

Matlock Bath Holy Trinity CofE Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112841
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325698
Inspection dates	12–13 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	57
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	Mrs Judy Crook
Headteacher	Mrs Amanda Mee-Shipman
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	14 Clifton Road Matlock Bath Derbyshire DE4 3PW
Telephone number	01629582862

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Matlock Bath. Almost all of the pupils are of white British heritage and all have English as their first language. Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are expected of their age group. The proportion of children entitled to a free school meal and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. All of the children are taught in mixed-age classes. The school is led by an acting headteacher, who has been appointed from the existing staff, and will continue until the end of the academic year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and has built good capacity to maintain this momentum. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good and the school benefits from enthusiastic and dedicated leadership that nurtures teamwork. Pupils are very proud of their school and are keen participants in the exciting range of opportunities that it provides, particularly in sport and music. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their computer skills in different subjects. Pupils and their parents are particularly, and rightly, impressed with the very high quality of pastoral care and the good academic guidance. A delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented: 'I cannot imagine being any happier with the school. The curriculum is delivered with imagination and the children are engaged enthusiastically and have fun while still learning effectively.' The school certainly has the respect of the community that it serves and works well with other schools.

Achievement is good and standards are consistently above average in national tests and assessments by the end of Years 2 and 6. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and reach standards that are above national expectations. The skills that children acquire in the Reception class provide them with a secure footing for future learning in Key Stage 1 and very positive attitudes towards school. This is because the teaching is outstanding for this year group and thoughtful use is made of assessment information to ensure the work set is matched carefully to pupils' needs. However, as pupils move through the school, there is a lack of consistency in the rigorous use of assessment data to plan work for the higher attainers. This is particularly evident in writing where standards are not as high as those in reading. This remains the case throughout the school, particularly for the boys. Nevertheless, standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are above average overall year-on-year.

The personal development and well-being of all pupils is exemplary. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and attendance rates have improved markedly since the last inspection. Staff respect and value the pupils. Consequently, pupils develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and they respond very well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. They work hard and play well together, forming excellent relationships with one another and with adults in school. They willingly take on extra responsibilities such as involvement in school council.

Leadership and management of the school are good. Although the school's self evaluation documentation is not fully updated, the school's view of itself is broadly accurate and has resulted in a clear strategy for continuing improvement. The acting headteacher, ably supported by her colleagues and governors, has spent her first six weeks productively, particularly in building staff teamwork. This is leading to a shared accountability for school performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding feature of the school. Children thrive academically within this highly caring environment and their personal development is outstanding. From the outset, staff make a point of developing excellent relationships with families, enabling children to feel confident,

safe and secure. This close liaison between home and school, combined with the sharing of information about progress, encourages parents to participate fully in their children's learning. Children are highly motivated because such an exciting range of activities is provided to meet the children's needs, both indoors and particularly outside. This was very evident, for example, in the children's work on money that fully engaged their interest. Adults work and plan together very effectively as a team and ensure that the children are challenged by a series of open-ended activities. Staff keep a careful check on how well the children are progressing. Support for children who are vulnerable or who find learning difficult is of a high standard, enabling them to enjoy success. Children make rapid progress and start Year 1 with standards that are above those found nationally for all areas of learning. Key factors in this success are the outstanding quality of leadership and the excellent teaching. There is a shared sense of commitment to ongoing improvement, with further development of the outdoor accommodation being the current focus of the team's attention.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for the boys.
- Make more rigorous use of assessment data when planning work to assure challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils attain above-average standards and progress well throughout the school. This ensures that overall achievement is good. Standards are consistently above average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. The school is particularly successful in enabling all of the pupils to achieve the benchmark Level 4 in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Boys achieve as well as the girls except in writing. Although pupils have an excellent range of vocabulary and a good understanding of grammar, some, particularly the higher attaining pupils and boys, are not sufficiently challenged to achieve their best. Furthermore, weaknesses in handwriting and presentation mar otherwise good work. The school has recognised these shortcomings and has made changes to the curriculum to improve the range of opportunities for writing. In numeracy, the problem solving approach has been successful in building pupils' skill levels and confidence in applying their mathematical understanding. In science, pupils benefit from the exciting, investigative approach to learning and a significant majority of pupils achieve the higher levels in national assessment tests. Pupils achieve a high standard of singing and this strongly supports the school's ethos.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' excellent behaviour, their enthusiasm for learning and willingness to help their teachers exemplify the pupils' contribution to the success of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is excellent. They grow in independence and confidence, and have many opportunities to exercise responsibility from the time they first enter the school. Attendance rates are above average. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how important it is to be good citizens. They make a worthwhile contribution to the school community and beyond through the many jobs they do such as pupil councillors and playground buddies. Opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the wider multicultural society are almost as strong. The developing links with a school in Uganda and fundraising for a variety

of charities helps pupils recognise that they are part of a global community. They have an excellent understanding of how to follow healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. These outstanding aspects of pupils' personal development, together with their good overall progress, provide a secure basis for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

A common feature in all classes is the warmth of the relationships that encourages excellent standards of behaviour and motivates pupils to do their best. Teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together to provide pupils with a high level of support to develop their independent learning skills. Teachers are skilled in asking open-ended questions to gauge pupils' level of understanding, and pupils are keen to respond because they know that their answers will be valued. Interactive whiteboards are used successfully to demonstrate new techniques and teachers ensure that the pace of learning is good. Because the work set is designed to encourage the pupils to think and is closely matched to the range of ages in each class, learning is fun and pupils make good progress. However, teachers are not as skilled at planning for higher attaining pupils, particularly relating to pupils' writing work. Teachers provide good oral feedback to pupils in class to make sure that they learn from their mistakes. However, the quality of marking in books lacks consistency and does not always help pupils know exactly how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is structured effectively to support learning in the mixed-age classes and strongly supports pupils' personal, academic and physical development. Staff work very effectively as a team and their priority when planning lessons is to promote pupils' enjoyment and excitement in learning. The curriculum is moulded to the needs of the pupils to ensure that they remain interested and alert to the joy of learning. It is imaginative and establishes creative links between subjects, especially through literacy, information and communication technology and numeracy. Pupils' social skills are very well developed through a wide range of sporting, musical and other extra-curricular activities. The popular residential visits in Years 2 and 3, and Years 5 and 6, successfully develop pupils' independence, confidence, initiative and teamwork.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding. The strength of the links between home, school and the church strongly support the nurturing environment. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and ensuring child protection meet current requirements. The staff, who are excellent role models, are fully aware of child protection procedures and what actions they should take if they have concerns over a child. Risk assessments are undertaken effectively for all activities. Pupils report that they feel very safe in school and they are confident that should they have a problem there is always an adult who will treat their concerns seriously and deal promptly with the issue.

Pupils' academic guidance is good. It is developing well because staff undertake systematic assessments of progress and results are used effectively to set targets for pupils. Work is planned for different groups of pupils within each class. However, although this process leads to tasks

that are matched well to those pupils who find learning difficult, it does not always lead to appropriate challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils are not consistently aware of what they need to do to improve their work, particularly in writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

This is an outgoing and progressive school. A key element of its success is the strength of the teamwork amongst adults. Supportive working relationships have enabled the staff to grow in confidence and to share the responsibility for effective school leadership. This is apparent in the continuing drive for school improvement under the stewardship of the acting headteacher. Standards are improving because the curriculum has been developed to motivate pupils and because the school makes effective use of local partnerships and initiatives to improve the quality of learning. Good links have been forged with other agencies and schools to ensure a smooth transfer for children, particularly at the age of eleven. Parental confidence in the school's capacity to continue to improve is strong. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. There are particular strengths in the pupils' understanding of local issues and the school's commitment to strengthen the global elements underpins much of the school's work. The governing body is a strength as it is well informed about the work of the school and is closely involved in planning for its future success. It has grown increasingly confident in its ability to hold the school to account.

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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?	1
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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	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	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?	2
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	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 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**

16 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Matlock Bath Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, Derbyshire, DE4 3PW

I really enjoyed my visit to your school because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I particularly enjoyed my discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assembly and watch the 'Dancing Petals'. I can understand why you are so proud of your school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them:

- you have excellent attitudes towards school and you achieve above average standards in your work
- the children in the Reception class are given a wonderful introduction to school.
- you clearly enjoy lessons and you behave very well indeed
- the school is very mindful of the need to keep you safe and happy
- your teachers make a good team and they make sure that learning is fun and exciting
- the school provides a wide range of activities to keep you interested. It is pleasing to see that so many of you enjoy sport and music
- your headteacher and the staff are determined to make sure the school gets better and better.

You are very fortunate to be able to attend such a good primary school. It is really important that you continue to work hard and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. I have made one or two suggestions that should help the school to improve even further. Firstly, the school should find more ways to help you do better with your writing, especially for the boys. I want all of you, boys and girls, to make sure the presentation of your work is as good as possible and rise to the challenge of harder work. Also, I recommend that the teachers make more use of the information it has about your work, when planning lessons, to help you make even better progress. This sounds like a lot of work but I hope that you will do your best.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector