

All Saints Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123228
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	327873
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Vivienne McTiffen

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)	374
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	44
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jennifer Roberts
Headteacher	Mrs Margot Buller
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Tamar Way Didcot OX11 7QH
Telephone number	01235 819143
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

All Saints Church of England (Aided) is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, or with English as an additional language, is lower than average but increasing. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is lower than the national average. Most have moderate learning difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. There is a Breakfast and an After School Club for children aged 4-11. The school has the Active Mark Gold accreditation, Healthy Oxfordshire Schools status and has achieved ECO schools Silver award.

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. A significant strength is the level of care offered to pupils, which nurtures good behaviour and has a very positive effect on their personal development and well-being. As a result, almost all pupils enjoy school. They have positive attitudes, concentrate well in lessons and participate keenly in a good range of activities, especially sport and music. Provision for the performing arts is another strength. All pupils have the opportunity to play the recorder, and there are chances to learn several other instruments. Attendance is good and has improved due to the sustained efforts of the school. Arrangements for children starting school are good. One parent comments, 'The Nursery makes a lovely gentle start into school life.' The Breakfast and After School Clubs are appreciated by parents and enjoyed by pupils who attend.

Achievement has improved significantly in the last two years, and pupils are now making good progress in all year groups due to good teaching and the school's firm focus on improvement. Consequently, standards in Year 2 have improved and above average proportions of pupils reach the higher Level 3. Although standards at the end of Year 6 remain broadly average, because of a legacy of past underachievement, the school's performance in the Year 6 tests in 2008 was much improved. Better teaching and assessment systems enabled these pupils to make rapid progress during their time in Years 5 and 6, so that they made up much of the lost ground. Pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics, with significantly raised achievement in mental mathematics in 2008. As a result, the very large majority of pupils achieved or exceeded their targets, and a larger proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 than previously. This represents a good achievement from their average starting points on entry to school. Whilst reading results were also better, achievement in writing is weaker because the school does not employ a full enough range of intervention strategies to improve writing. This is pulling down their overall scores in English.

Improvement since the last inspection is good. The driving force is the determined leadership of the headteacher who has built a strong team with a common sense of purpose. Sustained efforts by all, and especially those at management level, has resulted in improved achievement and teaching. The experience and expertise of the deputy headteacher has played a pivotal role in the good progress in mathematics. The school offers a good curriculum that is modified to meet individuals' needs. Recent improvements in the science curriculum have raised standards after several years of decline. However, the school does not make sufficient use of tracking systems to obtain a clear view of pupils' progress in science. Effective monitoring systems and informative feedback help teachers to develop their strengths. Phase leaders demonstrate good practice in their teaching and effectively evaluate how well teachers and learners are doing. Governors have fine-tuned their skills and support the school well. They rightly identified the need to provide before and after school facilities, for which they have selected a competent and enthusiastic manager. The school is in a good position to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Typically, when they come to school, children's abilities broadly match those of children of the same age. They make good progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, most reach the expected goals and many exceed them, although levels reached in matching sounds to letters and early reading are not as high. At the time of the inspection, newcomers were just settling in but good teaching demonstrates a clear understanding of the needs of young children. As

a result, children gradually gain independence. Good links with parents encourage them to become familiar with their children's new surroundings and experience for themselves the daily routine. Children mix freely with others and make friends. From an early stage, they choose for themselves. They enjoy the activities on offer, including using computers, and learn about healthy choices. Behaviour is good because there are clear systems to ensure children respond positively and remain safe. Adults work together well to support learning, led by a proficient manager who is keen to raise achievement and strives for improvement. Emphasis on strengthening early reading skills results in regular phonics teaching. Staff make best use of limited accommodation to deliver all areas of learning. Nursery children benefit from visits to the Forest School to explore and learn in a natural environment. EYFS aged children who attend the Breakfast and After School Clubs settle quickly and benefit from a good level of adult support. The school has rightly identified the need to improve accommodation and better prepare children for their move to Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing especially by widening the range of ways to help pupils reach their full potential in the subject.
- Raise standards in science particularly by improving systems for judging how well pupils are making progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From broadly average starting points, pupils now achieve well throughout the school and have caught up much of the shortfall caused by some weak progress in former years. As a result, although currently average overall, standards are rising but are better in mathematics and reading than in science and writing. In science, improvements have been made because of better attention paid to scientific investigations, but assessments systems in the subject are still weak compared to in mathematics and English. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make similarly good progress to their classmates. Those who struggle with basic literacy and numeracy do well. This is because of the effective extra help given by teaching assistants, and the provision of tasks matched well to their needs. High standards in reading are boosted by a wide range of intervention programmes that address individuals' needs well, but the school has few such strategies to support writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

'We learn lots of stuff we didn't know,' and 'Lessons are interesting and fun most of the time,' commented two pupils from Year 6, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils are friendly, helpful and happy. Behaviour is good. A small minority of pupils, who display unacceptable behaviour, understand the sanctions in place and strive to win 'Golden Time'. Their behaviour is improving as a result. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good although some have limited appreciation of other religions and cultures. Those attending the Breakfast and After School Clubs enjoy the activities on offer and socialise happily with pupils of all ages. Pupils report no worries about bullying, as they know what to do if issues arise. They are well aware of how to remain safe and gain valuable experiences from residential visits. Pupils show good understanding of healthy lifestyles, especially the value of regular exercise. They accept roles of responsibility and contribute well to the school and wider community. Well-developed

personal qualities and improving basic skills prepare pupils well for the next stage of education and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall, although individual lessons vary from satisfactory to outstanding. Good, consistent systems for managing behaviour, coupled with positive relationships between staff and pupils, lead to orderly classrooms where pupils work hard and are keen to succeed. Good use is made of skilled teaching assistants to help pupils who struggle with their work to make progress. Pupils who find it difficult to conform to accepted standards of behaviour are helped to fit in, and staff work together to ensure that any lapses do not disrupt the learning of others. Teaching provides pupils with extensive opportunities to discuss their work together and sort out their ideas. This is very effective in developing their learning, and leads to strong collaborative skills. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' individual needs and, in the vast majority of lessons teachers use a good range of strategies to ensure all pupils are involved. Where this does not happen, for example, in some satisfactory lessons, then a minority of pupils lose interest and concentration, slowing their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides well for pupils' needs and interests in different subjects. Links with local partnership schools form the basis of a number of exciting events such as a science festival. All pupils, from Year 1 upwards, learn a modern foreign language. The equipment for information and communication technology (ICT) is limited but new computers have been ordered. The school makes good use of the existing equipment to support learning in different subjects. There are extensive enrichment activities that contribute well to pupils' progress and enthusiasm, including visitors and visits out. Opportunities for residential visits throughout Key Stage 2 are particularly noteworthy. The wide range of extra-curricular activities includes several sports, choir, knitting, Spanish and French, as well as an eco-club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care, including provision for vulnerable pupils and their families, is strong. A parent says, 'The school has offered myself and my child great support over the time we needed it'. The consistent and fair application of 'Golden Rules' is welcomed by pupils and has led to improved behaviour and learning. In the Breakfast and After School Clubs the same systems exist for encouraging good behaviour. Effective training for support staff and improved systems for judging progress enable pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to do well. Those with specific gifts and talents are well supported. Robust systems ensure pupils remain safe. Careful tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics means that any who start to fall behind are quickly identified. The school also uses a good range of intervention programmes to address particular needs in mathematics and in reading. The range of strategies to support pupils in writing is limited.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

After a period of staffing instability, the headteacher is realising her vision in creating an enthusiastic team who work together to raise standards and achievement. They are now beginning to reap the rewards of their efforts as pupil achievement is rising and is now good. Senior leaders support the headteacher well and staff morale is high. Although some members of staff are new to their leadership roles, they are well supported in their commitment to high quality care and education. The school evaluates its own performance accurately and knows the priorities for improvement. This has led to the current focus on raising standards in writing and ensuring more calculation work in mathematics. Action to improve the rate of pupils' progress has resulted in class restructuring and greater use of ability grouping, leading to improved achievement. Equality of opportunity is well promoted and links with the immediate and local community are strong. Governors play an active role in holding the school to account. Spending is carefully monitored and the effect on pupils' learning thoroughly evaluated.

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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	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?	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
The extent to which 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 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

26 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Didcot, OX11 7QH

Thank you all very much for the welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school recently. We enjoyed seeing you at work and play and we were pleased to hear about all the things you enjoy, especially sport, music and residential trips.

I'm sure you would like to know what we found about your school. We think your school is a good school. Your headteacher and teachers work very hard to care for you and make sure you are happy in school. This is very important to them. We know you really value Golden Time, which helps you to behave well. In lessons, you are helped to do as well as you can and you have lots of opportunities to work together. It was good to see how much you are improving in your work, especially in mathematics, because you have been doing more calculations and working sums out quickly in your head. You do very well in reading. We have asked your teachers to help you improve your writing. Doing extra investigational work in science is helping you to improve but we think you could do even better. So we have asked the school to keep a more careful track of how well you are doing in science, so they can help you learn even more.

We hope you will always enjoy coming to school and that your work continues to improve. We are sure you can help the school to become even better especially if you concentrate as hard as you can in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen

Lead Inspector