

St Philip's Church of England Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104898
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	336383
Inspection dates	15–16 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Graham Tisdall
Headteacher	Mrs Marian Hodgson
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by eight teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, the progress and attainment of pupils, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers, through 31 returned inspection questionnaires, and the opinions of staff and pupils were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether targets set in English and mathematics are sufficiently challenging
- the impact of play provision outdoors and indoors on children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- whether teachers deliver lessons which enable all pupils to reach their potential
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in extending pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Information about the school

This school is average in size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The majority of pupils are of White British background. A very small minority are from minority ethnic groups. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, National Healthy Schools, Investors in People status, Artsmark, Activemark, Eco Silver and Sing Up Silver awards. The Early Years Foundation Stage manager was appointed in September 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This good school serves its community well. Comments such as 'my child feels valued and safe' and 'my child is happy and making good progress' reflect most parents' and carers' positive views about the school. Pupils achieve well, not just because teaching and learning are good, but also because pupils are given the self-confidence to work hard and enjoy learning. There is a strong sense of teamwork and pride in what has already been achieved, coupled with an absence of complacency.

Children start in Reception with skills that are below those typically expected. They get off to a good start because there is a strong focus on developing children's social skills and their ability to communicate with each other. Through Years 1 to 6 a large majority of pupils are actively challenged and supported well and progress is good. However, not all teachers consistently use assessment information effectively to plan lessons which challenge all pupils to reach their full potential. In recent years, pupils' attainment has been broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave in Year 6, although in 2009 it was above average. Sensitive and watchful pastoral care ensures that by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school.

Good teaching enables pupils to enjoy learning in a stimulating, productive environment. Most lessons are typified by enthusiasm, enjoyment, engagement and good behaviour. Consequently, pupils are well motivated, they come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. Teachers mark books carefully and regularly and give good advice to pupils as to how to improve their work. Pupils are happy in this caring school as reflected in their above average attendance. They work and play happily together, but their awareness of different ways of life in the diverse society in which they live is not developed well enough.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Most importantly, the headteacher and other school leaders know exactly what more to do to sustain its journey towards excellence. This, together with the successful action leaders have taken to maintain and consolidate the school's good outcomes since the last inspection, means the capacity to further improve is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To further improve the good rates of progress pupils make teachers should ensure that:
 - they consistently use assessment information effectively to plan lessons which

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challenge all pupils to reach their full potential.

- Extend pupils' awareness and understanding of different cultures and ways of life, by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experience of culturally diverse communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good and pupils enjoy their time in school. In the large majority of lessons pupils concentrate, listen well and join in discussions fully. They achieve well when teachers expect much of their pupils and explain complicated ideas well. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were learning at an exceptional pace. Spurred on by their teacher's excellent exposition and searching questions, they worked excitedly in pairs to explore multiplication and division of decimal numbers. The school works effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by providing work which matches their skills and understanding effectively. As a result, these pupils make similarly good progress to their classmates. Pupils confidently explain the value of adopting healthy lifestyles and the need for exercise, reflecting the Healthy School award the school has gained. The breakfast club also contributes to healthy eating and to pupils' above average attendance. Pupils develop a good understanding of safety and behaviour is good. They say incidents of bullying are rare and that they could talk to any member of staff if they had a problem. They have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and appreciate the wonders of life around them. Relationships are happy and harmonious and support the purposeful atmosphere observed by inspectors in most classes. Pupils eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in school life as, for instance, school or eco councillors. They are well informed about other people's needs, particularly through thought-provoking assemblies. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are confident and knowledgeable and create a well-ordered and calm environment. Most teachers are good at sharing with pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them make sense of their learning. Adults ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think and use more varied vocabulary in their answers. In the few lessons which are satisfactory rather than good or outstanding, learning and progress is held back because assessment is not always used well enough to plan work which closely matches the needs of individuals and groups. Occasionally, teachers talk too much, which limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning.

The curriculum is successful in assisting pupils to build their basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced well through local partnerships. For example, links with local schools broaden pupils' experiences by extending their musical talents. There is a good focus on using visits and the arts to widen pupils' life experiences.

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, receive good support. Those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive carefully tailored support that allows them to make good progress in their learning. Links between support staff, the special needs coordinator and the teachers are effective in ensuring that these pupils play a full part in all aspects of the life of the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Clear-sighted leadership and management are at the heart of the school's success. Senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and have worked tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities. The headteacher communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. There is a climate where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. There is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the school's strengths. In this way, the school promotes good equality for all pupils and makes sure there is no discrimination on any grounds. Subject leaders fulfill their responsibilities well. They are actively involved in checking pupils' attainment and progress in their respective areas.

The governing body is supportive of all the school's work and asks the searching questions that hold the school to account for its performance. It ensures that all safeguarding requirements are fully met and that pupils' safety has a high profile in all of the school's work. Partnerships with others are good, particularly in promoting pupils' well-being and their social development. For instance, links with local high schools extend pupils' sporting talents effectively. While there are good features in the school's existing work on promoting community cohesion such as working alongside parents in projects such as 'Better Together' days, the school is aware that some elements have yet to be developed more fully. It recognises the need, for instance, to forge links with other schools in more ethnically and socially diverse areas nationally and internationally.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children love school and greatly enjoy their learning. This is reflected in their happy faces as they choose whether to play in the well planned and continually improving outdoor spaces or to undertake a range of indoor play opportunities. For instance, outdoors they happily play together in designing and making a racing car from boxes and wheels. They chatter excitedly with each other about where they will go in the car, under the watchful eye of the adult on hand to praise and extend their social and communication skills. Teacher-led activities encourage children to discover new ideas as, for example, they make use of the binoculars they have made to explore, talk and write about what they see in the local environment. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early, their progress is closely monitored and support is introduced when necessary. Good relationships with home are fostered through weekly 'stay and play' sessions during which parents and carers join their children at play. Leadership is good. The manager has, in a short time, worked enthusiastically and skilfully to extend and refine the records of how children are progressing. Ongoing observations of children at play are collated by all adults. These are reflective and informative, and are used effectively to plan children's next steps in learning. All adults are very attentive to ensuring that children are safe. The impact of good provision and teaching is that the children are happy, enthusiastic learners and make good progress. As a result, when they begin Year 1, most are working broadly in line with expectations in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The response from parents and carers to the questionnaire was low. However, the school and its headteacher enjoy the confidence and support of the vast majority of those who completed the questionnaire. A few individual comments reflected the good quality care, support and guidance given to pupils. The inspectors agree with these views. A few parents and carers felt that the school does not manage unacceptable behaviour well and that the school could do more to help them with their children's learning. Inspectors found behaviour in class and around the school to be good and that means of communication and opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in their children's' education, by attending courses, are regularly available.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Philip's Church of England Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	71	10	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	71	8	24	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	50	15	44	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	59	13	38	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	59	13	38	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	47	15	44	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	47	18	53	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	47	15	44	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	50	16	47	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	44	14	41	3	9	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	47	13	38	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	50	13	38	3	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	62	10	29	2	6	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19th April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Philip's Church of England Controlled Primary School, Liverpool, L21 8NZ

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. St Philip's is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the good things we found out about it.

You make good progress in Reception and as you move up through the school. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach standards that are similar and, in 2009, were higher than those in most other schools. This is because your teachers encourage you to work hard. Your behaviour around the school and in your classes is good and you look after each other well.

Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work. Your headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to get even better. To help them to do this, I have asked them to:

- make sure all of you are challenged and stretched in your English and mathematics lessons
- give you more opportunities to learn about the lives, values, customs and beliefs of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and the world.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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