

St Andrew's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126030
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315403
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Smith
Headteacher	Jayne Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2004
School address	Nuthurst Horsham RH13 6LH
Telephone number	01403 891286
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Andrew's is smaller than most primary schools and has a rural village setting. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Almost all pupils are White British and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average but includes pupils with moderate learning difficulties in literacy and numeracy. The school is part of a network of village schools that have links with the local specialist sports college and has received a range of awards, including Healthy Schools and ECO Bronze Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and it is providing an improving standard of education. Pupils much enjoy school, are keen to learn and behave well. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's good leadership is moving the school forward. Her determination to raise standards still further is shared by a committed staff and governors, although the quality of subject leadership, though improving, is uneven.

Children in the Foundation Stage are well cared for, and generally settle well into school routines. Most children make satisfactory, and a few make good, progress across the areas of learning so that most are working within the goals expected of them on entry to Year 1. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory overall across the school, but better in Years 5 and 6. Younger learners, including those in the Foundation Stage, do not achieve as well as older ones.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and there is some good teaching, which accelerates pupils' progress because lessons are well planned with tasks matched to pupils' needs. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' capabilities, and their planning does not always match pupils' needs, especially in the lower years. Curriculum planning is satisfactory and provides a broad range of opportunities for pupils to make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress from their starting points.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their good behaviour, attitudes and relationships reflect the school's very strong physical and pastoral care of pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have good support both within the school and through the strong links with support agencies. However, academic guidance is weaker, particularly for younger pupils. This is because not all teachers mark consistently to help pupils understand how their work could improve.

Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory, though a few weaknesses remain. For example, standards achieved in English and by higher attainers in Key Stage 2 have risen substantially but mathematics across the school has not improved. Governors provide good support and challenge to the school. They are aware of the standards achieved and are holding the school to account. Most parents are fully supportive of the school and appreciate the care and the many activities offered to their children.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Foundation Stage with the skills and understanding broadly expected for their age. However, the variation in teaching means not all children in Reception make the rate of progress expected. Where teaching is consistently good, a small proportion of pupils make good progress. Since the last inspection, both planning and assessment have improved substantially and there is now a good balance between adult- and child-initiated activities. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide children with well-structured sessions which arise from well-planned opportunities to choose activities for themselves. Children work and play well together, enjoying their learning. Consequently, their behaviour is good for their age. The newly developed and good outside areas, appropriate resources and good support from teaching assistants all help to make learning fun.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Improve the quality of teaching particularly for younger pupils, including the children in the Foundation Stage.
- Raise the achievement and standards in mathematics across the school.
- Ensure that all pupils know how well they are progressing and what they need to know to improve.
- Develop the skills of the subject leaders so that they can contribute more fully to the school's improvement.

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

Current standards are above the national average in both key stages, with the exception of mathematics, which is broadly in line. This represents satisfactory achievement overall. Despite a dip in 2005, Year 2 results have shown continuing improvement over time, particularly in reading and writing, where standards are now above the national average. Mathematics continues to be in line with the national average in Key Stage 1. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 2, with good progress in English. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly in line with the with the national average, with English improving and exceeding them. Mathematics has not shown a similar upward trend. The good progress that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make towards the targets is the result of well-planned support and a curriculum tailored to their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say they much enjoy school, confirming the view held by the majority of parents. Good relationships are a feature of the school, with pupils willing to help each other. Pupils say they feel very safe and are confident that staff will deal well with any difficulties they experience. They are well aware of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and of the need to take regular exercise. They appreciate their school environment and work hard to keep it attractive. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Pupils are polite, responsible and respectful of others and these positive attitudes were recently rewarded by the school receiving UNICEF's Rights and Responsibilities Award. Pupils report that bullying does not happen and, if it should occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. The school's positive, caring Christian ethos is reflected in the many personal development initiatives, for example achievement assemblies, junior citizenship training, peer mediation, and 'reading buddies'. Pupils enthusiastically take up the many opportunities that exist for pupils to contribute to the school and wider community through participation in charity events, such as raising funds for a Gambian school, performing in local village events or as members of the active School Council who describe themselves as the 'pupil voice'. The school ensures that pupils enjoy an interesting range of cultural development opportunities through Theme Weeks. Pupils' good personal qualities, combined with sound basic skills, mean they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' enjoyment of their learning stems from the good relationships they have with staff. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. Overall, teaching is now satisfactory, after a period in which some year groups experienced a number of different teachers. In the best lessons, learning is fun, varied and exciting. Some teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and, where teaching is good, for example in some Year 4, 5 and 6 classes, planning takes account of pupils' past performance, using assessment data to ensure an appropriate level of challenge for pupils. Where teaching is less well pitched to pupils' needs, the pace is slower and less well focused; consequently, not all pupils are sufficiently challenged to achieve their personal best. This is particularly the case in younger classes and in mathematics across the school. In the best practice, pupils know and understand what they have to do to improve their work. However, some marking does not give enough feedback to pupils to help them to understand how they can do better. Teaching assistants provide pupils with good levels of support. This support helps to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good academic progress when measured against their relative starting points.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced. Improvements have been made in medium-term planning but this still does not always indicate clearly how work can be modified to meet different ability levels in the same class; this restricts the rate of pupils' progress. The development of topic-based learning resources to support the improving cross-curricular links has provided a wider range of learning opportunities and activities than at the last inspection. As a result, the school's 'Learning Journeys' curriculum has already raised standards in creative writing, particularly in Key Stage 2. A good range of specialist teaching, including French, music and sport, as well as visitors and visits, extends and enriches the curriculum and contributes to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The school makes good use of members of the local community with specialist knowledge to support topics taught. New interactive whiteboards and the information and communication technology (ICT) suite has significantly improved the ICT curriculum since the last inspection. The good range of extra-curricular activities, which includes sport and music, are well attended by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire view St Andrew's as a caring, friendly, happy and inclusive school, and most say their children much enjoy school. The pastoral and physical care of pupils is very strong and this has a good positive impact on pupils' personal development. All required checks on personnel have been carried out to ensure that pupils are safe. Pupils with learning disabilities and/or difficulties have good support, benefiting from work programmes that are well matched to their individual needs. Guidance for pupils' academic development has been recently reviewed and improved, especially in the Reception class. In the best practice, particularly in Years 5 and 6, teachers keep pupils well informed as to how well they are doing and, as a result, pupils in these classes understand what they need to do to improve their work. However, such guidance is not consistently effective

across the school. The quality of marking is variable and, as a result, not all pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. Attendance is good, which is an indication of the enjoyment the pupils gain from coming to school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides good leadership, setting a clear direction for development with an appropriate emphasis on raising standards. She communicates this well to all staff. Senior staff work together with the headteacher and the newly-formed curricular teams to ensure that areas for improvement are given priority and regularly reviewed. The framework within which subject leaders work is clearly set out, but the postholders vary considerably in the skills and experience that they bring to this aspect of their work. The school recognises that the role of subject leaders has yet to be fully developed in order to raise standards in line with the school's aspirations. The development of curricular action plans now ensures that staff training and development opportunities are more closely linked to school improvement needs and are regularly timetabled. Governors know the school well. They provide good support as a 'critical friend' whilst also holding the school to account. They have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in the life of the school through their regular visits to monitor its development. The school's self-evaluation is good and monitoring procedures are effective. The extent of improvement since the previous inspection and, particularly, the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve still further.

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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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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	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

13 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's Church of England Primary (Aided) School, Horsham RH13 6LH

Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school. I enjoyed meeting you, talking to you, and looking at your work. I was so impressed to see how hard you work to make your school a happy place. You clearly love your school and are proud of your many awards you have recently received such as your Healthy Schools and UNICEF Rights and Responsibilities Awards.

You told me that you enjoy school and that you work hard to do your best. You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and help others to have a happy time at school.

I feel that there are some things that your school could do better. This is because not all activities in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 help you to achieve your personal best. I also think that not all of you fully understand what you need to do to improve your work to reach even higher standards. I have asked your school to make some improvements to help you in these areas.

- To make sure that the activities planned, particularly for younger pupils and in mathematics across the school, help you to improve and achieve your personal best.
- To make sure you all know what it is you need to do to improve your work and that teachers check how well you are doing.
- To help your teachers to look after the subjects they are responsible for.

I know all of you will do all you can to help your school improve so that you achieve the best possible results. I hope that you will continue to work as hard as you can. Your good behaviour and attitudes will help your teachers work on the things they need to do.

Best wishes,

Wendy Forbes Lead Inspector