

All Saints CE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132809
Local Authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	328680
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Marianne Young HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	604
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kate Brown
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Mann
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

All Saints Church of England School is a smaller than average sized school situated in the heart of a large housing development to the south of Stockton. The majority of students live within easy walking distance of the school and are from White British backgrounds with very few are at an early stage of learning English. A lower than average number of students are in receipt of free school meals. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average; however, the proportion of students with statements of special educational need is above average. The school was awarded specialist humanities status in September 2008. It also holds the Healthy Schools Gold and Artsmark Silver awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

All Saints is a good school with outstanding features in the personal development, care, support and guidance it provides for its students. The vast majority of students are very courteous and respect each other, school staff and visitors. Their attendance is well above that found nationally, and they have excellent attitudes to learning. Their enjoyment of school, combined with their good achievement and well above average standards, ensures that students are well prepared for further education, employment or training when they leave school. Results in 2008, both for Year 9 and Year 11 students, were better than those in the previous year. This was especially the case in mathematics and science. These results are underpinned by very good assessment systems which enable staff to track students' progress in detail and provide effective intervention if needed. The school's own monitoring data and the results of examinations which have already taken place both indicate that students are on track to reach their challenging targets in 2009.

Students are taught to be safe, healthy, confident and responsible members of their community, especially through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship programmes. These are enjoyed by students who report that they welcome the new arrangements for these lessons, which started this term. Students in one lesson confidently discussed human rights and showed a mature understanding and awareness of right and wrong. These attributes contribute to students' independence and their ability to support, value and question the core values at the heart of the school's ethos.

Teaching is good and examples of outstanding teaching were observed by inspectors. In these lessons, teachers prepare lessons very well and employ a very helpful variety of activities to make learning enjoyable. Questioning is also used very effectively to check understanding and review progress. Students are expected to share their learning through paired and group work and find out answers for themselves. However, these features are not evident in all lessons. Sometimes teachers do not let students think for themselves or offer challenge to different levels of ability. The school has a comprehensive programme of lesson monitoring and this successfully feeds into the regular training and mentoring sessions for teachers. The school recognises the need to adapt its lesson observation records and ensure that monitoring always recognises students' progress during lessons.

Parents are very supportive of what the school offers for their children especially the extensive and helpful transition arrangements in place to support students when they move from primary schools to All Saints. The needs of all students, especially those with particular needs are very well met through early identification and the very good support they are given. These systems support their progress well. Overall the school provides good value for money.

Since the previous inspection, the school has grown to its full complement of students and previous staffing difficulties have been resolved. Staff work well together and there is a strong sense of unity. Senior leaders undertake regular and detailed self-evaluation to effectively monitor the performance of the school. The well considered plans senior managers have to embed specialist status throughout the school are symptomatic of the way senior leaders identify priorities in a reflective manner. At the heart of their work is to ensure that students at All Saints become considerate and responsible citizens. In this respect, they are very successful.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work in lessons is well matched to the capabilities and differing needs of all students.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above average and students' achievement is good. Students enter the school in Year 7 with standards that are above average. They make good progress as they move through both key stages to reach well above average standards when they leave at the end of Year 11. In 2007, test results for students in Year 9 were above average. Provisional results in 2008 indicate that these results improved, especially in English and mathematics and students' achievement was good. Challenging targets were met in English but narrowly missed in mathematics and science.

Unvalidated results in the GCSE examinations in 2008 showed a significant increase in the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics. This increase was due in part to improvements in students' performance in mathematics. All school targets were either met or exceeded and all students made good progress. Students did particularly well in English, business education and communications, although less well in geography, religious education and physical education.

Current students achieve well in lessons because of the good teaching they receive and because of their excellent attitudes to learning. No groups of students underachieve. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their peers because they are given constructive individual support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school promotes courtesy and consideration to other people and these values are strongly embraced by most students who possess excellent attitudes to learning and are very keen to succeed. They really enjoy coming to school and their attendance is well above average. Students' behaviour is excellent and they know how to stay safe. They are well aware of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and their efforts have been rewarded by the school gaining the Healthy Schools Gold award. A very well constructed programme for PSHE, interesting tutor periods and thought-provoking assemblies combine to make a very significant contribution to students' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students reflect well on moral issues and discuss knowledgeably and perceptively the differences between other faiths and cultures.

Students are very keen to contribute to the school community and perform their roles as prefects, mentors and members of the school council extremely competently. They also take part in a good range of developing activities connected with the local community through involvement with the church, partner schools and local businesses. All Saints students develop into very mature and confident citizens, whose skills and abilities equip them outstandingly well for further education and the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Where teaching is most effective, good subject knowledge, a lively pace which keeps students on their toes and tasks that require them to be actively involved and think for themselves promote good progress in lessons. These characteristics were evident in many lessons. In one history lesson, for example, the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject, combined with short linked activities and regular checking of students' understanding, enabled students both to enjoy the lesson and make outstanding progress. This best practice, however, is not yet wholly consistent across all subjects. Although students generally work hard and often know how to improve their work, there is some variability in the frequency and helpfulness of day-to-day marking so that students can learn from their mistakes. In a few lessons, however, teachers set work that fails to take account of the full range of capabilities within the class, progress is less rapid and students' interest is not fully captured.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has some strong features. It is reviewed regularly and has evolved over recent years to provide a broad and balanced experience for all students. For students in Years 10 and 11, it provides opportunities for all to undertake a range of vocational and academic courses. Good liaison with the local college ensures that students can follow work-based courses not offered at the school, for example in hairdressing and construction. Despite All Saints being a small school, the curriculum is flexible enough to allow higher attaining pupils to complete some GCSE courses a year earlier than expected. They are then able to study extra subjects such as additional mathematics and media studies.

In response to the views of both staff and students, changes have been made to the PSHE programme. From September 2008, all students are involved in PSHE days six times a year. Although at the early stage of development, these days are enthusiastically embraced by students, involve relevant external agencies and make a good contribution to students' personal development. A series of work-related events and a good work experience programme contribute well to students' preparation for the world of work and further education.

Students are appreciative of the wide range of opportunities offered by the programme of extra-curricular and enrichment activities and this adds considerably to their enjoyment and well-being. Plans to take advantage of the school's recently acquired specialist humanities status and changes in the National Curriculum are well advanced.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

An extensive induction programme organised for students transferring into Year 7 is just the beginning of the outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides for its students. This is further enhanced by the placement of students into vertical tutor groups through which they quickly get to know students from other years. Students speak very positively about their experience in this 'extended family' and their care. This view is well supported by parents. Staff know the students very well and display very good levels of concern for the needs of each individual. Child protection procedures and government safeguarding requirements are in place.

Active engagement with external agencies and the very good use of trained school staff means that the specific requirements of students with identifiable needs are well met.

The school liaises very well with further education institutions, and this along with the good careers guidance and work experience programmes helps to prepare students well for their future economic well being. For the last two years, all students at the end of Year 11 have continued into further education, employment or training. The academic progress of students is very closely monitored and appropriate interventions take place as necessary. A comprehensive individual mentoring system is used to support students who find learning difficult. The vast majority of students are aware of their targets. They receive very good guidance, especially on the academic review days, so they understand what improvements they need to make in order to reach higher levels and grades.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior leaders ensure that All Saints is a united and harmonious community built on respect and shared values. The senior team work well together sharing and developing their expertise. They use self-evaluation effectively, reflecting on the outcomes of monitoring before determining priorities for the future, in order to improve the school's overall effectiveness. This is clearly seen in the appropriate set of priorities identified in the strategic plan. Continual professional development, together with the coaching and mentoring arrangements, contributes well to supporting and helping teachers. Good use is made of challenging targets. This is evident in the way standards and achievement have improved, especially at Key Stage 3 and in mathematics overall. New measures and developing changes to the curriculum, some in response to student feedback, are fully supported and the level of morale amongst the staff is high. The school recognises that they are at the early stages of developing links with the local community. Nonetheless, over three quarters of parents who responded to the parental questionnaire were fully supportive of the school. One parent's view encapsulated their comments, 'My son is proud to attend All Saints School and is eager to tell me what he has been doing each day.'

Within faculties, the quality of leadership shown through evaluation, monitoring and further action is developing successfully. There has been a consistent and positive response from middle leaders as they meet the expectations and challenge from senior leaders. Governors know the school well. They work conscientiously with senior leaders in shaping the future direction of the school and are fully committed to its success. The school's capacity to improve further is good.

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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

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

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**

Dear Students

Inspection of All Saints CE School, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 5BL

Thank you for making us feel welcome and for speaking readily to me and my colleagues during the inspection. You told us you enjoy school, making new friends and appreciate the varied opportunities and activities you can take part in out of lesson times. Your views were very helpful. We were most impressed by your attendance and your behaviour. Sometimes the dining hall is very crowded but you all managed to move around sensibly and without spilling your lunches!

All Saints is a good school and has excellent features in the personal development and the care, guidance and support provided to you by staff. We were pleased to see that most of you work hard in lessons and are determined to do your best. You told us that you enjoy lessons when you work in groups and have to find out the answers for yourselves. This is what we saw in some lessons. Many of you are proud that All Saints has become a specialist school and look forward to taking part in new activities both within school and the local community.

Mr Mann, together with the other senior leaders and governors, works hard to ensure you all have the best possible education. They are all continually working to make improvements. My colleagues and I have asked them to do the following in order to improve your education further:

- To ensure that work in lessons is well matched to your individual capabilities and differing needs.

We hope that you will all continue to play your part in helping All Saints become an even better school. I hope you continue to enjoy your time at the school and wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector