

# St Andrew's Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113070
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	311095
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Grahame Sherfield HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Eggins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Whitell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Cullompton Devon EX15 1HU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01884 32206
<b>Fax number</b>	01884 34312

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

St Andrew's is of average size and serves part of this small East Devon town. Most pupils come from areas where fewer adults than average have participated in higher education. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportions with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with a statement of special educational needs are well above average, with a range of additional needs represented. Most pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.

## 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 is a satisfactory and improving school that successfully strives to develop both the learning and the personal skills and qualities of all its pupils. Most parents are supportive of the school's work. One parent observed that 'the school has a calm ambience and a caring, positive ethos' and another noted the 'wonderful family feel'. The inspection team finds that the parents are fully justified in these views. Pupils are happy and well motivated. They enjoy school and have good attitudes towards their learning. Behaviour is outstanding both in classrooms and around the school. Pupils are polite and confident, showing increasing maturity and enjoying very positive relationships with each other and with teachers and other adults alike. Most children start in Reception with a low level of skills and knowledge, and many with these well below what is expected, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in creative development. They make good progress because of the good provision in the Foundation Stage, although the high proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities means that attainment is still generally below expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. Current Year 2 pupils underachieved in Year 1 due to weaknesses in teaching but these pupils are now making satisfactory progress overall, although it is slower in writing than in other areas. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. Current Year 6 pupils, almost three quarters of whom have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are likely to reach broadly average standards in mathematics and science in the tests this summer. Standards are below average in English and, as with younger pupils, writing is the weaker area. The school has a strong commitment to promoting pupils' academic and personal development. The curriculum is good overall and is broad and balanced. It generally meets the needs and interests of pupils well, although the improved and now good opportunities for writing in different subjects are not yet raising writing standards sufficiently. Teachers work very successfully to ensure that pupils develop the skills and attitudes they need to make good progress in their work. They know their pupils well and use praise effectively to encourage pupils to have a go at new learning. The best teaching is in Years 3 to 6 and there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. At times, the scope to explore carefully with pupils what they have done in order to help learning move forward is not fully exploited. Work is frequently checked, sometimes with encouraging comments. Marking rarely identifies clearly how work could be improved or encourages pupils to reflect on how well they have done. The headteacher provides good leadership. Maintaining a strong sense of community that includes and values all pupils is central to this and this is reflected well in the day-to-day life of the school. The headteacher successfully seeks opportunities provided by new initiatives to help the school in providing for its pupils, such as Reading Recovery and Every Child Counts to raise standards in reading and mathematics. He is supported well by senior staff and a governing body that provides good challenge and support. There is a clear focus on improving teaching and on monitoring pupils' progress carefully which is resulting in improved progress in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, the capacity to improve further is good.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

From their low starting points, children make good progress. Their attitudes to learning and their physical development reach levels expected by the end of the Reception Year but their skills in other areas, such as reading, writing, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world, do not reach these levels. However, skills improve to be much

closer to the expected levels than when children enter. The Foundation Stage is well led. Children benefit from the good arrangements to support their smooth entry into Reception and from early assessment of their skills to plan the next steps in their learning. Curriculum planning addresses all the areas of learning well. Teaching is good, although sometimes opportunities are missed to help children review their performance and consider carefully which approaches work best. Teachers and support staff care well for the children, who enjoy a good mix of teacher-directed and self-selected activities. Staff use a good range of approaches in assessing children's progress which have been identified by the local authority as good practice and shown to staff from other schools. The teachers have been increasingly successful in engaging parents and carers in supporting their children's learning, although there is scope to increase this further. The use of the outdoor environment is currently restricted by the lack of a suitable canopy to protect children from rainy weather and large play equipment is limited. Funding has been allocated to address this in the new school year.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all opportunities to improve writing across the curriculum are pursued with vigour.
- Improve the quality of all teaching to the level of the best to ensure that the pace of improvement in pupils' progress is maintained.
- Ensure that pupils receive consistently clear guidance on how to improve their work and have opportunities to consider for themselves how well they have done. A small proportion of the 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**

Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. From their below average starting points in Year 1, pupils make adequate gains by the end of Year 2. However, standards are still below average in reading and mathematics. Progress is weaker in writing than in other areas and not all pupils have developed their skills in this area sufficiently. Vigorous action has been taken to address this and to ensure that pupils make up lost ground. Pupils achieve well overall in Years 3 to 6 and reach broadly average standards in mathematics and science, though standards remain below average in English, particularly in writing. The school is using good approaches in addressing this, helping pupils to generate ideas and plan their writing in English and in other subjects, although these have not yet had time to impact fully on the standards in Years 5 and 6. Achievement is improving in Years 3 and 4 and pupils now make better than expected progress. This is due to improving teaching and careful tracking of their progress so that action is taken where there is a risk of them falling behind. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to that of their peers. Their needs are clearly identified and targets are appropriate to their particular difficulties.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy through eating healthy foods and recognise the importance of taking regular exercise. St Andrew's gained Healthy School status in 2007. Pupils feel safe and know who to talk to if they are unhappy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils take many opportunities to reflect and to think

beyond their day-to-day lives. They understand each other well and know that, 'even though we are different, we are all the same'. They make a good contribution to the community both in school, such as by acting as reading buddies, and outside, for example through singing for the elderly and by raising money for charities. Pupils express their views through the school council which organises stalls to sell Fairtrade items and a small budget for expenditure on playground equipment. They develop skills in working together that will be useful in their future lives and use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively. Their preparation for future economic well-being is only satisfactory overall as currently skills in writing need further development. The school works energetically to improve attendance. However, a sickness bug this year, parents taking children on holiday during term time and the persistent absence of a small number of pupils have resulted in attendance remaining below average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to enable staff to access a range of well prepared materials quickly and easily. Activities are generally well planned and varied to engage pupils' attention. Teachers' subject knowledge and explanations are good, specialist vocabulary is well used and the pace of learning is brisk. As a result, pupils' concentration and interest in their work is good. Questions and small whiteboards are often used effectively to check pupils' understanding and, where appropriate, teachers press pupils to think further and more deeply. Levels of challenge are adjusted sensitively to match pupils' learning needs, sometimes through different tasks and more frequently, through the level of support from teachers and other adults. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. It is less effective than in other parts of the school as, at times, opportunities are missed to match materials more closely to the learning needs of all pupils. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and not enough is done to guide pupils on how to improve their work. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. They give good support when they are working with groups of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, helping to ensure that these pupils make similar progress to their classmates.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

There are good links between subjects creating broad themes which capitalise on pupils' interests, making learning relevant. Opportunities for writing across the curriculum are good, although there has not yet been time for these to bear fruit in better results in national tests. Provision for ICT has improved significantly, with many opportunities for pupils to use software to support them in their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and work is carefully adapted to their needs. There is a good range of well attended extra-curricular activities, including tennis, football, dance, drama, art and music. Residential visits encourage pupils to reflect and to develop their awareness of the world. Music is a strong feature of the school, with rich opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in performing and appreciating music. Some of the impact of this was seen during the inspection in a concert in which pupils performed for the whole school. This was of good quality and drew spontaneous applause.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The welfare of pupils is central to the work of the school and providing breakfast to help pupils to be ready to learn is one example of its efforts to promote this. Rigorous and effective procedures are in place to ensure the safety, security and health of pupils. Support for vulnerable pupils is good. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well focused and structured to help give pupils the support they need. Parents appreciate the help their children receive and the progress they make. A small number of pupils from Poland have recently joined the school and are at an early stage of learning English. They are well supported. Guidance for pupils in improving their work is satisfactory overall. Pupils benefit from good verbal guidance from staff in lessons and have learning targets which are reviewed regularly. However, these are not sufficiently tailored to the needs of individual pupils and not always considered adequately in planning lessons.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Senior staff and governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, based on effective systems for monitoring and evaluating its work. This has resulted in rigorous action where needed to improve consistency in the quality of teaching. There are ambitious targets for improvement and the progress of individual pupils is closely monitored. Subject leaders play an important part in carrying out appropriate activities in their areas of responsibility, particularly in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The school development plan provides an appropriate agenda for the improvement of the school for the current year, though it does not include activities to underpin this for the next two or three years. The staff and the governors have suitable priorities for the development of the school during next year and it is intended to incorporate these into an appropriate plan shortly. Good partnerships with external agencies extend opportunities for pupils in their personal development, for example with social care staff, the educational psychologists, the community and the developing relationship with the Children's Centre which has just opened nearby.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	3

### 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	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	3

### 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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

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

- July 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of St Andrew's Primary School, Cullompton, EX15 1HU I would like to thank you for your involvement in the recent inspection of your school, particularly for the friendly and open way in which you talked to us in discussions, in lessons and around the school. Your school is satisfactory and improving. It has some important strengths, including:
  - your outstanding behaviour and good attitudes towards your work
  - the way in which the school cares for you, and encourages and supports you in your learning and in your personal development
  - the wide range of activities you have in addition to your daily lessons
  - the good start children make in the Reception class
  - the good leadership of the headteacher, the governors and other staff. We have asked the school to improve three areas of its work:
- Your writing is not as good as your other work and we have asked the school to help you to do as well in writing as you do in reading and mathematics.
- The teaching is good overall but we have asked the school to make sure that all teaching is as good as the best.
- When teachers mark your work, you do not always get enough advice on how to improve your work or a chance to think for yourself how well you have done. You can help by taking the teachers' advice and thinking more about your work. Thank you again for your help during the inspection. We wish you every success for the future. Yours sincerely Grahame Sherfield Her Majesty's Inspector

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Andrew's Primary School, Cullompton, EX15 1HU**

I would like to thank you for your involvement in the recent inspection of your school, particularly for the friendly and open way in which you talked to us in discussions, in lessons and around the school.

Your school is satisfactory and improving. It has some important strengths, including:

- your outstanding behaviour and good attitudes towards your work
- the way in which the school cares for you, and encourages and supports you in your learning and in your personal development
- the wide range of activities you have in addition to your daily lessons
- the good start children make in the Reception class
- the good leadership of the headteacher, the governors and other staff.

We have asked the school to improve three areas of its work:

- Your writing is not as good as your other work and we have asked the school to help you to do as well in writing as you do in reading and mathematics.
- The teaching is good overall but we have asked the school to make sure that all teaching is as good as the best.
- When teachers mark your work, you do not always get enough advice on how to improve your work or a chance to think for yourself how well you have done. You can help by taking the teachers' advice and thinking more about your work.

Thank you again for your help during the inspection. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Grahame Sherfield  
Her Majesty's Inspector