

Thurlestone All Saints Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113469
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311283
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Watson
Headteacher	Philip Medway
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2004
School address	Thurlestone Kingsbridge TQ7 3NB
Telephone number	01548 560494
Fax number	01548 560513

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress the pupils make in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1; pupils' progress in writing in Key Stage 2; and the impact of leadership and management on the care of pupils and of initiatives for raising standards and achievement. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations; discussions with pupils and staff; reviewing the assessment data the school uses to track the progress the pupils make; and analysis of pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in 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

All Saints is smaller than most primary schools. It serves the local village as well as communities further afield. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is below average. Children join Reception with attainment that is at the expected levels. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The headteacher took up post just over a year ago. In addition to his leadership role, he has a part-time teaching responsibility for a class. The school holds Artsmark Gold and Active Sportsmark Gold awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This school is outstanding. Academic standards are high and pupils' achievement is exceptional by the time they leave. Pupils have strong opportunities for developing their creative and sporting talents too. Excellent levels of care help to promote pupils' sense of security and their outstanding personal development and behaviour. They flourish in the school's purposeful and happy atmosphere and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their learning and adult life. The vast majority of parents justifiably hold the school in high regard. As one parent says, 'We feel very lucky to have such an excellent school on our doorstep.'

Children make good progress in Reception, with excellent gains in reading. By the time they leave Reception, nearly all reach or exceed the standards expected, including in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' good progress continues and, by Year 2, standards are very high in reading and mathematics, and well above average in writing. Standards have risen in Year 2 this year because of improved systems for checking pupils' progress. The school is keeping a particularly close watch to make sure all pupils do as well as they possibly can from Reception through to Year 2, and demanding targets have raised expectations.

Pupils make excellent progress in Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, pupils reach exceptionally high standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics have been consistently high for several years whilst English standards have fluctuated. Pupils' performance has accelerated recently in English because standards in writing have improved. There is now a more exciting writing curriculum as well as better systems for checking progress. Pupils write fluently for many purposes and their story and poetry writing is particularly good. Throughout the school, pupils do very well in information and communication technology (ICT), sport, and art and design. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are extremely well supported from the minute they enter the school and, by the time they leave, very nearly all reach the nationally expected standards. Support staff make a valuable contribution to this.

The headteacher's outstanding leadership is central to the school's success. In his first year as leader, he has earned the respect of teachers, parents and pupils by the way he has built on the school's strengths and addressed the most pressing priorities. The arrangements for self-evaluation have recently been strengthened and are robust. Teachers' skills in planning and delivering lessons are evaluated rigorously with the involvement of subject leaders. Staff provide strong support for the headteacher and share his vision and sense of purpose. Governors give good leadership. They play a very effective part in supporting the school and this year have developed their ability to challenge the school. The recently appointed chair brings considerable expertise to the governing body. Governors have successfully managed the recent improvements to the school building. Strong teamwork by all concerned with the school is a major reason why it is improving so very well and for its excellent capacity to continue to do so.

The school's rigorous checks on pupils' progress pinpoint how well different groups are learning. These systems, with sharp focus on teaching, learning, assessment and target setting, have ensured that teaching and learning are at least good and usually outstanding. This is raising standards. However, in a few lessons when the whole class is gathered together, teachers do not always spend enough time on the direct teaching of basic English skills.

The curriculum is exciting and a major reason why pupils love school so much. It provides a firm foundation for pupils to learn literacy and numeracy and to experiment and create. It includes

a wide range of opportunities to learn about other cultures. There are some excellent learning opportunities in sport and art and design. It is enriched by many worthwhile extra-curricular activities. These encourage the pupils to be active and healthy, take an interest in caring for their environment and to become interested in sport and music.

Support from the local church and strong links with the community help to promote the school's family atmosphere and pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' contributions to the school and wider community are excellent. They develop a very good sense of responsibility for caring for their school and local environment. Their ecological awareness is developed well through their activities such as the gardening club. The thriving school council is a very good vehicle for enabling pupils to contribute to decisions the school has to make. The council members and other pupils work very well together and their teamwork and decision-making skills are constantly emphasised. The school vigorously promotes good attendance.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school has recently changed its provision in Reception and children are now taught in a single-age class. Children are nurtured and their safety and well-being are given the highest priority. Parents are delighted with how quickly their children settle and the way they come to love school. Children arrive with a wide range of skills but, overall, their attainment on entry to Reception is broadly as expected. They make good progress and, in reading, it is excellent. By the time they leave, most have at least reached the standards expected of this age and some exceed them, including in literacy and numeracy. The quality of teaching and the curriculum is good. Adults provide a careful balance between purposeful play and focused adult-led tasks. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's personal skills and confidence. The focus on developing children's speaking, listening and early literacy skills gives them a strong start to their education. Outdoor learning opportunities are good and much better than when the school was previously inspected. There are excellent links with the playgroup, situated on the same site as the school, and close links between home and school. The checking of children's progress is rigorous, although recording is predominantly by paper and not computer. The school has identified this as an area for development so staff and leaders can evaluate children's progress even more efficiently.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure enough time is spent on the direct teaching of basic skills when pupils are taught together as a class.

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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?	1
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	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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**

Thank you for your help when I visited your school. I felt very welcome, enjoyed meeting you and thought you were very friendly and polite. You certainly seem to enjoy school. I now want to tell you what I found out about your school.

Your school is outstanding and that means it is a really good school. Here are some things that are first class about your school.

- Your headteacher leads you all extremely well, and your teachers and the school governors are working very hard to make the school even better.
- You make excellent progress and, by the time you leave, you reach high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You make excellent progress in reading in Reception.
- You are a credit to your school and behave extremely well.
- You really enjoy school and get on very well with each other.
- Teaching is often excellent and teachers take superb care of you.
- You have really good opportunities for ICT, sport and art.

Here is something I am asking the school to change.

- Make sure teachers always spend enough time explaining how to do things before you start your group work in English. I hope you will continue to enjoy school and try hard in all you do so your work gets better and better.



28 November 2007

Dear Children

**Inspection of Thurlestone All Saints Church of England Primary School,
Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3NB**

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I hope you will continue to enjoy school and try hard in all you do so your work gets better and better.

Best wishes

Eileen Chadwick
Lead inspector