the wide range of abilities. From a sample of recent work, it is apparent that teaching is most effective in Year 6, where the staff clearly have very high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. The curriculum is good with a clear emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills alongside other subjects. Learning is enriched effectively through a well-considered range of visits and extra-curricular activities, which are popular and well supported.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good and pastoral care is a strength. Staff know the pupils well and there are good procedures to ensure their safety and well-being. Those with a range of learning difficulties are well supported by experienced classroom assistants and teachers. Academic guidance is satisfactory overall. Staff have recently done much to extend and improve the ways they check and track the progress pupils make. However, the organisation

of assessment procedures, and use of the information that is gathered is variable. It does not always help the planning of lessons or guide the teachers so that they can challenge all pupils, whatever their abilities.

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher's clear vision for the school is well supported by two effective assistant heads. They lead the staff team well, for example, by modelling effective teaching. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is good. The subject leader in mathematics monitors provision in the subject well, through reviewing planning and accurately evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning. However, the leadership of literacy is less effective. Senior staff are clearly aware of strengths and areas for development in the school, and have worked to address them, but have not yet entirely overcome the issues identified. Even though the governing body has several new members, they all share a great enthusiasm for the school and their roles. They are effective critical friends, asking questions of the leadership that get to the heart of the issues. With the progress the school has made and all those in influential positions clearly recognising where improvements are needed, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Leadership and management are effective and staff are working closely with the pre-school group, in preparation for joining together as an Early Years Unit. Initial assessments of children's skills and the subsequent tracking of progress are thorough, although at times, somewhat modest. Children settle quickly in the Reception class and make good progress in all areas of their learning. Most are happy and enthusiastic learners and enjoy the good range of activities provided. Teaching and learning are good, as is the curriculum. The school is involved in piloting a programme to help boost early phonic knowledge (the link between letters and sounds), which staff are confident is having a positive impact on early reading and writing. Good use is made of the newly extended outdoor learning area. This is well equipped and the children really enjoy using it.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching and learning are consistently challenging, and classroom activities are well matched to the range of abilities.
- Review assessment procedures to ensure progress is tracked effectively and the information is used to inform planning.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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

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| 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 | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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| 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

21 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints Interchurch VA Primary School, March, PE15 8ND

Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting you in lessons and at lunchtime. I particularly enjoyed chatting to some of you on the school council and thought you had some very mature views. I think the school provides a good quality of education for you all.

These are some of the best things I found about your school.

- You really enjoy your time at All Saints and like the wide range of activities.
- You are good at making friends and welcome everyone.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you try hard with your work.
- Most of you make good progress so that in Year 6 you do well in national tests.
- Staff look after you well and make sure you are safe and happy.

This is what that I think should be improved.

- Teachers should make sure that there are different activities for groups of you and check that the work they give you is hard enough to keep you interested.
- The staff should carefully track your progress to make sure that you move on in your work at a constant rate.

To help everyone, please continue to enjoy your time at school and keep on working hard.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector