

St Andrew's Church of England (VC) Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112869
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	311035
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2008
Reporting inspector	John Paull

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Roberts
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Cartledge
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2003
School address	Hadfield Road Hadfield Glossop Derbyshire SK13 2DR
Telephone number	01457 852328
Fax number	

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St. Andrew's Junior School is of average size. Most of its pupils have attended the nearby infant school. Nearly all are of White British background and very few speak English as an additional language. The percentage known to be eligible for a free school meal is average. While the proportion of pupils who find learning difficult is average overall, it is increasing, and is above average in Years 3 and 4. Attainment on entry is a little above average.

The school has recently received the Active Mark award and is working towards Healthy Schools, Eco-Schools and ArtsMark awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Andrew's Junior School provides a satisfactory education that includes a number of good features. In particular, because of the good care, guidance and support and the good curriculum that provides many opportunities for them to flourish, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well, enjoy school and practice many ways of keeping healthy and active. Attendance is above average.

Standards are a little above average and have been for the past few years. Able pupils achieve well. Pupils who struggle with their learning also achieve their individualised targets well, because teachers and teaching assistants ensure that they receive the help that they need. It is amongst the large group of average performers where teaching sometimes misses learning opportunities. Hence, this group of pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Nevertheless, considering their starting points, pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Year 6 results in English are not as good as in mathematics or science. This is largely because of basic weaknesses in writing. Leadership and management have correctly identified that several pupils, often boys, have struggled with forming correctly written sentences and with the organisation and presentation of factual accounts, so meaning does not always flow clearly. While senior and subject leaders have satisfactorily introduced a number of strategies to bring about improvement, this has not yet had a consistent impact on achievement. For example, the 2007 national tests continue to indicate that standards in writing lag behind other areas. Nevertheless, a recent overhaul of systems for tracking pupils' progress and assessing their work is helping staff to identify at an earlier stage any pupils whose progress slows down. As a result, staff are beginning to provide more timely support to help these pupils to keep up with the rest. Indications are that this is now producing more consistently good progress, especially in younger age groups. This means that the school is in a better position to build on pupils' progress and raise performance as they move on. However, while pupils are more involved in assessing their own work, not all of them have enough precise knowledge themselves of what to do to increase their rate of progress.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Improvements in the teaching of music since the last inspection have contributed to the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Their improved singing contributes strongly to a good spirit of reflection in assemblies. Use of music from other cultures has increased. Linked to the study of important aspects of a range of faiths in religious education, this has improved pupils' understanding of the importance and contributions of minority ethnic groups in modern Britain. Pupils are tolerant towards others and play and move around the buildings safely. Strengths in their sociability, links with local business that produce insights into the world of work and enterprise, allied to their developing literacy and numeracy skills mean that they are well prepared for life outside school.

Satisfactory leadership and management have used monitoring and evaluation successfully to establish what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Governors are supportive and keen to improve results on behalf of pupils. Together with other senior and subject leaders, the headteacher initiated changes to address weaknesses. While such developments have not always led to the desired impact on raising rates of progress, recent improvements are bearing fruit and performance is getting better. Taking all this into account, governors are ensuring satisfactory value for money and the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that basic mistakes in the organisation and presentation of pupils' written work are eliminated, especially amongst boys and pupils of average ability.
- Ensure that teaching and learning are as focused on the needs of average attainers as on those of other groups.
- Extend recent improvements in the monitoring, identification and support of pupils' progress, so all pupils themselves know more precisely what to do to improve their achievement.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are often above average, which is reflected in the results of recent national tests at the end of Year 6. Considering starting points in Year 3, which were also often above average, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Much is done successfully to ensure that pupils read well. Work is also adapted successfully to meet the needs of able pupils so that they achieve well. In mathematics and science especially, many pupils reach a level above that normally expected for their age. Teachers and teaching assistants use many appropriate strategies to support pupils who find learning hard. Many of these pupils achieve well, reaching and exceeding their individual targets. However, teaching is not always as focused on the needs of average attaining pupils. Opportunities are sometimes missed to explain learning points in enough detail for such pupils thus hindering their progress. This has a particular impact on skills such as handwriting, spelling and the organisation of written work. Boys' writing in particular is not as strong as their work in mathematics and science. This has had the effect of pulling the school's English results down. Nevertheless, evidence in the school's assessment records indicates that progress has begun to improve recently and is now good in Years 3 and 4.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are positive. Attendance rates are above average because procedures for reducing absences are effective and many pupils enjoy school greatly. Pupils including school councillors and different types of 'buddies', who help with reading or in the playground, contribute well to the community. Good quality sporting opportunities have a high level of participation because many pupils accept the school's good advice and teaching about keeping active and healthy. Nevertheless, pupils themselves are aware that further work remains to ensure that they always bring healthy packed lunches. They know how to keep safe and adopt increasingly ecologically friendly lifestyles, as demonstrated in the school's participation in the eco-schools scheme. By the time they leave, most have acquired secure personal and academic skills for the next stage of their education. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with significant improvement in the spiritual and cultural elements. Pupils also have the skills for life in a culturally diverse society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall but included examples of good teaching. This picture reflects the school's own evaluation of teaching and learning as satisfactory overall. Strengths include the organisation of pupils into classes that bring together those of similar ability (known as setting) and good adaptations of work particularly to suit the needs of more able pupils. Teachers also manage pupils well and make lessons interesting. As a result, pupils behave well, staying on task effectively, so time on learning is maximised. Nevertheless, opportunities are sometimes missed to provide detailed explanations when pupils use words and language incorrectly. One telling example occurred when two words were confused. While the teacher rightly picked up the mistaken usage, the opportunity was missed to explain the distinctions between the two words. As a result, learners of average capability who might not already have known the difference did not receive enough guidance. Slower learners are supported effectively and often make good progress towards their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Music provision has improved well since the last inspection. This has had a positive impact on pupils' standards of work in this area and their spiritual and cultural development. Subject leaders, together with all teachers, plan all National Curriculum subjects effectively and keep their future planning of what to teach up to date with nationally required and locally recommended changes. However, the planning of written work does not always lead to enough support for middle attaining pupils. Personal, social and health education is also good. Teaching is enhanced effectively with the use of extra-curricular activities including clubs, outings and visitors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding pupils are very robust. Pupils who find learning harder than others receive good quality support. Initiatives, such as the 'Rainbow Room' for pupils who require support both academically and emotionally are a good example of the school's strongly caring provision in this aspect of its work. As one pupil commented, 'We all benefit because it helps those children concentrate better when they return to class.' Pupils are confident that rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are handled effectively. The school has taken a very positive approach towards preventing bullying and racism. Strong links with a local business have benefited the whole school community, including gifted and talented pupils. Very constructive partnerships with other schools ensure a smooth transition from infant school and to local secondaries. The school has started to track pupils' progress with greater precision than in the past. Recently introduced procedures are rigorous and identify potential underachievement earlier. However, although learners are becoming more involved in assessing their own progress, this has not yet resulted in all of them knowing how to improve their work or whether they are making enough progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher and senior managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have successfully created a climate where pupils feel confident to succeed. Staff at all levels have a shared determination to provide the best for pupils. There is a strong sense of community and partnership. The school's self-evaluation is accurate in most respects and improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. For example, there has been good improvement in the provision of music and pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The quality of teaching and pupils' overall achievement remain satisfactory. Nevertheless, recent procedures and processes for monitoring performance are of good quality. These are now starting to bear fruit in rectifying underachievement earlier. However, further work remains to be done to ensure that initiatives have the best possible impact on the achievement of all groups of pupils, particularly in writing. For example, although satisfactory, the quality of teaching is not yet consistently strong enough to ensure that progress is always good and not all pupils yet understand for themselves what to do to improve their achievement. The governing body provides secure, informed support. Based on its improvement since the last inspection and those initiatives undertaken more recently, the school has a satisfactory capacity to move forward.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

31 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Andrew's Church of England (VC) Junior School, Hadfield, SK13 2DR

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when Mrs Campbell and I inspected your school. We were pleased that many of you told us that you enjoy school. We thought that your behaviour is good and are pleased too that your attendance is above that of other schools. We enjoyed speaking to the school councillors. We agree with them that you play together sensibly and get on well with each other. We believe that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and that what is taught is well planned.

There are some important things that are good about your school.

- Children who find their work hard are supported effectively.
- You feel safe and know a lot of things about how to keep healthy and fit.
- The school's new ways of keeping a check on your progress are good and are beginning to result in faster progress for you.
- Your teachers and other staff take good care of you.

There are some things that we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do next.

- Help you even more with your writing, so you can cut down on mistakes. You can help by always writing as carefully as you possibly can.
- Make sure that the learning needs of those of you who are of average capability are always met as effectively as those in other groups. You can help by always asking when you have not understood.
- Build right through the school on what the new systems for checking your progress tell them, making sure that you understand better for yourselves how to improve and achieve your best by the time you leave in Year 6.

I hope that you will always feel proud of you school and enjoy it as much as you say you do now.

John W. Paull

Lead inspector