

# St Andrew's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110828
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	337583
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Patrick Manley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Richard Liddington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Sand Street Soham Cambridgeshire
<b>Telephone number</b>	01353 720345
<b>Fax number</b>	01353 624585
<b>Email address</b>	head@st-andrews-pri.cambs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 19 lessons and parts of lessons while visiting 14 teaching staff. Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, teaching staff and a group of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' work. Staff and pupils' questionnaires were also scrutinised along with 139 completed by parents and carers.

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

- the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities throughout the school to determine if teaching is sufficiently focused and there is sufficient support
- how teachers plan to meet the needs of differing groups of pupils
- the quality of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small, but increasing number, speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to national averages. The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children in either morning or afternoon sessions in a Nursery class and in two Reception classes. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status.

There is private pre-school provision, not managed by the Governing Body, held on site each day. This is reported on separately.

**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

Improvements since the last inspection ensure the school is now providing a good education. Pupils behave well and are enthusiastic learners, taking full advantage of the wide range of curriculum opportunities on offer. Most parents have confidence in the school and are pleased with the provision it makes for their children. For example, one parent typically commented, 'St Andrew's is a very friendly school, my son really enjoys himself and we can see at home that he is constantly learning new things.' The school provides a welcoming environment and pupils say they feel safe and well looked after. They know who to speak to should they have a problem. Pupils work well together in lessons, share ideas and support each other's efforts. Work as 'buddies', play leaders and school councillors are examples of the pupils' good contribution to the school community and give them opportunities to help each other well. Pupils are engaged in a wide range of activities in the local community, supporting festivals and the church, with which there are close links.

Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress as a result of the sound provision. However, the lack of cohesive planning throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage results in children not progressing as rapidly as they might. Pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 6, and their achievement is good. Considerable attention paid to developing writing skills has improved progress in English. Skills in mathematics are also improving but there are occasions when the most-able pupils do not always attain the standards of which they are capable. Teaching is good across the school enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Occasionally, there is an imbalance between talking by the teacher and pupils' activities and more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in mathematics.

The school is well led by the senior leadership team and they are well supported by subject leaders. Self-evaluation is rigorous and there has been a clear and successful focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. Tracking of pupils' progress is rigorous and makes clear where there is underachievement. There has been a focus on improving the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics and recent initiatives are beginning to show impact. Governors have produced a clear plan to promote community cohesion. However, they have yet to evaluate effectively the impact on pupils' understanding of other cultures and faiths in this country. The steady improvement in pupils' attainment, the curriculum and the quality of teaching demonstrate the school's capacity to sustain further improvement.

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

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- Accelerate progress in mathematics further for the most-able pupils by:
  - ensuring teachers make the best use of assessment information to pitch work at the correct level for all groups
  - allow those pupils who are able to move on to more challenging work sooner.
- Enhance the pupils' understanding of different cultures and backgrounds in this country by improving the planning and the evaluation of its work to promote community cohesion
- Raise the quality of teaching for children in Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - improving curriculum planning so that it takes better account of children's prior learning
  - improving the accuracy of assessments of children's progress.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science and pupils make good progress. Pupils are confident and fluent readers and use these skills well to read for enjoyment and to undertake research. Science skills develop well and pupils make good use of computers for a wide range of applications. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 2 were busy interrogating the internet to find out about George Stephenson. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers and there is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are provided with good support enabling them to make good progress.

Pupils really enjoy school although attendance is only average. Pupils talk knowledgeably about eating healthily and the importance of exercise and a good proportion participate in the many sporting activities on offer. Pupils enjoy the morning 'activate' sessions at the beginning of the day. The school council plays an important role in school life and other pupils value its contribution. Pupils have a good moral understanding, one pupil explaining their view by saying, 'We want to win but if we don't we don't boo.' They develop a good awareness of different religions and cultures through links with schools abroad although their knowledge of other cultures in this country is less well developed. Pupils' secure basic skills and good social skills prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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.

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

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

### How effective is the provision?

Pupils say they find learning enjoyable and this was confirmed through lesson observations. Teachers question pupils well, eliciting well-thought out responses. In the best lessons teachers generate much enthusiasm. For example, in two Year 6 lessons pupils were enthused to improve their mathematical understanding through very well structured sessions that successfully encouraged them to 'aim high'. The pace in these lessons was good, they were exciting and really engaged the pupils' interest. Assessment information is used well and there are clear learning objectives. In the less successful lessons, teachers talk for too long, leaving insufficient time for pupils' work. There are missed opportunities to enable some of the most-able pupils really to accelerate their learning in mathematics. There is also an overuse of work sheets that do not challenge pupils' understanding.

Pupils say the curriculum has recently become more relevant and interesting to them with the move to an approach based on the use of their skills. Visiting authors add relevance to reading and writing. A wide range of visitors and visits, including residential trips, add significantly to pupils' interest. Themed days and weeks, such as Greek and India days and medieval week, enhance learning well. Sporting, musical and artistic opportunities are abundant with many pupils taking up the opportunities. Effective mentoring provides good guidance and support for those pupils who lack confidence or who are having learning, behavioural or emotional difficulties, enabling them to take a full part in all aspects of the curriculum. In spite of rigorous monitoring procedures, a small number of pupils are persistently absent and some parents choose to take their children on holiday during term time.

**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

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has a clear vision for improving the learning environment, raising attainment and improving the provision. Morale is high and there is a keen sense of purpose to make learning exciting and enjoyable. The management of teaching and learning is rigorous with regular lesson observations, identifying accurately the strengths and where improvements are needed. Good use is made of outside consultants to support the school's own rigorous self-evaluation. The leadership is effective in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils and that there is no discrimination.

The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is a good focus on evaluating the pupils' academic performance. Governors play an integral part in shaping the future of the school and question the senior leadership's planning effectively. Health and safety issues permeate all aspects of school life. At the time of the inspection, all safeguarding procedures were in place and pupils were looked after well. The governors have planned carefully for community cohesion. As a result, pupils begin to develop a clear understanding of different religions and cultures although they are not clear about the different cultures and backgrounds of people in this country.

There are good and developing links with parents. Information through reports and meetings is well received by parents, who appreciate the good dialogue between home and school. The strong links with outside agencies aid the school in providing for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

There are good relationships with parents and carers and other providers so that children settle quickly when they enter the Nursery class. They make satisfactory progress and on entry to Year 1, attainment is below average. Skills in calculation lag behind the children's other skills. Progress is slightly better in the Reception classes. Teachers and staff provide a wide range of activities to keep children interested and motivated. Children have the opportunity to choose from many activities that take place both inside and outside. However, planning for progression across the Early Years Foundation Stage, although improving, is not yet secure enough to ensure activities build on skills previously learned. There is a good emphasis on the teaching of sounds and letters and opportunities are provided for children to develop their early communication skills. Assessment procedures are developing satisfactorily but the school recognises that some assessments are not yet secure. Staff know the children well and their health and safety are paramount. The new leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is beginning to make changes. However, they are too recent to show any significant impact.

*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 overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are pleased with the quality of education provided by the school. A small number of parents commented on the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors found that the school had good procedures in place to deal with poor behaviour.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's CofE 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	84	60	52	37	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	91	65	44	32	1	1	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	68	49	66	47	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	42	69	50	7	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	79	57	55	40	3	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	45	70	50	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	41	76	55	3	2	1	1
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)	56	40	68	49	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	40	76	55	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	46	57	41	12	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	37	68	49	10	7	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	64	46	64	46	7	5	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	83	60	52	37	3	2	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

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](http://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"><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.**



3 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's CofE Primary School, Soham, CB7 5AA

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and seeing you work and play. We learned a great deal about your school and this letter is to tell you what we found.

Your school is providing you with a good education. You enjoy coming to school although a small number of you do not attend as regularly as you should. The teaching is good and you do well in lessons. We know you enjoy the more exciting opportunities for learning. There are many interesting visits and visitors and you enjoy taking part in the wide variety of clubs.

You really behave well and look after one another. The school also looks after you well and gives you good guidance on how to improve your work and do your best. The headteacher and his staff are determined to make the school even better and we have asked them to do the following to help it improve:

- help those of you who find work a little easy in mathematics to do even better
- improve the provision for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes
- help you to learn more about the different backgrounds of people living in this country.

You told us that you feel safe in school and that there is always someone you can talk to when you need help. You also try to keep healthy. You can help the school by attending regularly, working hard and always trying to do your best.

Once again, it was very good to meet you all. We wish you and the school all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards

Lead inspector

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