

All Saints CofE (A) First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124341
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328113
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Graeme Bassett

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	240
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	Carl Peters
Headteacher	Sharon Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cheadle Road Leek ST13 5QY
Telephone number	01538 483235
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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

This average-sized school draws most of its pupils from the immediate neighbourhood in Leek but some children come from further away. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There is a part-time Nursery class and two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are eight classes in all in the school, including one mixed-age class of Years 1 and 2 pupils. The headteacher has been in post for 18 months. There have been some staff changes in the classes for younger children over the past year. The school provides after-school care for about 60 pupils through its Breakfast and Tea Clubs, which are managed within the school by the governing body.

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. The pupils really enjoy their lessons and work together as one whole family. As one pupil said, 'Everyone is loved, no one feels alone.' Significant improvements have been made in developing good monitoring and evaluation procedures since the last inspection. As a result, standards, teaching, curriculum and leadership and management have all made a marked improvement. The headteacher, with the strong support of the deputy headteacher, has made an outstanding contribution to the school, successfully building upon the strengths previously established. Infectious enthusiasm encourages all governors, staff, parents and pupils to share willingly and powerfully commit their efforts to improving the quality of education even more. The governing body gives good support and is particularly good at helping the leaders and managers of the school to evaluate the school's priorities. This ensures that the school has good capacity to make further improvements in the future.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a level of skills that is broadly as expected for their age. Over the past few years, pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science has been generally satisfactory and standards have been consistently average. However, because teaching is now good and often outstanding, this continual pattern has been broken. Tracking records to plot each pupil's progress are established extremely well and are used very effectively. In almost all classes there is now far more challenge for the more able pupils whilst the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive very good support. As a result, standards have improved and are currently above average in English, mathematics and science, and pupils' achievement is good. Many pupils, especially in Year 4, are currently making outstanding progress. Pupils' skills are exceptionally high in information and communication technology (ICT) and in the Arts, particularly in drama and painting. However, whilst in most classes the new initiatives to raise standards and achievement are having a good effect, there are still a few inconsistencies where the developments have not yet shown a real impact. For example, joint planning between teachers is not always put into practice consistently, and as a consequence the progress of some pupils is slower than in the rest of the school. The curriculum is good and cross-subject links are used effectively to support literacy and numeracy in a purposeful and meaningful way. The development of the Arts curriculum is particularly exciting. However, the lack of outdoor facilities for the Early Years Foundation Stage restricts children's options when choosing between activities.

Good care, guidance and support make a significant contribution to pupils' good personal development and well-being. All staff care well for each pupil and the quality of pastoral care is high. Very good relationships exist between staff and pupils and everyone is valued. Regular praise shows an appreciation of pupils' individual talents. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is outstanding and their appreciation of British and European culture is exceptional. However, the school's promotion of community cohesion is only satisfactory because there are insufficient measures to ensure links with national and global communities and schools. As a result, many pupils have limited knowledge of the different customs and traditions of other people in our diverse society.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Over the past few years children have made satisfactory progress and by the time they entered Year 1 the level of their skills was broadly average. Good leadership and management have

brought about important improvements in teaching and learning which are resulting in the acceleration of children's development in all areas of learning. The development of each pupil's skills and understanding is now carefully checked and this information is used effectively to plan activities which successfully challenge children. In particular, there is now far more challenge for more able pupils. As a result, achievement is now good and children are reaching above average standards by the time they enter Year 1.

The welfare of all children is good and staff know each child well. Children's personal development and well-being are good and relationships are very good between children and staff. Indoors, there is a good balance of activities provided under staff direction and those that children choose for themselves. These are well planned with clear outcomes in mind. However, the school has correctly recognised that the outdoor facilities for Reception children are not sufficiently accessible for them when selecting an activity for themselves.

Communication with parents is good. Parents are extremely happy with provision in the Nursery, describing it as 'absolutely brilliant', but some have been concerned by the staff changes in the Reception class. This is being resolved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching to ensure that what is planned is always put into practice effectively.
- Improve pupils' awareness of the customs and traditions of other people in our multicultural society.
- Ensure that there are more opportunities to enable children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to easily pursue their own interests, both indoors and outdoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Over the past few year pupils' progress has been continually satisfactory overall and standards have been broadly average. However, because of improved teaching in most classes, standards and achievement are improving. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils are now making good progress and standards are currently above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher National Curriculum Level 3 is now well above average in all three subjects.

However, progress through Key Stage 2 is inconsistent. The younger pupils are currently making satisfactory progress and the standard of their work is broadly as expected for their age. Nevertheless, pupils in Year 4 have higher expectations for themselves and their progress accelerates rapidly because of the outstanding quality of the teaching. Their achievement is currently good and standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The proportion exceeding the standards expected for their age is high.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils learn to understand the feelings of others and describe their classmates as 'friendly and helpful'. They are keen and eager to learn new things and embrace activities with enthusiasm. The older pupils are brimming over with confidence and this was illustrated by their excellent performances in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Pupils' behaviour around school and in class is outstanding, and they feel very safe in school. Pupils really enjoy school and their attendance is good. Pupils make healthy choices of food and like taking exercise. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education and later life.

Pupils relate very well to teachers' comments and are now able to assess how well they are doing and competently identify targets which they know they have completed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons in all classes are planned very well and teachers work together to confidently devise challenging tasks that match the full range of pupils' needs to build upon what they have learned previously. Teachers are very competent in their use of ICT, especially to enhance the drama and assembly performances with lighting and sound programs. Pupils are fully engaged in their learning. Marking strategies are being established effectively and highlight where pupils can improve still further. In some cases in Key Stage 2, what is planned is not always effectively delivered. This causes the progress of some pupils to remain satisfactory rather than good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Some exceptionally good developments are being made to cover skills and understanding through themed topics wherever possible. Nearly all pupils are enthusiastic because of the interesting and meaningful themes covered and the stimulating manner in which tasks are arranged. Relevant local interests are incorporated very well into lesson planning. The coverage of skills and understanding for literacy and numeracy is detailed effectively in curricular planning. The curriculum for Arts and for ICT is exceptional. The teaching of Spanish is now becoming well established. The range of out-of-lesson activities is good and the development of the Arts in painting, performance and music is planned exceptionally well. Nevertheless, the curriculum does not yet ensure that pupils are sufficiently aware of other people's cultural differences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and support for vulnerable pupils, including those with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are outstanding and underpinned by excellent links with other schools and other experts who can offer advice. Pupils say that their teachers are 'really kind'. Equal opportunities are good and everyone is included in all that the school does. Good links with the Breakfast and Tea Clubs enhance the provision for younger children. The wraparound care provided in the afternoons for younger pupils is of high quality. Teachers maintain exceptional tracking records that enable them to identify what each pupil needs to learn next. Teachers' intervention skills to promote pupils' interests are very good. The school ensures that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure pupils' safety and protection. At the time of the inspection a minor health and safety issue was raised with the school, but the leaders already had documented plans to resolve it.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The governors have been extremely active in aiding the school with its good self-evaluation and in establishing procedures to monitor the challenging targets set to raise standards. Their strong involvement with the development of staff teams has helped leaders and managers at all levels to provide an outstandingly clear direction to raise standards and achievement.

However, the plans to achieve this vision are not yet consistently and effectively applied. Links with parents and those with the local community, such as the schools in the federation, allotment organisation and local businesses, are very good. However, school links with other national and global communities and schools are not sufficiently well developed to help pupils understand the variety of traditions and customs in our modern society.

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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	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?	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?	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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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	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**

1 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints Church of England (Voluntary Aided) First School, Leek, ST13 5QY

Thank you for helping us when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, and found that you receive a good education with some excellent aspects. Your school has improved exceptionally well since the last inspection. You do some very exciting things, there is a good team spirit in your school, and it is a very happy place. We were very impressed by your exceptional production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

- These are the things that are particularly strong in your school.
- The way your school is led and managed by your headteacher is excellent. The staff also have high expectations and very clear ideas of how to bring about improvements.
- The teaching is good and often outstanding. The teachers plan very interesting tasks for you, that successfully link subjects together and make your learning more meaningful. Your work in ICT and in art, drama and music is outstanding.
- You make good progress overall and your work in reading, writing, mathematics and science is above average.
- You are all developing very good attitudes towards your work and towards each other. You have a good understanding about how to keep safe and healthy.
- You are very polite and your behaviour is excellent.
- Staff look after and care for you very well.

There are still some ways in which your school could be better. We have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- ensure that teaching in all the classes is of consistently high quality by making sure that lessons always reflect what your teachers have planned
- improve your awareness of the customs and traditions of other people in our multicultural society
- ensure that there are more opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to easily pursue their own interests, both indoors and outdoors.

Once again, thank you for your help. You can do your bit to improve by asking your teachers how you can make your work better.

Yours faithfully

Graeme Bassett

Lead inspector