

# St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115699
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338641
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mo Roberts

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>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Patsy Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Weekes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Stroud GL5 4JE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01453 764705
<b>Fax number</b>	01453 762033
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-matthews.gloucs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 12 lessons, 10 teachers, and saw two small group sessions. Meetings were held with governors, senior staff and groups of pupils and an inspector spoke informally to some parents. They looked at the school's work and scrutinised tracking and assessment information, school development plans, minutes of meetings and documents relating to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Forty nine parental questionnaires were also analysed.

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

- pupils' progress in writing and if the school is doing enough to reduce barriers to improvement
- the success of the Early Years Foundation Stage in helping children catch up on their weak speaking, listening and mathematical skills
- whether the leadership team has a sufficiently accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, especially with regard to pupils' attainment and progress, and if their actions are sufficiently well targeted to drive further improvement for all groups of pupils.

## Information about the school

The school is a little smaller than average but the decline in the roll has been halted. Most pupils are of White British heritage and they mostly come from the mixed housing in the locality. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average.

**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

The school continues to offer a satisfactory education and has made significant improvements in some areas since the last inspection. The buildings are vastly improved after a major refurbishment and the care, guidance and support given to the pupils and the quality of the curriculum are all now good. There is a happy atmosphere and pupils take an active part in an increasingly wide range of exciting activities.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, although writing remains the weakest aspect. Higher attaining pupils do well in mathematics. Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which gives pupils a strong start and allows them to begin to catch up with their peers nationally. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and all lessons include good features; skilled class management effectively promotes pupils' good behaviour. However, in some lessons there could be increased challenge. Some activities need to be shorter to maximise the use of time for learning. The assessment of pupils' progress is not sufficient sharp to ensure that when they have grasped the concept they move on sufficiently swiftly to the next step. In some older classes pupils are not always certain how to review their own work or how their targets can help them move on. The school has improved the pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Pupils' health is well supported and they especially enjoy growing healthy food. Most like taking plenty of exercise, including rowing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they make many positive contributions to the wider community and are a credit to themselves and their school.

School leaders have successfully introduced school-wide assessment systems aimed at closely tracking pupils' progress. They have also begun to hone monitoring to identify where additional action is needed to help individual pupils to achieve more. The teaching assistants add a good deal to the lives of individual pupils and to the whole school. Safeguarding is satisfactory and ensures pupils are safe and secure.

The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate but a deeper analysis is required in some areas. The impact of new initiatives is not assessed promptly enough to allow staff to make adjustments and drive rapid change. Overall aspirations are high and there is a shared desire to lead further improvement. The governors are regularly in school and are strong supporters. They have begun to develop their role as critical friends and the school therefore has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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

- Raise all the teaching to the quality of the best by ensuring all activities are well paced and that progress within lessons is reviewed against tight success criteria.

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- Develop the self-evaluation process and ensure all steps in new initiatives are time constrained and tightly monitored to assess their impact
- Further develop pupils' use of targets and self-assessment so that they learn to take a greater degree of personal responsibility for their learning.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

Pupils enter the school with a number of skills that are below the levels expected for their age, particularly in communication and some areas of mathematics. In the Reception class pupils rapidly develop their vocabulary, early mathematics skills and their ability to talk about their experiences as well as their social skills. Their subsequent progress is then at least satisfactory overall, and sometimes good, although progress is better in some classes than others. Attainment in Year 6 is higher than in previous years and close to national levels, although pupils' writing remains the weakest area. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well as a result of some good, innovative teaching, including the use of ICT.

In all year groups pupils enjoy their learning and respond positively to the school's spiritual, moral and social ambiance. They broaden their understanding of the modern world, helped by links with schools in more multicultural areas and with a school in Uganda. The gardening and cooking activities have a positive impact on pupils' well-being and they mostly make healthy choices, although some say they eat too many crisps. Pupils enjoy numerous after-school clubs and are keen to take care of the environment. They play an active part in school life and feel their opinions in their class meetings and in the school council are taken into account. They cooperate well and help each other; the playground helpers' scheme, where older ones help the younger ones, is a good example. Those new to learning English do well as teachers provide appropriately for them. Good support is also given to those pupils who are getting ready to move on to their next schools.

*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>

<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.

<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>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> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is good, having been adapted to stimulate and engage pupils by giving them a broad range of first-hand experiences. For example, the pupils made willow sculptures with a visiting artist from Uganda. There are numerous educational visits, while themed weeks, including the food week, are much enjoyed and broaden pupils' understanding of the world. Pupils' reading is improving as a result of the system adopted to promote the pupils' grasp of letter sounds within words, and this is also helping them to begin to be more confident writers. The spacious and newly refurbished building supports learning effectively as there are good work spaces for small group support work as well as bright and informative displays.

Teachers plan lessons carefully but they sometimes talk for too long at the start of lessons and do not stop frequently enough to reinforce key learning points and to see how quickly pupils have progressed. Just occasionally, teaching is not fully successful in drawing in the minority of less motivated pupils. In the best lessons, such as one on imaginative writing about Cinderella, the pace was brisk and the objectives clear. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good in-class support as well as good individualised activities to help them develop. Teachers' good class management ensures younger pupils learn to cooperate as a group, for example when singing or considering how to write a postcard. Teachers provide appropriately for those new to learning English and good support is also given to those pupils who are getting ready to move on to their next schools.

*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>
	3
<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>

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

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The school knows its local community well and strategic development decisions are carefully considered based on this good practical knowledge. Community cohesion is good in practice, with pupils learning to consider the needs of others. The school's leaders have sound plans in place to tackle issues they have identified for improvement. There are systems in place for monitoring the quality of teaching but observations do not always sufficiently identify where a little more can be demanded. The leadership team increasingly shares this monitoring responsibility and this is having a good impact as specialists evaluate their subject. The English and mathematics coordinators now have opportunities to see the impact of new initiatives in classes as well as through pupils' assessment data. Governors are attached to class cohorts as they move through the school and are beginning to monitor the impact of changes on □their' class. However, overall, the systems for checking the implementation and impact of new developments are not yet robust enough. Safeguarding is taken very seriously and the school has good systems and procedures for child protection. However, some risk assessments do not go into quite enough detail about the specific risks associated with off-site visits. Attendance and lateness are carefully monitored and pupils have a good attendance record, showing how well the headteacher has secured parents' cooperation and how much most pupils value and enjoy their school. Equal opportunities are also generally maintained and the school is successfully developing its relationships with parents.

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

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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children have a good learning experience both indoors and outdoors and staff work seamlessly together. The rich resources stimulate cooperative play and independent exploration. For example, magical resources to support *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* drew in both the boys and the girls to retell the story. Children are encouraged to follow their own interests. The atmosphere is settled and tranquil as they explore, create and investigate things, like how water rushes down hill and moves boats along. There is enough space for pupils to develop their physical skills. When adults are teaching they keep the time short and appropriate for the age group; they are lively storytellers. Mathematics skills are well developed through a wide variety of play provision appealing to both boys and girls. Imaginative solutions are sought to encourage boys to write but they are not always successful. Children share their experiences of home and staff use children's ideas to develop their confidence to speak in front of the group and to develop their vocabulary. Personal, social and emotional development is well supported by the caring atmosphere and adults' good knowledge of each child. The school's assessment records show that children narrow the gap between their scores on entry and leaving and come closer to the national level at the end of the year. Teaching, leadership and management are good. Routines are safe and well established and parents and carers are pleased with the home-to-school links which support the children's learning.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires, as well as those spoken to by inspectors, are generally positive and supportive of the school. The good ethos, the hard work of staff and the increased diversity in the curriculum were all celebrated in comments. Parents also commented about the well-rounded education received by their children, and inspectors agree. Concerns were expressed about the number of different teachers some pupils experience but inspectors found there was good continuity between teachers where classes were shared. A few issues were raised about behaviour but these were specific rather than general worries. The inspection found behaviour to be good and that when an issue arises prompt action is taken. The consistency of challenge in lessons and homework is one area that inspectors agreed to some extent that the school needs to improve further.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Matthew's 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school. N.B The return rate may be due to the fact parents had recently returned questionnaires when the inspection was cancelled and did not send a second one

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	37	29	59	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	51	24	49	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	31	34	69	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	29	30	61	5	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	41	24	49	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	27	29	59	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	41	29	59	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)	8	16	33	67	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	33	27	55	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	22	29	59	6	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	16	29	59	6	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	33	25	51	4	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	45	23	47	2	4	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.**



28 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, Church Road, Cainscross  
GL5 4JE

Thank you for the help you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed watching you learn and seeing you have fun and get good exercise in the huff and puff session. We found your school is giving you a satisfactory education and is especially good at encouraging you to be sensible and kind to each other.

These are some of the best things about your school.

- You behave well and you all try hard to listen and learn in class
- Your school welcomes your parents' and carers' ideas and views, and wants them to understand all the new and exciting things you are now doing.
- You are good at coming to school on time and every day
- You work steadily and do nearly as well as children of your age across the country. Your mathematics is your strong point.

We have asked your headteacher to do three things:

- make sure that activities in your lessons do not go on too long and that teachers check that you are keeping up
- make sure that senior staff check that the new things you do in lessons and in the school are really helping you
- help you to feel more confident about how to improve your work

Please help by thinking hard about what you are trying to learn in each lesson!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Mo Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

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