

Matlock All Saints Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112838
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	311023
Inspection dates	17–18 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Alison Cogher

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rod Cook
Headteacher	Miss Helena Button
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Dimple Road Matlock Derbyshire DE4 3HX
Telephone number	01629 582913
Fax number	01629 582913

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized infant school situated near the centre of Matlock. All but a very small number of pupils are from White British backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language and a well below average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well below average. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including Investor in People status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and an ECO schools Green Flag award.

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 with some outstanding features. The school's strong partnership with parents makes a significant and valuable contribution to pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. The school provides good value for money and good improvement has been made since the last inspection. School self-evaluation is generally accurate although the judgements made are not always securely rooted in a broad range of first hand or quantifiable evidence gathered in a systematic and organised way. The school is over critical of the quality of curriculum it provides.

The school is well led and managed by the headteacher who is supported effectively by knowledgeable staff, and governors who give generously of their time. Staff work well together and are keen to improve their own skills so that they can continue to improve the learning opportunities they provide for pupils. This commitment to providing the very best for pupils is strong and underpinned the significant improvement in standards secured in 2007. These features clearly illustrate the school's good capacity for further improvement.

A small number of pupils at the school have learning difficulties or disabilities. Most start school with standards that are above those expected for their age. Good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures all pupils make good progress in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 as they build successfully on their previous learning to reach standards that are exceptionally high overall by the time they leave the school. Pupil assessment information is used well to set very challenging targets for pupils, to identify those who would benefit from additional support and to guide teachers' planning. Lessons are very carefully planned so that activities are well matched to pupils' interests and abilities and pupils receive the help or challenge they need to enable them to achieve well. Teaching assistants work extremely closely with teachers and their contribution to pupils' learning overall is excellent. Despite this good practice not all pupils are clear about exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

In response to the good quality care, guidance and support they receive, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school's Christian affiliation underpins the positive and productive relationships within the school. Pupils generally behave well, say they enjoy being at school and think their teachers make learning fun. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and make a good contribution to their school and the wider community. They understand how to keep themselves safe and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Effective links with other schools and outside agencies contribute well to pupils' overall health, safety and well-being.

Good teaching and the outstanding curriculum ensure pupils work hard in lessons and are motivated to learn. They concentrate well because teachers make effective links between subjects and plan an exceptionally good range of activities that capture pupils' imagination. The extremely good range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors are used effectively to further extend and enrich pupils' learning.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, together with good teaching ensure that pupils achieve well and develop an eagerness for learning. Teachers work closely together

to provide a rich and varied range of activities that encourage pupils to explore their world and to develop good levels of independence. The outdoor area is used well to support pupils' learning, but can only be fully utilised in good weather and this restricts the learning opportunities teachers are able to plan. Pupils enjoy being at school and are well prepared for Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide all pupils with clear information about how they can make their work better.
- Make improvements to the Foundation Stage outside space so it can be used throughout the year.
- Monitor and evaluate the school's work in an organised and systematic way so school self-evaluation judgements are based on a broad range of first hand, and where possible measurable evidence.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. They start in the reception class with standards that are above those expected for their age. In all areas of learning of the Foundation Stage curriculum pupils make good progress and many exceed the expected goals by the end of their Reception year. They continue to make good progress in Year 1 and 2. As they build confidently on previous learning most pupils successfully achieve the challenging targets teachers set for them. Standards in 2007 were significantly better than in previous years and were exceptionally high in reading, writing and science, and well above average in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Attendance is good and pupils say they enjoy their time in school. They particularly like playing with their friends and the interesting activities their teachers plan for them in lessons. They think learning is fun and appreciate the help and support they receive from adults. Pupils understand what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe. They trust the adults at school and are confident they would receive help if they had a problem. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are helped to understand and respect other cultures and religions whilst productive links with the local church underpin the school's Christian ethos. Within the school's caring and supportive environment almost all pupils are well-mannered and behave well. A very few pupils find it difficult to behave appropriately in some situations. The school challenges, but also supports these pupils to improve. Pupils are keen to contribute to the school and wider community. They take their roles as school councillors and playground buddies very seriously and contribute well to church and town community events. Pupils' outstanding basic skills and their good personal development prepare them well for the next stage in their education and their futures in the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Consistently good teaching ensures pupils achieve well. Teachers plan meticulously to take account of pupils' abilities and interests. Consequently pupils find lessons fun and they are keen to learn. Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is outstanding. Teaching assistants are skilled and very well briefed and the contribution they make to pupils' learning through their work with individuals and small groups is significant. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set them very challenging targets. Whilst pupils are aware of these targets in general terms, not all of them understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils receiving specific additional support do know what they need to do to improve as each step towards making their work better is explained clearly to them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils learn well because the curriculum is planned creatively to capture their interest and imagination whilst retaining a very clear focus on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills. A strong emphasis on learning through topics and practical activities gives pupils' learning relevance and helps them to make links between what they have learned in one subject when they have to apply it in another. Teachers make excellent use of good resources to bring lessons to life and encourage pupils to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups. An extremely good programme of visits, visitors and after-school clubs contribute significantly to pupils' learning overall. They enrich and extend their experiences and add much to pupils' understanding and enjoyment of healthy living.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's arrangements for assessing pupils and tracking their progress are good. Effective use is made of this information to set very challenging targets for pupils and to guide teachers' planning but it is not used consistently to provide all pupils with individual guidance as to how to improve their work. Procedures to support pupils as they enter or leave the school are good. All pupils, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities receive good levels of personal support and guidance and feel safe and cared for in school. Consequently, they are confident and have good levels of self-esteem. Procedures to keep pupils safe are robust and implemented consistently by staff. The school works well with other schools and outside agencies to support all pupils' learning and personal development. Parental confidence and involvement in the school is strong. Many parents provide help in school on a regular basis and the majority provide good levels of support for their children's learning at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong, informed leadership that is sharply focused on ensuring that all pupils achieve their personal and academic potential. Subject leaders are knowledgeable

and enthusiastic and have guided and supported staff to secure improvements to teaching and the curriculum that have resulted in the raising of standards. Teamwork is a strength within the school and all staff contribute well to the school's success. Agreed changes are implemented quickly but the impact of these changes is not systematically monitored and evaluated. School self-evaluation is generally accurate but not always based on first hand secure evidence. Data is increasingly being used to identify aspects of the school's work that need improvement and to verify the judgements the school makes about itself. Governors are supportive of the school but rely heavily on school staff for information about the school's effectiveness. However, they understand their role as critical friends and give generously of their time in classrooms on a daily basis.

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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	1
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?	1
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

19 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Matlock All Saints Infants' School, Matlock, DE4 3HX

Thank you very much for helping me with the inspection of your school. You made me feel very welcome and I enjoyed being in your lessons, talking to you about your work and having lunch with you. You and almost all of your parents and carers think you go to a good school and I agree.

Your teachers plan lots of interesting and fun things for you to do and this helps you to learn well. I was impressed by the way you concentrate in lessons. You are good at taking on responsibilities and work hard at getting along together. Almost all of you behave well in lessons and around the school. Your headteacher, the teachers and helpers in the classroom and the governors care about you a lot. They want you to be happy at school and work hard to keep you safe. They check how well you are doing and make sure you get extra help if you need it. I have asked your headteacher, the teachers and other adults who help you in your classrooms and the governors to work on making your school even better by doing the following.

- Making sure the space outside the reception classrooms can be used all year round
- Ensuring you all know exactly what you need to do to make your work better
- Making sure that the adults in school improve what they do to check just how good your school is.

Thank you again for being so helpful. Please keep on working hard and enjoy your time at school. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Alison Cogher

Lead inspector