

# Parson Cross Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107107
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	336812
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Swallow

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Trish Atkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs D Woodward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Halifax Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S6 1LB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including school improvement plans, safeguarding documents, arrangements to check pupils' progress, the work pupils were doing in their books and the questionnaires completed by parents and carers, pupils and staff.

- whether attainment by the end of Year 6 was still improving, particularly at the higher levels
- whether boys' attainment in writing was improving
- the impact of recent developments in assessment on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and progress
- the effectiveness of provision made in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers, at all levels, in embedding ambition and driving improvement, given significant and recent changes in the school's senior leadership team.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. It admits children to Reception at the start of the year that they reach age five. Most pupils are from a White British background, with very small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, but the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is rising and above average. The school holds the Artsmark Gold award, Activemark, Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark and National Healthy Schools Standard. Since the last inspection there have been significant changes to the school's senior leadership team, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and two senior teachers with whole-school responsibilities. New governors have also recently joined the governing body.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

Parson Cross is a satisfactory, happy and improving school. The headteacher provides strong leadership which is resulting in improved outcomes for pupils. Through detailed and accurate evaluation, she has correctly identified strengths and areas for improvement. Staff are fully committed to further improving the quality of education provided. However, most other senior leaders and some governors are new to their responsibilities and it is too early for the impact of their work to be fully evident. As a result, inspectors judge the capacity for future improvement to be satisfactory.

Some aspects of the school's work and pupils' outcomes are good. These include the behaviour and attendance of pupils, the extent to which they make a contribution to the community and the way they look after each other around school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe and for caring for and supporting them are also good. All staff know individual children and their families well and, as a consequence, pupils enjoy coming to school and say that it is a safe environment in which to learn. They take active roles on the school council and enjoy the many extra-curricular clubs on offer. They are knowledgeable about leading a healthy lifestyle, as seen in the active playtimes and healthy lunch choices.

Attainment is broadly average and the progress of all groups of pupils is satisfactory. Boys' attainment in writing is improving, although there is still more work to be done in this respect. Pupils who are identified as more able are now making, for the most part, expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, because they are provided with suitably challenging activities. However, not all teachers are using the assessment data they are collecting to meet the needs of all pupils so that they understand how to improve their work and to enable them to make consistent progress across the school.

The school has been generally successful in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Year 6 standards in English and mathematics have risen and in 2009 they were above national expectations, particularly at the higher than average levels of the national assessment tests. Procedures for checking pupils' progress and identifying any underachievement have been refined. A new curriculum is providing more exciting opportunities through which pupils can develop key literacy and numeracy skills, as well as learning about different countries and cultures. As a result of more rigorous monitoring arrangements, the school is aware of the need to continue to improve the quality of teaching in lessons that are no better than satisfactory. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not sufficiently stimulating and does not yet encourage children to become independent learners from an early age. Teachers' assessments are not rigorous enough to ensure that children's learning builds

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systematically on their previous achievements.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - developing planning and assessment to provide more opportunities that build on children's previous learning and encourage them to take the lead in devising new learning experiences
  - making closer links between the six areas of learning to extend opportunities for children to investigate, explore and develop independence in their learning
  - providing more resources in the outdoor area which engage children and extend their learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to be at least good in all lessons by ensuring that all teaching provides:
  - practical and meaningful activities that inspire and challenge all pupils to learn more effectively
  - regular opportunities to check how well all groups of pupils are doing and to reshape tasks accordingly to speed up their learning
  - specific advice to individual pupils about how to improve their work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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In lessons pupils concentrate well and are keen to learn. They respond well to the tasks set by teachers and in the best lessons are keen to ask questions and offer their ideas. They enjoy their lessons, especially when they are actively involved in practical and meaningful tasks that match their particular needs. Effective action has been taken to ensure that the overall quality of teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection and most pupils were observed by inspectors to be making at least satisfactory progress in lessons and good progress in some. However, progress across Years 1 to 6 is inconsistent because variations still exist in the quality of teaching.

In 2009 improved national test results show that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 accelerated their progress to compensate for previous underachievement, which has now been addressed successfully. Standards reached in the end of Key Stage 2 tests were much higher in English, mathematics and science than in previous years, especially at the higher National Curriculum levels. This represents good rates of progress by these pupils, given their starting points. Boys achieved well, particularly in writing. The school's latest performance information shows that these improved rates of progress are for the most part being sustained although not in all year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. They generally receive

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appropriate support from teachers and teaching assistants which enables them to understand and learn the skills being taught.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They understand safe practices, for example in relation to hygiene and in crossing the road. Pupils are welcoming and positive, respond well to staff and behave considerately towards each other. They are confident that they can turn to adults in school to help them with any problems. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons and around the school. They understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and enjoy participating in the good range of physical activities the school provides. There is a good take-up of school lunches and pupils are learning to appreciate the healthy options offered. They enjoy the many opportunities to take on responsibility, for example as 'peacemakers,' playground buddies and members of the school council, Job Squad and the eco committee. Many participate in the wide range of after-school activities. They feel that they have a genuine voice in the school and that their views are listened to. Pupils are using and developing their basic skills satisfactorily. They are developing their teamwork skills particularly well and are rewarded for success in this area. Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. They make outstanding progress in developing their spiritual, social and moral understanding which enables them to cooperate effectively within the school community. In particular, their understanding and appreciation of other cultures is increasing through well-planned opportunities to learn about people from other ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>  <b>2</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. For the most part, teachers use an appropriate range of questions to promote thinking and create supportive learning environments. Where learning is most effective, teachers plan stimulating opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and understanding independently, working on practical and purposeful tasks that are relevant to everyday experiences. Learning is challenging and well-trained teaching assistants work effectively alongside pupils with specific and additional needs. In lessons judged to be satisfactory, teachers tend to talk for too long, pupils' attention wanders and pace in learning falls. There is an over-reliance on work sheets and activities are not related to real-life experiences. The school has improved the quality and regularity of assessment information collected about individual pupils. This is being used well by some, but not yet all, teachers, to share with pupils what they need to do next and to plan for future steps in their learning.

The curriculum is increasingly well organised, with clear links across topics for pupils to practise literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills. Opportunities to enhance the way pupils think about their learning and how they relate to one another socially and emotionally are developing well. The use of staff from outside the school, for example to support the teaching of French, gives pupils access to a wider range of expertise, which they find stimulating. However, many of these arrangements are recent and have not yet had the time to impact fully on pupils' outcomes. The good range of out-of-school activities, such as dance, drama, sport and music, are popular, helping to enrich pupils' overall experiences.

Arrangements for the care, guidance and support of all pupils are well organised and effective, making a good contribution to their development. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and regular attendance are very effective. The school intervenes sensitively to provide additional support for children and families when needed. Clearly targeted support has positive outcomes for more vulnerable pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school. She is successfully refocusing the work of the new senior leadership team on improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise achievement and standards. There are appropriate procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the school's work. These include scheduled lesson monitoring, scrutiny of pupils' work, regular feedback to governors about all aspects of the school's performance and a thorough analysis of attainment and progress for all groups of pupils.

The school ensures that all procedures to safeguard pupils meet requirements and are up to date and effective. Training of all staff, in particular in child protection, is of good quality. The school includes issues about safety and safeguarding effectively in the curriculum so that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. There are good links with community, local authority and other outside agencies, such as physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and the special needs support service. Links with parents and carers are also good. They are kept well informed about their children's progress and behaviour through letters and meetings, questionnaires and regular newsletters. The school works well to improve pupils' life chances, to promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination. This has had an impact on raising the attainment of underachieving boys and in narrowing the gap between the attainment of boys and girls.

The governing body carries out its statutory duties satisfactorily and governors play a direct part in the life of the school through links to curriculum areas. They act as critical friends and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. Nevertheless, their role in challenging the school and in helping to set a strategic direction is less effective. This is because a number of experienced governors have recently retired to be replaced with new governors. The strong sense of community within school is extended by wide-ranging charity work, beneficial links with the local church and parish, and productive partnerships with other schools locally. However, much of this is not planned in a systematic manner, nor evaluated methodically to determine the impact in the surrounding community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress, overall, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding similar to those expected for their age and leave at the end of Reception broadly in line with national goals. Staff create a warm, nurturing environment where children feel safe and a calm atmosphere prevails. Children's welfare is paramount at all times. Well-known routines underpin the positive relationships and help to establish close links with parents and carers. Staff place strong emphasis on children cooperating with each other, taking turns and sharing. As a result, they make good progress in their personal and social development. Children are well behaved and respond positively to clear expectations and appropriate levels of praise and encouragement. However, children are not always stretched and challenged enough in their learning. Activities for children to investigate, explore and develop independently their reading, writing and mathematical skills are not well embedded. Planning is broad and does not build sufficiently on previous outcomes or offer sufficient opportunities for children to initiate their own learning. There are insufficient links between the various experiences that children have to ensure that important skills and competencies can be reinforced at every opportunity. The outdoor environment is not used widely enough to help children reinforce and extend key skills. Recent changes to the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage have not yet impacted sufficiently on the overall quality of provision or the planning for future improvement.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of those who responded to the questionnaire were very happy

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because their children enjoy school and are cared for well. There were no particular trends in the small number of criticisms received. Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed about care and the effect this has on children's personal qualities. The inspection findings about children's progress in learning and the manner in which some staff meet their individual needs support the view of the few parents and carers who believe these aspects could be better.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parson Cross Church of England 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 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 198 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	53	12	40	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	67	10	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	50	13	43	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	60	9	30	3	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	50	12	40	2	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	50	13	43	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	60	10	33	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	53	11	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	57	9	30	3	10	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	50	13	43	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	43	15	50	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	57	12	40	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	60	10	33	2	7	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



09 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parson Cross Church of England Primary School,  
Sheffield, S6 1LB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the inspectors. We appreciated all the help you gave us. This letter tells you what we found out.

Parson Cross is a satisfactory and improving school, with some good features. In particular, the inspectors agree with many of you and your parents and carers who told us how kind the adults are to you and that you like school. You behave well and show really positive attitudes to each other. Many of you set a good example by keeping active at break and lunchtimes and by eating fruit and vegetables as snacks – well done! All the adults take good care of you, including those of you who need extra help. Many of you do well in lessons. These things happen because your headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors check carefully and work hard to improve what is happening in school.

One reason for our visit was to see what your school could do better. We have asked your headteacher, governors and teachers to work on the following things.

- Make sure that the youngest children have more opportunities to learn through play activities which they choose for themselves, and ensure that the outdoor area for these children has more exciting resources to extend their learning.
- Make sure that all teaching is at least good by providing you all with practical and interesting activities and by ensuring that all of you understand what you are doing well and what you need to do to improve.

You can all help your teachers by continuing to attend every day, reaching your targets and supporting each other. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Andrew Swallow

Lead Inspector

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