

All Saints CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123754
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327979
Inspection date	26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Martin
Headteacher	Charles Pope
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2006
School address	Fishers Mead Dulverton TA22 9EE
Telephone number	01398 323231
Fax number	01398 323231

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school is part of a federation with an adjoining middle school and another first school 10 miles away. The federation came into being in April 2007 and was one of the outcomes of a review of education in West Somerset. Although each school has its own headteacher, the federation has a single governing body which addresses the business of all three schools. Pupils attending the school come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and nearly all are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average.

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 an inclusive ethos and provides a good education for pupils, preparing them well for the next stage of their education. It is well led and managed. The headteacher has ensured that both staff and governors share a vision of raising standards through improving achievement and providing pupils with a stimulating and creative curriculum. The school has increased its effectiveness since the last inspection by developing systems to regularly check and measure its performance and to implement strategies aimed at bringing about improvements. This has been a key factor in raising pupils' achievement and demonstrates that the school has made good progress in a relatively short period of time and has a good capacity to improve in the future. Parents are very supportive of what they believe to be a good school and appreciate the quality of education and care it provides for their children. 'I cannot thank the school enough for all the help and support they have given to my son' was a typical comment in parents' questionnaire replies.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills lower than those expected for their age, and often well below expectations in their language development. Good quality teaching throughout the school enables pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to achieve well in all year groups. Standards in Year 4 are comparable to the national average overall and this represents good progress. However, the school is aware that standards in writing are lower than in other subjects in all year groups.

Pupils are keen and eager to learn and describe their school as a happy and friendly place where adults make them feel wanted. Their personal development and well-being are good and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to all aspects of school. Behaviour is good and pupils try hard to do well. They say that they enjoy school and list mathematics, literacy and music amongst their favourite subjects. They have developed a good understanding of the need to keep fit and healthy and enjoy taking part in 'Huff and Puff' exercises at playtimes. They make sensible choices and take on responsibilities very seriously. Pupils have a good community spirit and say that they feel safe and secure. However, whilst their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, pupils' appreciation of the multicultural nature of modern British society is not as well developed as other aspects of their cultural education.

The curriculum is good and makes effective use of the local environment. It is broad and balanced and designed to make learning interesting and enjoyable. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good and contributes much to their sense of well-being. However, the quality of teachers' marking varies and does not consistently provide pupils with effective guidance on how to improve their work. Leadership and management are good. The school's leadership team, which includes all members of the teaching staff, provides the headteacher with good support. The governing body fulfils its duties satisfactorily and is realistic when challenging and supporting the school. However, governors are only now beginning to gain a clear understanding of the school's strengths and aspects in need of development.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well in both their Nursery and Reception years because good teaching caters for their needs effectively. Classrooms are colourful and attractive and provide children with safe and secure learning environments. The curriculum provides a good range of interesting

activities for children and ensures there are good opportunities for them to develop their early numeracy and literacy skills. Teachers work well with learning support assistants to ensure lessons blend opportunities for independent learning with adult-directed tasks. Those children requiring extra help are provided with the support they need to make good progress. The school has developed good systems to monitor the progress of Reception class children and is now in the process of extending this to Nursery-aged pupils.

Progress in personal, social and emotional development is good and parents appreciate the care and support their children receive. Children are happy to share and take turns, whilst joining in lesson activities with enthusiasm. The school's practical approach to learning builds up their knowledge of the world and develops children's creative skills. A further range of interesting activities ensures that, by the time they enter Year 1, most children meet expectations in nearly all areas of learning, although their language skills are often less well developed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop and implement strategies to improve pupils' achievement in writing throughout the school.
- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently provides pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.
- Ensure the governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and those areas requiring improvement.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well in all year groups because good teaching helps them to build effectively on previous learning. The school's systems for analysing pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection and are used well to identify those who need extra help or who are performing less well than they should be. This ensures, for example, that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the level of support needed to make the same good progress as other pupils. As a result, standards have risen with pupils in both Year 2 and Year 4 on course to meet the school's appropriately challenging targets. However, standards in writing in all year groups are not as high as those in mathematics, reading and science. The school has correctly identified the need to improve achievement in this subject area, especially the ability of pupils to complete longer pieces of writing successfully, as a priority.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school, although this is not reflected in their rates of attendance, which are no more than satisfactory. They have good attitudes to learning and act safely and responsibly at all times, displaying a high level of consideration for others. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and know that any rare instances of unkind behaviour will be dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how the 'Outdoor Committee' and other school committees give them a voice in school decision making and also about their involvement in the local community and in fundraising for both local and international charities. Their good progress in developing their skills in numeracy,

information and communication technology (ICT) and literacy, together with their good understanding of individual and collective responsibility, means they are prepared well for future life. However, whilst the quality of their spiritual development is good and their moral and social development is strong, pupils' understanding of life in a culturally diverse society is limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and ensures pupils make good progress. Lessons are well structured, well paced and have clear learning intentions. Class teachers work well with effective learning support assistants to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their needs or abilities, receive the help and guidance they require in order to make good progress. As a result, pupils achieve well. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and pupils appear keen to learn. Lessons are well organised and teachers deploy a variety of methods, for example using interactive whiteboards effectively, to make learning interesting. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, especially when they involve practical activities. However, on very rare occasions, the pace of learning sometimes slackens and a small minority of pupils lose a little interest for a short time in what is going on.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed a creative and interesting curriculum which links subjects together well and makes good use of the school's rural location and close proximity to Exmoor National Park. Pupils say they like this approach to learning and the fact they are able to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. A wide range of interesting visitors to the school and visits to places of interest, such as the annual residential trip to Bristol, further enhance pupils' experiences of the wider world around them. The school provides a diverse programme of enrichment activities for pupils, including well attended lunchtime and after school clubs, which pupils say they enjoy taking part in. Good planning and provision for personal, social and health education ensures that pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and helps these pupils to make good progress. However, there are few opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop their awareness and understanding of the wide range of cultures in modern British society.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a pleasant family atmosphere about the school which contributes well to pupils' sense of well-being. Pupils speak very positively about the care and attention they receive and say they know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. The school works effectively with parents to ensure all pupils, including those with complex learning needs, are provided with the support they need in order to make good progress. Induction and transfer arrangements are good and help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Robust child protection procedures are followed by all staff. Health and safety arrangements are secure and risk assessments meet current government guidelines.

Procedures to track pupils' progress, criticised by the last inspection, are now thorough and used well by teachers when planning further work. However, the quality of teachers' marking varies and does not consistently provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work, and this affects their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads and manages the school well. Working with the support of teaching staff, he has ensured the school has been thorough in analysing its performance and in implementing changes where needed. This has ensured the school's targets are challenging and that improvement planning is focused on the key areas in need of development in order to raise both achievement and standards.

The governing body has worked well with the headteacher and staff to ensure the school has recently and successfully federated with two other schools. This has led to a period of change for governors, who now have an expanded workload. They have worked well to improve provision, for example, successfully bidding for central government capital funding to enhance resources in ICT. However, the governing body is still in the process of gaining a full understanding of the school's specific strengths and of those areas requiring improvement.

The school works closely with parents and regularly seeks their views. Links with external agencies are good and support pupils' learning well, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is well resourced and has made very good use of the recent successful bid for capital funds.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 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	3
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?	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

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?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	3
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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints Church of England First School, Dulverton, TA22 9EE

Thank you for making us feel very welcome during our visit to your school. We really enjoyed our day and especially enjoyed talking to some of you about what you like the most about your school and seeing you work in lessons.

Here are some of the things we particularly like about your school:

- Yours is a good school which gives you a good start to your education.
- Good teaching helps to make sure that you make good progress throughout the school.
- Your personal development is good and you know why it is important to eat healthily and exercise as often as you can.
- The quality of care and support you receive from the school is good.
- You all behave well and are very polite.
- Your headteacher, staff and school governors are working hard to make sure that your school continues to improve in the future. We believe your headteacher and teachers can do some things to make your school better:
 - Help you to improve your writing skills.
 - Make sure that when your teachers mark your work, they always give you ideas about how you can improve.
 - Make sure that your school governors know the good things about your school and the things that need to improve.
 - Help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds to your own.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron

Lead inspector