

St Saviour's CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118695
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326873
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Ellis HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenda Field
Headteacher	Jane Troth
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2006
School address	Elm Grove Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8LD
Telephone number	01843 831707
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average junior school serving a local community where the majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average and few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average. Most pupils with additional needs have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around the national average. The school operates a breakfast club and provision during school holidays.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Saviour's is a good school. Standards have improved significantly over the last few years and are now generally above average. However, standards in writing have not risen as sharply as in other subjects. Pupils make good progress because of their own positive attitudes to learning and teaching that is consistently good. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are enabled to do well because of the good support and guidance they receive. Good liaison with parents and outside agencies supports learning. Consequently, all pupils in the school achieve equally well.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and pupils take care of each other and their environment. Pupils say that they enjoy school and demonstrate this through their good attendance and evident enjoyment of learning. They understand the need to keep safe and develop healthy lifestyles. Good relationships with each other and with adults contribute to a shared sense of belonging to one community. For example, staff and pupils all participate in the morning 'shake and wake' activity before the start of morning lessons. Pupils are able to participate in decision making within the school and feel that their views and opinions are valued.

Teachers know their pupils well and plan lessons that are generally well matched to pupils' needs and interests. Pupils respond well to the challenges they are given and teachers' marking provides useful comment on how pupils can improve or develop their work. However, some pupils are too dependant on the teachers and other adults and have not yet developed the independence needed to take responsibility for their own learning. Assessment information is accurate, and rigorous tracking of pupil progress enables teachers to identify when pupils are underachieving or at risk of underachieving so that timely additional support and guidance can be given.

The subjects that pupils study promote enjoyment and achievement for all. Good use is made of the local environment, and a wide range of trips and visits to places of interest and an extensive range of well-attended clubs and activities, which run at lunchtime and after school, enrich the curriculum. Pupils have excellent opportunities to develop their self-confidence and learn the skills necessary for success in the next steps in their education and to develop an understanding of different types of work. The school has had good success in improving attendance and in reducing the proportion of unauthorised absence. The needs of different groups of pupils are well catered for and there are rigorous and effective procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to ensuring that all pupils are provided with a safe and supportive environment that encourages personal development and academic achievement.

Leaders and managers monitor the work of the school effectively and have an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Improvement planning is based on the evaluation of accurate performance data and identifies appropriate priorities. The school makes a good contribution to developing a sense of local community values and promoting inclusion. Senior leaders provide clear direction and are committed to developing leadership and management at all levels. The quality of middle leadership is variable; however, the school rightly recognises that continuing to enhance and develop leadership skills will contribute to further school improvement. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively and hold the school to account for the standards it achieves.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.
- Build on existing practice to continue to improve leadership and management, particularly at middle management level.
- Encourage and enable pupils to become independent and take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils arrive at school with the skills, knowledge and understanding just below the level typically found for their age group. The school's assessment information and inspection evidence show that their achievement during their time at St Saviour's is at least satisfactory and most often good. Standards have risen steadily since the last inspection and are now satisfactory in English and above average in mathematics and science by the time that pupils leave the school. The school recognises that raising standards in writing remains a priority. The school sets challenging targets for its pupils and the school's own tracking data and inspectors' scrutiny of their work show that most pupils are on track to achieve their targets. All pupils, regardless of their backgrounds or ability, make similar progress. Pupils who have emotional, social or behavioural difficulties make similar progress to their peers because of the good support and guidance they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are friendly, helpful and polite to visitors; they greatly enjoy school and say they find lessons interesting. They feel their views count and that decisions the school council make have impact, for example, the improvements they have made to the school playground. Pupils have an excellent understanding of why it is important to be healthy and adopt healthy lifestyles. The good range of sporting activities and excellent playground facilities enable pupils to stay fit. They take full advantage of a thriving Healthy Tuck Shop, and lunchboxes generally reflect healthy eating choices. A very small number of children and parents have concerns about bullying. However, inspectors found pupils to be friendly and considerate and the vast majority said that they feel safe and enjoy school. The school is able to demonstrate a swift and rigorous response to any reported instances of bullying. Almost all parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that their children were safe and well cared for in school.

There is a very good awareness of different religions and cultures within the school and the school is developing its international links to enhance pupils' cultural development. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider national community is less well developed. Attendance has improved as a result of the school's sound strategies and initiatives and is now above the national average. Relationships between children and staff are very good. Specialist staff help vulnerable children to deal with emotional and practical difficulties and there is a designated adult in the playground at break time to help mediate children's disputes. A quiet area and supervised construction activities indoors provide an alternative for those children who find managing their behaviour on the playground difficult.

Pupils also make an excellent contribution to the community, for example, the choir sings at the Christmas Tree festival locally. They gain excellent economic understanding through projects involving the world of work and develop the skills necessary for the next steps in their education.

Children collaborate successfully in class and share responsibilities around the school, for example, helping younger children at lunchtime and maintaining display boards about team events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The pupils' good progress owes much to the good teaching. Learning is good in all subjects, and pupils particularly enjoy work that combines different subjects and which gives them good opportunities to work collaboratively. Teachers plan their lessons well, taking into account the needs of the learners. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to bring interest to the lessons. Teachers have a good rapport and manner with the children and effective questioning secures good responses. Pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning and know what their targets are and what they need to do to improve because of very good, detailed marking and relevant feedback on the next steps for learning. Pupils work well together and trust that their teachers and support staff will help them. One pupil commented, 'I like the teachers, they help you when you are down.' Other adults in the class work well with individual pupils but they are not always deployed effectively when the whole class is working together. Whilst lessons begin at a brisk pace, this is not always sustained, in particular when pupils are given an activity to complete with no expectation of how long they have to complete the task. Too few pupils have developed independent learning skills and many pupils are reliant on the teacher regarding what to do next if work is completed before the end of the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned to reflect the needs and interests of the pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers combine subjects well and provide opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing in most lessons. The curriculum is well resourced, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT), and this is well integrated into all classes. Displays of a high quality are a strong feature in the community areas of the school, which show the breadth, and balance of the curriculum. The dragon theme and models in the entrance foyer are particularly impressive. All pupils have access to learning a modern foreign language and the opportunity to play a musical instrument (Ocarina). In order to raise standards there is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and a good number of effective intervention programmes to support those who find learning difficult. The curriculum promotes safe and healthy lifestyles and is supplemented by outside agencies and visitors to do so. The curriculum is further enhanced by a wide range of stimulating trips and visits such as a camping trip in Year 4 and a visit to residential activities centre in Year 6. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that take place during the lunchtime and after school; these are very popular and some are oversubscribed. The school has good links with sports clubs locally and good use is made of the local environment. An outside classroom and allotment area is being developed and when complete will further enhance the range of provision and opportunities offered.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils benefit from excellent day-to-day care and a very strong emphasis on welfare and safety which effectively contribute to their enjoyment, learning, personal development and well-being. This is an inclusive school, which is viewed by pupils and parents as a safe and welcoming place for everyone because a high priority is given to securing pupils' health, safety and welfare. All adults have a firm commitment to the care, guidance and support of all pupils and to minimising risks. There is a robust and effective system in place to ensure that pupils are safeguarded and protected, which meets statutory requirements. The school has a very efficient tracking system to monitor pupils' academic progress that is used by every class teacher. Children enjoy coming to school and a range of good strategies have been implemented to improve attendance, resulting in a steady improvement over the last three years; attendance is now above the national average.

Pupils express confidence in their teachers and support staff, knowing that any problems they face will be dealt with successfully. The school has effective links with specialist agencies to provide support for all pupils and their families. Pupils with learning difficulties, including those with a statement of special educational needs, have very good learning programmes to enable them to achieve to their potential. The breakfast club promotes the development of social skills well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and ensures that the senior leadership team are successfully focused on raising standards and achievement. They work closely with the governing body to ensure that the school's self-evaluation clearly identifies strengths and targets for whole-school improvement. Middle leaders are being empowered and enabled to take increased ownership of key areas of school development and leaders at all levels contribute to the evaluation of the school's work. However, the effectiveness of middle leaders, although improving, is variable. Staff at all levels are encouraged to work together to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring of lessons and scrutiny of pupils work provides subject leaders with an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. Analysis of this information informs improvement planning and results in appropriate actions and good feedback to teachers, which is helping to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are increasingly encouraged to work together to develop their skills and improve the quality of lessons.

The school has good accommodation and uses resources well to enhance learning. There are good links with parents and external agencies, particularly to support vulnerable children, and parents are strongly supportive of the school. The governing body provides a good balance of challenge and support and is well informed about the progress that the school is making.

The positive impact of the actions taken to address the areas of improvement identified by the previous inspection, together with improvements in achievement and standards, demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement.

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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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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	1

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?	1

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**

13 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Saviour's Junior School, Westgate-on Sea CT8 8LD

Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We saw how well you get on together and how well you look after your school. You told us how much you enjoy school. We particularly liked listening to you singing. Your school is a good school and the adults who run it know it well and have some good ideas about how it can be made even better. We saw that standards are rising and you make good progress. We really enjoyed our visit and look forward to hearing about your future success.

Here are some of the things you do best.

- You have an excellent understanding of the importance of being healthy and keeping safe.
- You like coming to school, get on well with each other and attend regularly.
- You are well looked after and given good opportunities to develop as responsible young people.
- Teachers make lessons interesting and exciting so that you enjoy them.
- The school provides many extra activities to help you with your learning, including opportunities for you to learn at home.
- The leadership team, staff, governors and other adults are working hard together to improve the school.

These are some of the things that need to be better.

- You need to improve your writing.
- Some of you need to learn to be more independent, take a bit more responsibility for your own learning, and not rely so much on your teachers.
- The people in charge of your school need to continue the good work they have started and make regular checks to make sure that everything is as good as it should be, and to sort out any problems quickly.

You can help in all these things by working as hard and following the advice that your teachers and other adults give you.

Yours faithfully

Robert Ellis

Her Majesty's Inspector