

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100613
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	323312
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	203
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Doff
Headteacher	Miss Jayne Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Kay Road London SW9 9DE
Telephone number	020 7274 7012
Fax number	020 7334 4593

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

There are more girls than boys in this small school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught full-time in a Reception class. The great majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Around two thirds are of Black British heritage. Although English is not the first language for quite a high proportion of the pupils, only a small number are at an early stage of learning English. This includes some of the above-average proportion of pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is high, covering quite a wide spread of different needs. The school offers extended provision through its breakfast and after-school clubs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Andrew's is a good school. A shared vision and drive for improvement have enabled the headteacher, leadership team, staff and governors to move this school a long way in the time since its last inspection. The feedback that leaders give to staff, based on their rigorous monitoring of lessons and of pupils' work, has helped to sharply raise teachers' expectations of behaviour and of what their pupils can do. Indeed, the question 'Can I?' is posed at the start of every lesson, with pupils routinely determining at the end of each lesson that 'We can do it'.

In this way, the school is steadily moving towards achieving its stated aim of encouraging pupils to 'reach for the stars', and the extensive improvements since the last inspection demonstrate the school's good capacity for continued improvement. Standards in English, mathematics and science, that had for many years previously been exceptionally low, have been in line with the national average in each of the last three years. Pupils now make good progress and achieve well. Pupils joining St Andrew's part-way through their primary education, including a number who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress. However, the progress of pupils with learning difficulties is inconsistent. Some do very well, but that is not the case for all. For some of these pupils, progress is no better than satisfactory because their specific targets have been updated less frequently than the more general targets that all pupils have in their classrooms. Nonetheless, the school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. They are helped to feel very safe and secure at St Andrew's, and the teachers' marking contributes to the pupils' good progress by giving them very clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

Pupils greatly enjoy school. They listen intently in lessons and join in with considerable enthusiasm. Pupils' personal development is outstanding, and their exemplary behaviour and the exceptionally good relationships between pupils from different backgrounds have helped to make St Andrew's a harmonious and happy community. Pupils are keen to take part in sports and the many opportunities that they have for creative arts and music. The curriculum is both stimulating and innovative, for example in the way it organises pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. As a parent explained, 'These have really helped my son to get ahead in reading and develop an enthusiasm for mathematics.' Because, in some year groups, boys have not made such fast progress as girls, the school has put in place initiatives to stimulate boys' interest. For example, there is a 'Boys' book box' in Year 6 with books aimed squarely at getting boys to read more.

Last year, a combination of illnesses, injuries, maternity leave and other events led to the extended absence of the headteacher and several gaps in the leadership team. It is a tribute to the effectiveness of leadership and management and the robustness of the management systems in place that these had only relatively minor impact on the quality of provision. They did have an effect, however, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where standards fell. Progress has picked up again this year, but staff have not got the balance right between adult-directed and child-initiated activities. At present, children in the Reception Year do not have enough opportunities to make choices for themselves.

School leaders have had particular success in forging a growing partnership with parents. Of those parents who wrote to inspectors, the great majority expressed very positive views. One

summed up the opinion of parents and pupils alike with the comment, 'My daughter thinks this school is great, and so do I.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start in Reception with standards that are below those expected for their ages. They are especially low in some aspects of literacy and numeracy. Children's pre-school experience is very variable. Some have attended various different provisions, but around a third have had no pre-school education. Children are helped to settle in through careful initial assessment of their needs and they are made to feel welcome and secure. A parent represented the views and experience of many in commenting, 'My daughter loves going to school and enjoys learning there.' Provision in Reception is thoughtfully arranged so that children can access resources for themselves across all areas of learning. They are not, however, given enough opportunities to do this, because too many activities are closely directed by staff. Nevertheless, the children make good progress. The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has successfully reversed the fall in standards last year. Standards are now on track to be much closer to the levels expected for the start of Year 1. Relationships in Reception are a real strength, and children enthusiastically share their learning with adults. Children relish the opportunity to make decisions as to whether learning has gone well by ticking their names and explaining what they have learnt. The Reception class has two outdoor areas, but these are both small. This restricts the opportunities for physically active play. School leaders have identified the need to improve the outdoor areas as a priority in the school improvement plan.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help children in the Reception Year to develop as more independent learners by giving them more opportunities to choose activities for themselves.
- Accelerate the progress of pupils with learning difficulties by ensuring that they are working to individual targets that are kept fully up to date.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have improved sharply since the last inspection. They had previously been consistently below average in the Year 2 assessments, and exceptionally low in the Year 6 tests. However, for the past three years, standards at the end of both key stages have been average. As teachers' expectations have risen, so pupils have in turn risen to the increased challenge, helping them to achieve well. The good progress that pupils make in their key literacy and numeracy skills prepares them well for the next stage of their education and for future life. Girls have made faster progress than boys in some year groups, but both do well. Pupils joining St Andrew's from other schools and from overseas are helped to make good progress. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. Although some make spectacular progress, the progress for others is slowed, because the targets in their individual education plans are updated only twice a year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy their education, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Spirituality is very evident in the way that pupils grow in confidence and

self-esteem, and treat each other with kindness and respect. It is also reflected in their joyful singing and the thoughtful prayers that pupils write. Throughout the school, behaviour is exemplary and pupils show they are keen to learn. They are very welcoming towards pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who start school part-way through the year. As one boy explained, 'It makes me warm in my heart to know I have welcomed a new friend to the school.' Relationships between pupils and their teachers strongly underpin the school's friendly but nonetheless busy working environment. Pupils' African, Caribbean and European heritages are celebrated through photographic displays. These, and work in religious education, ensure that pupils have very good awareness of other cultures and beliefs. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe, including when they are using the internet. They have an equally strong appreciation of the need for a healthy lifestyle, and they take part in sporting competitions with great enthusiasm and growing success. Pupils contribute well to the school and the wider community, for example by raising money for the school and for a charity in Rwanda. Attendance is no better than satisfactory despite the school's best endeavours to promote regular attendance and to chase up absences. Much absence is due to families taking holidays in term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

It is teachers' raised expectations that have made the biggest difference in this school. These have resulted in purposeful, well-managed lessons where there is a good pace of learning. Teachers know their pupils' needs well and are successful at motivating them to try hard and do their best. They make good use, for example, of the interactive whiteboards in each class, to provide visually stimulating elements to lessons and to set out the 'Can I?' learning objectives. Classroom organisation is very good, so that pupils listen carefully to their teacher, and to each other, and settle to work quickly and without fuss. Pupils are routinely encouraged to share ideas in pairs, although teachers do not always make the most of this strategy when they only take from pupils their own rather than their partner's answers. Teaching assistants are used well, both to support individuals and groups of pupils, and to share in the teaching. In some lessons, however, work is not matched carefully enough to the different capabilities of the pupils, so that it can be overtaxing for some less-able pupils and those with learning difficulties, or not challenging enough for the more able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The rich curriculum helps to excite pupils and motivate them to succeed. Pupils' needs are well targeted through innovations in literacy where, for example, pupils are grouped across classes by ability rather than age. School leaders have made imaginative use of technological solutions, for example in using the internet to translate written material for older pupils joining the school with very little English. Almost every pupil in Years 1 to 6 is involved in a singing group or in learning a musical instrument. An impressive range of educational visits that utilise the local area, as well as museums and galleries in London, are well planned to enrich learning. The wide variety of after-school activities, from Brazilian dance to Spanish, are very well attended. An artist in residence has helped pupils to develop their skills in using pastels. The curriculum contributes substantially to pupils' capacity to stay healthy and they really enjoy taking part in a very wide range of competitive sports tournaments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Marking gives pupils very clear guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils understand and use their targets, and these are helping to raise standards across the school. However, this is not always the case for pupils with learning difficulties, because their targets are not reviewed as frequently as they could be. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are robust. A notable strength of this school is the high quality of induction procedures for pupils who arrive part-way through their primary education, including a number who join the school speaking very little English. The arrangements enable these pupils to settle quickly, so that they are helped to make similar progress as their peers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Much of the improvement seen at St Andrew's is due to the rigour of school leaders' monitoring and careful tracking of pupils' progress. What they have learned from this has been used to drive up the expectations and aspirations of staff, pupils and parents. Leaders have been innovative in adapting schemes to meet the school's particular needs. In response to the school's high proportion of newly qualified teachers, for example, school leaders devised a 'recently qualified teacher' programme to extend the support routinely given to teachers in their first year. School self-evaluation is mostly accurate, although leaders record an overly positive evaluation of achievement and standards. This is, in part, because they have reflected the improvements that have been secured over the past three years, but it is also because comparisons have been made with other schools in the locality rather than with national norms. Governors are supportive. They have not allowed vacancies in the governing body to side-track them in their work of challenging school leaders and overseeing the school's good contribution to community cohesion. This has been developed through the school's celebration of pupils' different backgrounds, opportunities to learn about other beliefs and ways of life, and support for and work with parents. The extending of the school day through the breakfast and after-school clubs has helped the school to better meet community and parental needs.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

31 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, London, SW9 9DE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. You are rightly proud of your school. It is a good school that has come a long way since its last inspection. Because the school is so well run and the teaching is good, you make good progress from the Reception class through to the end of Year 6. Standards, which used to be very low, are now consistently in line with schools nationally. It is not just President Obama and Bob The Builder who chant 'Yes, we can'. You all like to show that you have achieved the 'Can I?' learning objectives that teachers give you at the start of each lesson.

One of the reasons that you do well is because behaviour is excellent, and you concentrate hard in class and listen carefully to your teachers. You are really helping yourselves to succeed, and your enthusiasm for learning stands you in good stead for when you move on to secondary school. You get on very well with each other, and that helps to make St Andrews's such a happy, friendly place to be. You really enjoy all the many interesting things that you get to learn about and do, and we could see that lots of you join in the many clubs on offer. I was especially impressed with your singing. The Year 4 soloists in assembly sang so confidently and so well that I wondered whether we might be listening to some of the 'X Factor' stars of the future!

The school takes very good care of you, and we were pleased to see how many of you know your targets and use them - and your teachers' very helpful marking - to move your work on. Targets are not changed often enough, however, for some of the pupils who need extra help with their learning, and this is something that we have asked the school to improve. We have also asked them to provide more opportunities for the children in the Reception Year to make more choices for themselves, to help them to become independent learners.

We are sure that you will want to continue to work hard and do your best, and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector