

Sarum St Paul's CofE (VA) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126411
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	328495
Inspection dates	3–4 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson 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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	211
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	Chris Hewitt
Headteacher	Jennifer Larsson
Date of previous school inspection	25 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Westminster Road Salisbury SP2 7DG
Telephone number	01722 336459
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated on the edge of Salisbury and draws its pupils mainly from the local area. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided for in a Reception class and are currently taught by a temporary teacher. An experienced Early Year Foundation Stage teacher has been appointed from September. Children's attainment on entry is a little below the expectation for this age. The school has an eight-place unit for pupils with hearing impairment. Currently, it supports four pupils who are integrated into mainstream classes for the majority of the week. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around average but the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language has grown over recent years. About 20 pupils in the school are at an early stage of learning English. The school has an Active Mark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sarum St Paul's is a good school. It is a lively, happy place to learn and work, where pupils are enthusiastic about school life and feel part of a cohesive, supportive community. The school has many good features and some are outstanding. The vast majority of parents are full of praise for the school, particularly the leadership of the headteacher and the school's supportive atmosphere and ethos. Pupils' personal and social development are outstanding and this is a reflection of the very good attention staff give to pupils' welfare. Pupils readily participate in activities in lessons and the school's photographs and displays capture the variety in the school's creative curriculum and pupils' enjoyment of the wide range of interesting activities and opportunities. Parents and pupils singled out many of these special events that promote a love of learning, such as the creative arts week, science week, school productions and residential trips. These, together with the good teaching and good leadership, are key factors in the school's good improvement since the last inspection and its good capacity to improve further.

The headteacher provides very good direction and leadership. Many parents wrote comments praising her vision, approachability and communication skills. The effectiveness of communication and teamwork is a clear strength throughout the school. The key stage and subject leaders have a generally good overview of standards and progress and most monitor these through meetings with staff to look at pupils' books, for example, and observing each other teach. Their evaluation of strengths and areas for development relies more on informal discussions and observations than the more formal methods of monitoring, such as observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work. This limits the impact they have on pupils' outcomes. Nevertheless, standards have improved to above average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points and targets. This is because leaders use data well to analyse the relative weaknesses in pupils' performance and ensure everyone focuses on what needs to be done to address them. A range of 'catch-up' programmes supports pupils who need extra help, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Teaching is good. Staff are enthusiastic and have very good relationships with pupils. This, in turn, inspires pupils to try hard and apply themselves to their learning. Lessons are well organised and provide well for pupils of different abilities. The school's system for tracking pupils' progress is effective in English and mathematics and it is used well to identify pupils who are moving ahead quickly in their learning and those whose progress has been slower. Academic guidance is good in some classes, but there are some inconsistencies, and marking and targets are not always used effectively to help pupils move forward in their learning. The quality and impact of personal support and guidance are very good. This ensures pupils learn in a safe and supportive atmosphere and receive help straight away should they need it. Pupils with hearing impairments benefit from good provision which is well matched to their specific small-step targets. Staff work hard to remove any barriers to learning and they are committed to including pupils who face difficulties or challenges.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school's data show some aspects of their learning and development where progress is good. For example, those who left Reception in 2008 made particularly good headway in their mathematical and physical development. By the end of their Reception Year, children's attainment is broadly in

line with the standards expected by this age. Parents report that children settle well into Reception, helped by the school's arrangements which one parent described as 'continually reassuring for parents and children'. Children have positive attitudes to learning and school life, underpinned by the positive atmosphere that adults create and the appropriate care and support. Planning is satisfactory for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Activities provide opportunities for children to make their own decisions and to experiment and investigate, balanced by more directed tasks where adults work with groups of children. However, plans do not always show clearly enough what the learning focus of activities is, and are not based enough on what children of different abilities know, understand and can do.

The school handled the unforeseen absence of the substantive teacher well and took steps to ensure continuity for the children. However, the changes in teaching have led to some gaps in how children's learning and development have been recorded during the year. The school is aware of this and has been developing profiles for each child this term. Teaching is satisfactory. Adults engage with children well and value their contributions. They ask appropriate questions to promote talk and encourage children to share their ideas, explore and play. Regular opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility and develop their independence. On occasions, opportunities are missed to engage with children and promote their learning and development during outdoor learning activities.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Ensure planning for all six areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage is based on children's current stage of learning and development, and that individual records provide a full picture of their progress.
- Strengthen the monitoring role of key and subject leaders to develop further their impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- Improve the consistency of teachers' marking and their use of targets to guide pupils on the next steps in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have improved at both key stages since the last inspection, most notably in mathematics and writing at Year 2 and in mathematics and science at Year 6. Reading results have been a little more variable at Year 2 over recent years but the school identified this and adapted its provision for more-able readers. As a result, results at the higher Level 3 have improved considerably this year. At Year 6, performance at the higher Level 5 is mostly above average. After an unexpected dip last year in English, early signs are that more pupils are likely to gain the higher level this year. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology and pupils reach above average standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding. They like using the sensory garden and are proud of their achievements in helping to design this special place where they go for peace and quiet. Pupils are very respectful of one another and value other pupils' opinions and contributions. They show a genuine interest in learning about other religions and cultures. One pupil observed that this is important because 'everyone should be treated as they would

like to be treated'. Pupils feel very safe in school and are keen to follow healthy lifestyles, with many participating in fitness activities at lunchtime and after school. Pupils are confident and independent. They readily take responsibility and contribute to school life. These personal and social qualities, together with their good standards in key skills, mean they are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan interesting activities to enthuse pupils and draw upon a range of starting points to inspire pupils' work, for example using drama, or setting up a writing task through exploring moving images. Many parents wrote comments praising this aspect of the teaching, noting how teachers brought learning alive for their children. Teachers mostly adapt work well to cater for the different abilities of pupils and use a good variety of questions and make sure pupils know what is expected of them in a lesson. On occasions, this is not as effective and the pace of learning slows to satisfactory. Teaching assistants are used well in most lessons to support and extend pupils' learning. The specialist teaching and support for pupils with hearing impairments are good. These pupils' progress is evaluated after each lesson and any necessary changes in emphasis or approach are made to help them make progress towards their individual targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed an interesting, vibrant and creative curriculum. It is clear that the school is constantly thinking of ways to develop its curriculum to support its mission statement – 'Love to learn'. A good example is the range of opportunities for pupils to take part in special events and activities. Pupils learn a good deal about other people around the world to broaden their awareness and understanding of diversity. The school's links with a school in Berlin are a good example. The curriculum is also enhanced by a very good range of after-school activities which have a high take-up. The personalised homework introduced three years ago, for pupils in Year 6, has had a clear impact on their achievement in mathematics and science. The quality and richness of the curriculum have a strong impact on pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal and social development. The curriculum is not as effective for the youngest children in Reception and those who are in the early stages of speaking English as an additional language.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils learn in a very caring environment underpinned by the school's Christian values and ethos, and all staff play an important part in this. There are good procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included. Links with a range of outside agencies such as health therapists are very good and the school has especially strong links with St Paul's Church. Pupils like their school assemblies, which make a very strong contribution to their spiritual and moral development. They are encouraged to reflect and look inward and pupils state that they give them ideas on what to do and help them to learn about other people. Marking and targets are used well in some classes to help pupils improve but

there are some inconsistencies and pupils are not always sure about what they need to focus on for their next steps in learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has high expectations and leads by example. She has developed a cohesive, energetic and committed team and a culture where staff are keen to develop their skills. Several teachers, for example, benefited from an external course last year to develop their leadership skills. Everyone is clear about the direction the school is taking and its priorities for further improvement. This is articulated in a clear and manageable school improvement plan, which includes appropriate priorities. For example, the school already has a good system for tracking each pupil's progress but the headteacher knows it could be improved further, and plans for this are in hand. Governors keep in touch with the school's work in a range of ways, for example through meeting with their assigned subject teams or conducting focused visits. They are rightly developing their role further as 'critical friends' by monitoring the priority areas in the school improvement plan. The leadership of the hearing impaired unit is good. Teaching assistants are trained well to help them in their role and the progress of these pupils is monitored effectively.

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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?	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?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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	1

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1

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

5 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Sarum St Paul's CofE (VA) Primary School, Salisbury SP2 7DG

We very much enjoyed visiting your school recently and would like to thank you for your warm welcome. We were pleased to be able to talk to quite a lot of you in lessons and in the playground. Thank you for telling us about your work and all the interesting and exciting things you do in your school.

You go to a good school. It has improved a lot since its last inspection. This is because your headteacher leads the school very well and all the staff work very hard to give you a good education. You are taught well and make good progress. There were several things that shone through on our visit. First and foremost, you all clearly enjoy school and your behaviour and attitudes are outstanding. We know from your work, the displays and the photographs on your website that the teachers provide a lot of exciting opportunities for you to learn and to develop as individuals. We could also see that you all work hard and make the most of these opportunities, and we hope that you will continue to do so.

We have asked the school to make some improvements for the children in Reception and to make sure that the teachers' marking is helpful in all the classes so that you know what you need to work on to improve. We have also asked the teachers who have special responsibilities to look carefully at how well you are all making progress, to identify things that are going really well and find out what needs to be done to make things even better.

We would like to wish you all the best for the future and we hope you continue to enjoy school and have a happy time there.

Yours faithfully

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector