

# St Matthew's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125235
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	328319
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Taylor-Bennett HMI

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	476
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	79
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr William Alexander
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Lightfoot
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Linkfield Lane Redhill RH1 1JF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01737 762 080
<b>Fax number</b>	01737 761 360

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2009
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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

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is larger than the average primary school. It serves a part of Redhill characterised by ethnic and linguistic diversity. A large minority of the children do not usually speak English at home. The school's community reflects its locality with its wide-ranging social mix, and an above-average number of its children face challenging personal circumstances. The school has a Special Needs Support Unit (SNSU) that serves the needs of children who have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A breakfast club is run by the school. There is a Nursery which has 40 places, providing for up to 80 children over two sessions in the day. The school holds a number of local and national awards including the Activemark and the Healthy School Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The new headteacher has already made a significant impact on the lives of pupils and staff at the school and has made this a rapidly improving school. After speedily and accurately identifying the main areas for improvement shortly after her arrival, she has worked with her senior team, concentrating on ensuring that the day-to-day running of the school is calm and continually focused on learning, and that the values and ethos of the school are maintained to a high standard in all classrooms and across the site. Staff and pupils agree that the school is now a pleasant and happy learning environment in which all can flourish. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons and around the site at playtimes and at lunchtime. One parent represented the views of many in saying, 'The new headteacher has made several changes to the school, making it a better place for the children'.

Pupils' achievement over their time at the school is satisfactory, and they reach standards by the end of Key Stage 2 that are close to national averages. However, pupils' writing skills are not as well developed, especially in the early years and by the end of Key Stage 1. Also, pupils do not learn the mathematical ideas taught in Key Stage 2 within the meaningful context of their experiences and needs, and consequently they cannot always retain or apply their learning to a satisfactory standard.

The Nursery is a happy and busy place where young children are well cared for and develop important skills. The school prioritises pupils' welfare and well-being and staff support them very well, including some who have considerable social and emotional needs. The quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory or better but there is little that is outstanding. Information from the school's monitoring of academic progress provides useful information to teachers about pupils' starting points each year, and a broad indication of the progress that may be expected. It does not, however, ensure that sufficient challenge is presented to all pupils to achieve their personal best over a key stage.

Governors are supportive of the school and take pride in its work. Because of the strong leadership from the headteacher and her senior team, and the skills they have shown in identifying improvement priorities and implementing them so far, the school has a good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has made a significant impact on the ethos and organisation of the Nursery and Reception classes. She has worked effectively and efficiently to identify the setting's strengths, and staff have demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing areas identified for improvement. Appropriate plans are in place to further improve the provision. For example, a new assessment system is planned that has the capacity to give a much clearer picture of each child's strengths and interests on entry to the stage and throughout their time within it.

Children enter the Nursery with a range of skills and abilities, but generally they are at levels below those commonly seen in children of their age. Children make satisfactory progress over their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They feel safe, confident and happy, and say that they really like school and the things they do. One very young pupil spontaneously said

to a visitor, 'Are you happy? I am happy because I'm painting!' They play and behave well and care for each other. The current teaching, and the curriculum and activities provided, both indoor and outdoor, are satisfactory and have a number of good models of learning, particularly in the younger classes. Recent developments in the organisation of the curriculum have been successful in promoting enjoyment and exploration. However, the leader and all staff recognise that still more work is necessary in this area to ensure that the learning and development needs of the children are met more consistently in all of the classes. While there are very good examples of adults supporting children's learning and exchanging interesting and thoughtful questions, this is not yet consistent across the age range. Due to the effective leadership, adults are becoming more skilled in responding to and providing for children's interests, especially with respect to raising challenge and improving outcomes in writing, particularly for boys.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing throughout the school, and particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 by ensuring that pupils see the subject as useful and relevant.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching by establishing clearer expectations of the progress of individual children and groups of learners throughout each year and across each key stage, and using this information consistently in the classroom.

A small proportion of 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**

The school sets itself appropriately challenging targets and the standards pupils reach by the end of their time at the school represent a broadly satisfactory level of achievement for them. The standards reached by pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those seen nationally. This is because of the steady progress they make throughout Years 1 and 2 from standards on entry into Year 1 that are close to expected levels. Pupils make better progress in mathematics than in literacy skills over Key Stage 1. The school has recognised this and has prioritised the improvement of children's writing in particular, where significantly less progress is made. Progress in Key Stage 2 is also satisfactory overall, and many pupils reach the standard expected for their age by the end of Year 6 in English and science. Pupils' achievement in mathematics in Key Stage 2, however, is not satisfactory despite recent improvements in the proportion of pupils gaining the highest levels. This is because learning in mathematics is insufficiently stimulated by the need to respond to practical problems. A significant factor in the overall performance of any year group is the number of pupils who leave and arrive at times other than the beginning of a key stage, and who may not have English as their first language. They are supported well and make satisfactory progress at the school. The progress of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is no different from that of their peers because of the good support they also receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. When asked about school, pupils are enthusiastic about many aspects, particularly the wide range of clubs, and can think of very little they would change. Attendance for the majority of students is satisfactory; the school has worked hard with a small number of parents who do not send their children to school as often as they should, and attendance is now close to national figures. The number of exclusions has fallen dramatically over the last year.

A few parents expressed concern about the behaviour of a small group of pupils but the behaviour observed throughout the inspection in lessons, in assemblies and around the site was consistently good and sometimes excellent. Most pupils obviously enjoy school. They are courteous, lively, confident and enjoy being helpful. Pupils listen very well to teachers and to one another. They know that bullying, on the rare occasions that it occurs, is dealt with firmly and effectively. Relationships are consistently good among pupils and between staff and pupils. There is a high degree of racial harmony. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They learn to develop respect for themselves and others and put it into practice. Assemblies and the programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education help them think about ideas and feelings and they clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. While there are some opportunities for students to learn about other cultures, pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom is underdeveloped.

Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example through the school council. They participate in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, many involving physical exercise. They have good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles and staying safe. Links with the community are good and parents are supportive. Pupils' satisfactory levels of skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT), coupled with their good personal skills, prepare them satisfactorily for later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Although there is much good and effective teaching, it is not yet consistent enough to impact sufficiently on the pace and continuity of learning throughout the school to ensure good progress. The leadership team has an accurate understanding of the strengths and developmental needs in teaching and has initiated appropriate plans to address the inconsistencies within the year groups. Good lessons have a brisk pace and the teaching engages pupils actively in their learning from the start. New learning is presented in a way that captures the imagination of pupils by associating it with subjects that are of interest to them or to which they can relate, often with images, artefacts and equipment to aid their learning. There is effective use of ICT across the school with even very young children making good independent use of computers to support and reinforce their learning. In satisfactory lessons, pupils are less clear about what they are expected to learn and too much time is taken up by teachers directing and explaining rather than pupils learning; more able pupils are not always sufficiently well challenged and inconsistent use is made of assessment information to plan subsequent lessons. Teaching assistants are able to support pupils' learning and there are very good examples of this throughout the school but again, this is inconsistent across classrooms.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum includes all subjects and a sufficient amount of time is devoted to each area. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of healthy lifestyles, as demonstrated by a child who enthusiastically explained the importance of us all - including inspectors! - wearing a hat in the sunshine. Pupils enjoy a range of physical activities supported by good provision for extra-curricular opportunities, and there are pleasant and extensive grounds to run and play in. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of key areas to develop and are aware of the need to relate learning opportunities to a context pupils understand. However this is at an early stage of development. For example, currently there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reinforce the numeracy skills they learn within mathematics through other subjects. Pupils benefit from visits and talks provided by external visitors such as the disability awareness training day seen during the inspection, which they wholeheartedly enjoyed and from which they clearly learned a great deal. They also appreciate the opportunities provided to undertake visits, including those to museums and to the local farm. The curriculum is further enhanced by lunchtime opportunities, after school clubs and events such as special weeks for science and other key focus areas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Good pastoral care ensures that all pupils are looked after well. Pupils say that they feel safe and that they know where to turn if they need help. The great majority of parents feel that their children are cared for well. One said, 'My children love St Matthew's. The teachers are very attentive and show a good interest in them'. Another said 'All the staff are very kind'.

Clear behaviour procedures give pupils a sense of security and create a very good working atmosphere in which they can learn confidently. All health and safety requirements are met and procedures for safeguarding pupils are securely in place and meet requirements. Any pupils at risk are quickly identified and supported effectively. The very good work of the SNSU is a significant factor in some pupils' lives. The school provides good personal guidance that is closely matched to individual needs, and teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful feedback. The school's system of academic assessment and monitoring is satisfactory because it ensures pupils are aware of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, it does not focus with sufficient precision on the progress that could be expected of individual pupils, based on their capabilities. Consequently, the information it produces is not always good enough to inform teaching and to enable staff to make appropriate interventions to ensure that good progress is achieved by all pupils.

The school has good links with agencies to support pupils who speak English as an additional language, as well as those who have behavioural difficulties or learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These assessment systems provide good support for these pupils, although systems to monitor their impact are still rudimentary.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The new leadership has given opportunity for staff and governors to question and examine many of the school's practices, and the quality of outcomes for the pupils. The rigorous and honest self-evaluation, undertaken shortly after the new headteacher's arrival, disclosed the need to give more clarity to the leadership roles of middle leaders, along with assigning higher levels of accountability to them and to staff generally. This process has begun but it has not yet had time to have an impact on all aspects of the curriculum and in all key stages. As a consequence, the plans to drive up standards have not yet had a chance to improve pupils' achievement. The clarity of vision of the headteacher, together with her commitment to bring about the changes required to improve the quality of outcomes for pupils, mean that the school has a good capacity to improve.

The school has a good understanding of the nature of its local community and works, particularly through church links, to meet some of its needs. There has been no systematic evaluation of the impact of these actions yet and the school has plans to formalise its approach to planning and evaluating its work in this regard. The school's Christian ethos finds expression in many ways, including valuing all members of its community equally, striving to meet the needs of all individuals, and a strong commitment to the elimination of discrimination. Governors have overseen the school's response to the areas for improvement highlighted in the previous inspection. Their level of understanding of the school's strengths and development needs, and their current ways of working, do not allow them to provide a good level of challenge to support the work of the senior team. The value for money achieved by the school is satisfactory because resources are deployed effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's aims and objectives.



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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?	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	2

### 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 <sup>1</sup> 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	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Matthew's CofE Primary School, Redhill, RH1 1JF

You will remember that three inspectors visited your school recently. We were all very impressed with how welcoming, kind and thoughtful you were and this meant that we enjoyed meeting you and getting to know your school. Thank you for this!

We were able to learn a lot about your school very quickly, and to understand why you like being there so much. We saw that St Matthew's is at least satisfactory in all of its work, and it is good at helping you to develop into confident, happy and capable young people. Your new headteacher has made many improvements already and they are important ones. For example, the behaviour of a few pupils is much less of a problem for everyone now, and you can all learn much more easily and begin to make better progress because of this. In fact I was very impressed with how well-behaved everyone is in lessons and how nicely you play with each other on the field at lunchtime. We also saw that your teachers can explain things well and help you to learn effectively, to make sure that you make the sort of progress that is expected. There are lots of things to do outside of lessons and it is impressive to see how many of you take part in all sorts of clubs and activities and enjoy them so much. Sadly, some of you do not attend school as often as you should. This is a shame because this means that you miss a lot of learning and the chance to have fun and develop friendships at the same time.

I have asked your headteacher to do three things to help make your school even better.

- Improve your writing, especially in the early years and in Key Stage 1.
- Make sure that when you learn mathematics in Key Stage 2 you understand how the ideas are useful and practical. This will make it easier for you to remember what you learn, and help you to use your skills better.
- Help teachers to make sure that each of you does as well as possible by recognising that some of you will make different amounts of progress at different times, and to plan for this.

I saw that St Matthew's is a school that is getting better and better. You have an important part to play in this, and I know from meeting you that you will do everything you can to support each other, and the staff, to make St Matthew's a really great place to be.

Yours faithfully

Alan Taylor-Bennett

Her Majesty's Inspector