

# St Margaret's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126018
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	315397
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Laver

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	504
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Snell
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Boreham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Arundel Road Angmering Littlehampton BN16 4LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01903 785416
<b>Fax number</b>	01903 850749

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Margaret's is a much larger than average school, with pupil numbers doubling in recent years. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion from minority ethnic groups are both well below average. The minority of pupils with special needs covers a range of learning and emotional difficulties as well as various disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Margaret's offers a good standard of education. It is on an upward path, with pupils achieving well academically and developing a range of personal qualities which prepare them very well for the next stage of education. The great majority of parents understandably enthuse about the school, and the following comments are typical: 'My children are valued as learners and as children, and I appreciate all the hard work that the school does' and 'I cannot think of a single negative comment about St Margaret's. My son absolutely loves it.' Young children get a very good start in the Foundation Stage, and then join Year 1 with standards that are above national expectations. In recent years, pupils from five years old upwards have consistently achieved well, although test results show that progress has been more rapid amongst younger rather than older pupils. This has been principally because some boys have not achieved as well in literacy as in other core skills, although results have been above average. The school has worked hard to address this area of relative underachievement, adopting learning strategies that use a wider range of reading and writing resources and more specialist support for lower attainers. The success of these strategies is reflected in the fact that the previous gap in attainment between boys and girls is narrowing. Personal development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and most have a positive attitude towards learning. They also have an outstanding sense of community responsibility. Behaviour is good overall, although a minority of parents have concerns about pupil misbehaviour, generally outside of lessons. Pupils are also enthusiastic about the excellent curriculum. This is notable for the very high take-up of activities such as sports clubs, and the emphasis given to music, languages and an integrated approach towards teaching topics. This approach encourages pupils to make connections between different subjects and also gives them more opportunities to refine skills in writing and information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers manage pupils well, often in large classes. Teachers also make good use of support staff to boost the progress of pupils with learning difficulties. The best lessons make learning exciting and 'fun', with briskly paced activities that engage pupils. This was seen in a lesson in which younger pupils enthusiastically shared 'interesting' vocabulary about the weather. In lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, children are less enthusiastic, and comment that they spend too long on a particular activity. The use of assessment in lessons and the quality of marking are inconsistent, so that pupils are not always clear about how best to improve their work. Support for pupils' academic progress is therefore less strong than other aspects of care and guidance. Care for other needs is a strength, and there is excellent provision in particular for pupils with learning and physical disabilities, who are able to access the curriculum and progress well. Inclusion of all pupils so that all achieve equally well is one of the great successes of the school, as both pupils and parents recognise, although a small minority of parents have some concerns about the large size of classes. The personal leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. His experience and expertise are greatly valued both in and beyond the school. He has developed, and continues to develop, leadership and management teams which work to ensure that all staff feel that they have a strong stake in the school. Consequently they respond well to challenges such as producing detailed reviews of various subject areas and other aspects of the school's performance. Accurate monitoring and evaluation feed into appropriate planning. This enables the school to sustain good progress and build on existing strengths such as parental support, stable staff and positive pupil attitudes, so that an already successful school has a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children currently make good progress and develop a range of skills and knowledge beyond the expected levels for their age by the time they begin Year 1. Individual child profiles clearly demonstrate the standards achieved as a result of good teaching. The Foundation Stage is well led, and good relationships are carefully fostered with parents, support agencies and other staff. Although enthusiastic staff ensure that children develop both independent and collaborative learning skills, the balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities is sometimes geared too much towards the former.

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

- Improve assessment in lessons, including marking and the use of targets, to enable all pupils to understand clearly how they can improve their work.
- Ensure that the best teaching practice is spread more consistently throughout the school, in order to further improve pupils' achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils join the school with average standards and reach above average standards by the time they leave at the age of 11. All groups of pupils, from the most able to the least able, achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from excellent support, both within their regular lessons and when receiving extra help in improving basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The school has focused particularly on developing strategies to improve the achievement of boys in English, for example introducing a wider range of reading books and encouraging a range of writing in various subjects across the curriculum. This has succeeded in narrowing the gap in achievement between boys and girls. There have also been improvements in science and ICT since the previous inspection. The school is on track in the current year to meet challenging targets.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Strengths include the relationships between pupils when working together, the spiritual awareness developed in assemblies and in creative work in lessons, and the effort taken to develop cultural awareness through activities such as themed learning weeks. Pupils' positive attitudes are reflected in improving attendance and the very high take-up of out-of-class activities such as sports. A strong programme of personal, moral and health education has helped to develop attitudes that contribute to a well ordered, friendly school. There is a strong awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. There is a real enthusiasm amongst pupils for helping each other, representing their peers on the school council, and contributing to charities in the wider community. High standards prepare pupils well for the next stage of education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Learners make good progress in most lessons because teachers often have high expectations and plan work of an appropriate level of challenge and pace to meet the needs of pupils with a wide range of ability. Pupils respond by taking good care with presentation of work, and are enthusiastic in lessons. This was very evident, for example, in a lesson on the environment in which the teacher's questioning and challenge to pupils' thinking fully engaged pupils and succeeded in extending both their knowledge and awareness of community issues. Occasionally lessons are satisfactory; then the learning is passive and much less stimulating. Whilst teachers often give good verbal feedback to pupils, the marking of work is sometimes not very constructive and pupils are unsure of how well they are really doing.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

Pupils are enthusiastic about the curriculum, which offers a rich range of opportunities. There is an excellent take-up of the many clubs and other activities outside lessons, and outside trips are very popular. The school has an imaginative approach to developing modern foreign language skills, with younger as well as older pupils. Sports activities such as swimming, and creative subjects such as art and drama, have a high priority, and all Year 4 pupils receive instrumental tuition. The school gives a high priority to nurturing personal as well as academic qualities. Parents attest to the success of the rounded nature of the curriculum, as in the comment, 'My child is very happy. This is an example of how inclusion should work.'

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe in school, and this reflects the high priority the school gives to ensuring robust child protection, risk assessment and other safety procedures. Academic support and guidance are not yet fully embedded in everyday teaching practice. For example, some pupils find their targets too easy or too hard. However, pupils also confirm that the school takes very good care of their personal needs. The school makes excellent use of its links with outside support agencies, for example in organising meetings with parents, and there is excellent personal care for vulnerable pupils.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

A large and enthusiastic leadership team, with an experienced and highly regarded headteacher at the helm, has high expectations for the school. This is exemplified in detailed planning for improvement. The drive for improvement has been successfully filtered down to middle managers, particularly the subject leaders, who monitor teaching and learning in their subject areas. Governors support and challenge the leadership as knowledgeable 'critical friends'. There are excellent links with outside support agencies and other schools. Although classes for older pupils are large, the school makes efficient use of resources by providing a good range of support staff to meet the needs of all pupils.

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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?	1
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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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	1
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	1
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

<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	1
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**

9 May 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of St Margaret's C of E Primary School, Arundel Road, Angmering, Littlehampton BN16 4LP Thank you for welcoming us so politely and positively when we visited your school recently. We greatly enjoyed the opportunity to see most of you in lessons, in assemblies or enjoying yourself at break and lunchtimes. We were very impressed with the positive way in which you represented the school when we had the opportunity to talk to you. St Margaret's gives you a good education. Both you and your parents have told us this, and we have seen it for ourselves. You do well in your lessons, and, when you take tests, you often do better than children in many other schools. We agree with you that you are well looked after, that you behave well and enjoy school, and that your teachers teach you well. You were very enthusiastic when telling us about some of the things you enjoy doing most, such as taking part in after-school clubs and going on trips. The school also looks after those of you with particular difficulties extremely well. Mr Boreham leads the school very well. He is very enthusiastic and keen for you to make as much progress as possible. The other teachers and adults in the school also work hard to help you do well in your work and make you feel safe in school. Your positive attitude towards learning is already helping you to make good progress. We have asked the school to also help you more in two particular ways. One is to use your targets more, and mark your work better, so that you have a clearer idea of how to further improve your work. The other is for teachers to share more ideas on how they can help you learn even better in lessons. Once again, thank you for your warm welcome. Good luck for the future. John Laver Lead inspector



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John Laver  
Lead inspector