

All Saints CofE (C) First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124256
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328090
Inspection date	17 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–9
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	Andrew Raby
Headteacher	Andrea Kenny
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Leigh Stoke-on-Trent ST10 4PT
Telephone number	01889 502289
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Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this small school from the village of Church Leigh and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Pupils are taught in two classes in the morning, but in the afternoons children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a separate class. All pupils are of White British origin. The school has been through a time of disruption, with several changes in staffing, including a new headteacher in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This satisfactory school is improving steadily under the clear direction of the new headteacher. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to this school because there is a happy and welcoming atmosphere provided by the caring members of staff. Children make a sound start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 4, satisfactory teaching ensures that most pupils make satisfactory progress across the school, although pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well as a result of good, focused support from teachers and teaching assistants. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are broadly average, with mathematics and reading being slightly stronger than writing and science. In writing, pupils' handwriting is of variable quality and their spelling is comparatively weak. In science, the more able pupils do not do as well as they could because, while they have good opportunities to carry out practical activities, their written work is not always a fair reflection of their capabilities. The school sets realistic targets for pupils and has started to increase the level of challenge across the school.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are evident in their exceptionally good behaviour and the sensible way they work together. They care for the environment and carry out various responsibilities in school. Pupils know about the benefits of healthy food and exercise.

Care, guidance and support are good. Enthusiastic members of staff support pupils' pastoral needs well because they have good relationships with them. Teachers assess learning carefully and are starting to encourage pupils to take the initiative for their learning. For example, pupils put their thumbs up to show how well they have understood what they have been taught. Teachers do not always plan work that challenges all pupils well enough. This is particularly noticeable in science.

The satisfactory curriculum includes good provision for pupils' social development, and practical activities add to the pupils' exceptional enthusiasm for learning. The school has rightly recognised that pupils do not have enough opportunities to write independently, or to extend and practise their writing skills in subjects other than English. Also, the school is aware that while pupils have a good awareness of and involvement in their local community, they do not currently have enough planned opportunities to fully appreciate how people from other cultures and backgrounds live their lives.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has made a good start to improving provision and is enabling other members of staff to play a greater part in monitoring learning in the subjects they lead. The governors have been successful in ensuring that the school continued to run smoothly during the many recent staffing changes. Leaders know how to improve the school and recent strategies to improve progress in reading are starting to have a positive impact, demonstrating that the school has a sound capacity to improve further.

The school has good relationships with parents and external agencies such as the health service to support the pupils' well-being. Most parents are very pleased with the school. They make positive comments such as, 'The children are happy and thoroughly enjoy their school,' and 'The school offers a caring environment for all.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children are broadly working at the levels expected nationally for this age group when they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their learning and development are satisfactory, and standards remain broadly average by the start of Year 1. Adults prioritise the children's welfare, providing calm and sensitive support when it is needed. Consequently, children's personal development is good. Children make friends quickly and develop good independence. There is a happy buzz in lessons, with children supporting each other well and choosing where they are going to work sensibly. However, choices are sometimes restricted by the lack of space in the small classroom. In the mornings, teaching assistants provide valuable support so that the Reception children can work at tasks that match their needs when they are in the same class as the older pupils. Good support from the local authority has helped teachers new to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum to become more confident in observing learning and planning lessons where work is pitched at the right level for all. Visits and visitors support learning well. For example, children's awareness of how to stay safe was supported well by a visit from a police officer, with them acting out 'emergency situations' in their role play area after the visit.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear understanding of what needs to be done next. Adults work together well as a team. They are beginning to make better use of data to check that all children are doing well enough. They have rightly identified that outdoor provision has not been sufficiently well developed to support all the areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' handwriting and spelling and provide greater opportunities for them to write independently across the curriculum.
- Increase the level of challenge in lessons, particularly so that more able pupils make better progress in science.
- Give pupils better opportunities to learn about life beyond their local community.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average across the school. Standards in mathematics and reading are slightly higher than those in writing and science. A successful whole-school focus on developing sounds and letters is having a positive impact on the pupils' progress in reading, but there are weaknesses in their handwriting and spelling. In science, teachers do not expect enough of pupils, especially the more able. There has been a dip in progress in the recent past but most pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified swiftly and they are given good support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' great enjoyment of school is evident in their good attendance and the enthusiastic way in which they take part in lessons. Pupils behave exceptionally well and are confident, sociable and articulate. They work very hard most of the time, although they do not always take enough care with their handwriting.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and the way that they take on responsibilities is especially noteworthy. Pupils contribute to the community well by helping others and taking part in local events. They take on a wide range of tasks around school and carry them out conscientiously. Pupils show good concern for those less fortunate than themselves. They regularly organise fundraising events and support charities around the world. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own culture, but their knowledge of other cultures and traditions is less strong.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They show good care when walking to church and are clear about how to stay safe on the narrow village roads. Pupils show a good awareness of how to live healthy lifestyles. They take frequent exercise in clubs and lessons and grow their own healthy food in the school garden.

Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education and eventually for later life. They make at least satisfactory progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills and are sociable and articulate. They leave school with high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are good features to teaching in all classes. Teachers and pupils get on very well together and this ensures that there is a happy atmosphere in lessons. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and use resources such as the interactive whiteboards effectively to hold pupils' attention and to introduce new skills. Skilled teaching assistants give good support in lessons, especially by meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers give clear explanations to help pupils understand what to do and they make learning fun by planning many exciting practical activities. However, teachers do not always pitch work at the right level for all ability groups, especially for the most able pupils in science.

Teachers mark pupils' work frequently, often giving clear guidance by identifying how pupils could improve. However, this practice is not yet consistently good across all subjects or classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, helping them to enjoy school. Creativity is fostered very imaginatively and pupils in all year groups produce high quality art work. The school provides a good range of additional activities that support pupils' personal development well. There are a good number of sporting activities for a small school. The Activemark award demonstrates how well the school compensates for the lack of space by using other local facilities.

The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders are right to be working together to strengthen the use of writing across the curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to practise and develop their skills in different subjects. Although the curriculum is generally well planned, it does not include enough opportunities to celebrate the cultural diversity of modern society.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very happy school with a welcoming atmosphere where pupils say they feel safe. The school works well with parents and outside agencies such as the police and health service to safeguard pupils' well-being. Pupils say that they know what to do if they have a worry and are rightly confident that concerns will always be dealt with quickly.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory and have improved significantly in the last year. The checking of pupils' progress over time has been significantly strengthened by the new headteacher and pupils are given clear targets to aim at. Consequently, many can now talk knowledgeably about what they need to do to improve their work. However, teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to plan the next stage of learning for individual pupils, especially in terms of setting a high level of challenge. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and are given good support to ensure that they make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, governors and other leaders have a shared commitment to increasing pupils' progress. The school's systems for self-evaluation are good, enabling leaders to have a realistic view of school effectiveness and a clear understanding of what they should do next. The new headteacher is ensuring that other leaders have the time and skills to lead and manage their subjects. Strategies to raise attainment are starting to have a positive impact on pupils' progress, but it is too soon to be able to show sustained improvement. The school sets and mostly achieves realistic targets, and is starting to make these more challenging.

While the school ensures that all pupils at the school are given the same opportunities and feel free from discrimination, its contribution towards community cohesion is only satisfactory. Leaders have carried out an audit of current provision and are aware that pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own is limited. There are suitable plans in place to increase links with other schools in the United Kingdom and globally to increase the pupils' access to those with different backgrounds from their own.

Governance is good. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school and are fully involved in planning for school improvement. They have clear plans to increase their involvement in ensuring that standards are higher.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

18 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of All Saints Church of England First School, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 4PT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education, which means that some things are good but some important areas could be better.

Here are the things we liked best about your school.

- You enjoy school very much and you take responsibility well. You are doing a good job in helping to save the environment, and your tapestry of animals in danger of extinction is wonderful.
- Your teachers work hard to help you learn interesting things, and you particularly enjoy the practical activities they plan for you.
- The adults in the school care for you well and help you when you are finding life difficult, and this ensures that those of you who struggle in your academic work make good progress.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know how to make your school better and are beginning to do so.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Help you more with your handwriting and spelling, and give you more chances to write independently in different subjects.
- Make lessons better by ensuring that those of you who are quick at learning do better work, especially in science.
- Help you to learn more about life beyond the area where you live.

What you can do to help your teachers.

- Continue to behave exceptionally well and make sure you try to improve your handwriting and spelling.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this happy school and wish you well for the future.

■ Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector