

St Werburgh's CofE (A) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124339
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	314893
Inspection date	16 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Barbara Crane

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	120
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	24
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ratcliffe
Headteacher	Jared Eccles
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Holt Lane Kingsley Stoke-on-Trent ST10 2BA

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	16 September 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small, rural primary school draws its pupils from the village of Kingsley and the surrounding area. There is a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and none with disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS) has recently been extended to include three-year-olds who attend part-time. There is a privately run breakfast and after-school club and pre-school playgroup onsite.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving and is well regarded by parents, who value the good level of care provided for their children. Pupils enjoy school and are soundly prepared for the future. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community. Their good personal development and excellent behaviour contribute greatly to the school's happy atmosphere. A parent's comment that 'the strong family feel of the school and the good sense of discipline and importance of manners are very beneficial to my child's development,' reflects the view held by many others. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, and lead active and healthy lives. This springs from the school's careful nurturing that helps them to make the right choices.

Sound teaching supports satisfactory achievement by children in the EYFS and by older pupils. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average by the end of Reception and Year 2 and by the time pupils leave the school. The school's focus on improving teaching in mathematics has had a positive effect on pupils' learning and standards are rising. Good relationships with teachers and other adults mean that pupils approach work eagerly. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. The school is working hard to bring its academic guidance for pupils up to the good level of its care for pupils on a daily basis. More stringent checks on pupils' progress are putting the school in a stronger position to identify pupils' different rates of progress. As yet, teaching is not fully using these assessments to consistently adapt work to match pupils' different abilities. Pupils are not always sure of what they need to do to improve their work and reach their personal targets. These factors combine to restrict pupils' progress and prevent it from being good. Pupils enthusiastically take part in a good range of extra activities that support the satisfactory curriculum.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides energetic leadership and a clear vision that is driving the school forward. Staff morale is high and there is a determination to improve that is supported by sound self-evaluation. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Satisfactory leadership and management lead to a realistic view of the sound provision for EYFS children. Teaching and children's achievement are satisfactory. A steady rate of learning means that, from starting points that are close to expectations for their age, standards are average by the end of Reception. Children do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because of consistent planning to meet children's developing needs based on accurate assessments. There is not quite the same fast pace of progress in other aspects of children's learning. This is because teaching does not always build in sufficient challenge into activities, based on children's different abilities. Positive relationships between key adults and children ensure that children settle well into the pattern of the day. Three-year-olds, for example, confidently help to share and prepare healthy snacks. A satisfactory curriculum strikes a reasonable balance between children choosing activities and being guided by adults. There are, however, too few opportunities for children to spontaneously explore their creativity through, for example, acting out parts. The facilities for outdoor learning are currently limited but plans are in hand to improve these in the near future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision in the EYFS, particularly in children's creative and outdoor learning.
- Ensure that teaching throughout the school uses information from assessments to build in the right level of challenge for pupils' different abilities.
- Ensure that teaching helps pupils to understand their targets and how to reach them.

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

Children in the EYFS make satisfactory progress and are working at average levels by the start of Year 1. Children make rapid and good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, they approach learning in Year 1 with enthusiasm and a good level of independence.

Standards are average by the time pupils leave the school and their achievement is satisfactory. While pupils' progress is satisfactory over their time at school, it is uneven. This is because teaching does not consistently take full account of pupils' different capabilities and build in the necessary challenge to move them on at a good rate. There are encouraging signs that this is improving. Effective action taken over the past year to improve teaching and learning, for example, in mathematics, means that standards are rising. Pupils calculate accurately and have a particularly good grasp of how the value of a digit changes depending on its position in a number. Pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to others. There is often faster progress by these pupils when they engage in specific programmes to support a distinct aspect of their learning, such as reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They feel a strong sense of community and belonging and say that they are proud to wear the school's uniform. Their exemplary behaviour and strong relationships are major factors in the school's friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils are very respectful towards each other and adults. Their mature and thoughtful attitudes help them to learn from each other. Pupils' enjoyment of school is very evident in their good attendance. They eat and drink healthily and understand the importance of keeping active to stay fit. Pupils readily take on responsibility, such as helping in the dining room to organise younger ones at lunchtime. The school council effectively gathers pupils' views about changes for the better and manages a budget to bring projects to fruition. Pupils are involved in many community events and welcome the community into the school for musical and dramatic performances and special lunches. They have a good understanding of the diversity of the global community through the range of study in subjects like geography, art and music. Pupils are well prepared for their future in developing positive attitudes to learning and good social skills but are less well prepared in terms of their progress in their work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory but has good features that are found in all parts of the school. Warm relationships between pupils and adults result in happy, purposeful classrooms. Staff work hard to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils respond very well to the consistently high expectations of behaviour. Good questioning helps pupils to extend their thinking. New vocabulary is identified and well used in discussions. There are, however, some inconsistencies in teaching that prevent pupils' good progress. Teachers assess pupils' work frequently but do not always use the information gained to match work precisely to pupils' different abilities. Consequently, the work is sometimes too hard for some or too easy for others and this leads to pupils' learning losing momentum. Pupils are not always sufficiently clear about precisely what to do to reach 'the next step up' and reach their targets. There is some effective support by teaching assistants for groups who are engaged in specific programmes to meet identified needs. When teaching assistants lack sufficient guidance on how to fully promote pupils' learning, they are not as active in helping pupils to improve their work in the classroom.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils, including those with learning difficulties. It is not always adapted as sharply as it should be to fully match the range of pupils' abilities. There is an effective programme of health, social and moral education, which starts with the youngest children and is a major reason for pupils' good personal development. The school makes good use of health professionals to boost pupils' learning about how to safeguard their well-being. There is an enthusiastic take-up of extra-curricular sport, with good links to other schools, that helps to boost pupils' levels of fitness. All pupils from Year 1 to 6 benefit from learning a modern foreign language. Year 6 pupils say that learning French and German is helping them to face transfer to secondary school with confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Adults show a good level of daily care for pupils and give them good advice on how to cope with any daily problems. Pupils are certain that there is always an adult to turn to if they meet difficulties. Community and learning partnerships are used well to support vulnerable families and children. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are secure. Academic guidance for pupils is not as effective as pastoral guidance. The school's system for setting targets for pupils is relatively new. Most pupils know broadly what they are aiming for. They are sometimes uncertain about the next small step that needs to be taken in their learning because teaching does not always provide sufficient guidance. The provision and support for pupils with learning difficulties are satisfactory. Individual education plans are reasonably detailed but vary in quality in guiding staff to support pupils' learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is developing in the right direction under the headteacher's good leadership. It knows what to work on next and the staff are committed to improvement. Priorities are based on accurate and honest self-evaluation. The staff's skills in checking first-hand and analysing data are steadily developing under the headteacher's guidance. This is helping them to contribute more fully to the school's self-evaluation and has proved particularly effective in mathematics. The school has worked diligently to ensure that it uses its system for tracking pupils more effectively to pinpoint differences in rates of progress. It has not yet ironed out the inconsistencies in teaching that underpin these differences.

The staff and governors ensure that the school is at the heart of its community. Good community cohesion is promoted. Effective liaison with the pre-school playgroup enables smooth transition for children into the school's setting. Links with schools in the wider community are well used to broaden pupils' opportunities for learning. There have been several changes of governors recently. Governors satisfactorily use their range of expertise to support the school and are starting to ask searching questions to help the school to reflect on its effectiveness.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Werburgh's C of E (VA) Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 2BA

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to Mr Best and I when we visited your school recently. We could see how much you enjoy school and were happy to hear that you feel well cared for by the staff. Well done for coming to school so regularly. You are getting a satisfactory education and you are helping your school to improve. This is what else we found out about your school.

- Young children make a sound start to school and settle in quickly.
- You make satisfactory progress in your work and standards are improving because of sound teaching.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on really well with each other and the adults. These things help your school to be a happy place.
- You know how to stay safe, healthy and fit. It is good that you are keen to get involved in things that help both your school and the village to improve.
- You have a satisfactory curriculum and enjoy taking part in the many extra activities that you find exciting, like drama, music and sport.
- The staff enjoy working with you and are working hard to make the school even better.

We have asked the school to do a few things to help it improve further:

- Give young children more chances to be creative and learn outdoors.
- Make sure that work is just at the right level for everyone.
- Help you to understand what to do to reach your targets.

You are brilliant ambassadors for your school. Keep trying your hardest. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Crane Lead inspector