

All Saints Upton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131217
Local Authority	Halton
Inspection number	341110
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Miller
Headteacher	Mrs J Forrest
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2006
School address	Hough Green Road Widnes Cheshire WA8 4PG
Telephone number	0151 4247248
Fax number	0151 4248182
Email address	head.allsaintsuppton@halton.gov.uk

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

T: 08456 404045
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eight lessons were observed, taught by eight teachers. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress and the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The inspectors also analysed 36 questionnaire returns from parents and carers and took account of 94 from pupils.

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

- how well pupils achieve, especially in English
- how effectively the school uses assessment data to track pupils' progress and support their progress and learning
- how well the curriculum has developed since the last inspection to impact on pupils' learning and progress.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school in which a well above average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Nearly all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and Activemark. A new school building is under construction on the present site; it is due to be finished in November 2010.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Good leadership and management, supported very effectively by a good governing body, have been rigorous in tackling the issues for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. As a result, the school has significantly improved many aspects of its work and its overall effectiveness. This, and the fact that leaders and managers evaluate the effectiveness of the school efficiently and know what to do to improve it even further, demonstrates the school's good capacity for sustaining improvement.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well as they move up through the school because teaching and the curriculum are good. They stimulate pupils' interest and ensure that learning is enjoyable. Good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, ensures that they make good progress and achieve well. However, pupils are not always clear about how well they are doing, what is expected of them and what they need to do to improve their work, especially in developing their writing skills. As a result, attainment in English is generally in line with national averages while in mathematics and science, attainment is higher. Occasionally, teachers do not make effective use of assessment information to plan activities in lessons that are appropriate to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils.

Despite the disruption and restrictions caused by the construction of the new school, pupils' behave sensibly both in and out of lessons. They say how safe they feel in school and appreciate the good levels of care, guidance and support the school provides for them. They enjoy coming to school. Most pupils attend regularly. A very small minority, however, are absent too often. The school does all it can to tackle this persistent absence with the result that the situation is showing signs of improving. Pupils are respectful towards each other, adults and visitors. They enjoy taking on responsibilities in school. For example, pupils were heavily involved in the design of the new school building. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are used especially well to provide time for spiritual reflection. Pupils are encouraged to consider objectively topical issues in lessons such as Britain's involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Leaders and managers use the outcomes of rigorous evaluation to identify priorities for improvement and strategies to realise them. However, although the school does much to promote community cohesion, it does not evaluate the impact of its actions systematically enough to be clear about how successful its actions are.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further, especially in English, by:
 - making sure that pupils are consistently clear about what is expected of them, how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, especially in developing their writing skills
 - making sure that teachers use assessment information consistently well to provide appropriate activities for different groups of learners.
- Evaluate systematically the impact of actions taken to promote community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. In lessons they are keen to answer questions. They respond well to sharing ideas in group and pair work. Pupils take pride in presenting their work neatly. They settle to work quickly and usually give of their best. Only occasionally, when tasks are too easy or too difficult does pupils' concentration wander. Attainment has risen since the last inspection especially in mathematics and science. Overall attainment is now average. This represents good progress and achievement given pupils' generally low starting points. Attainment in English is more variable because pupils are less certain about how best to develop their writing skills. Good support from teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress as they move up through the school. Pupils know how important it is to stay healthy. They enjoy participating in the wide range of sporting enrichment activities. Even the youngest children can articulate what foods are good and bad for them and why. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities in school. They are active in the local community and are successful fund-raisers for a range of charities both local and abroad. By the time they leave school, pupils' good levels of basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) and their good levels of maturity and responsibility ensure that they are well prepared to take advantage of the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is at least satisfactory and most is good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to present good levels of challenge in most lessons. They are adept at using questioning to make pupils think through problems and explain the answers they give. Teaching makes good use of group and pair work to encourage pupils' independent learning skills. Teaching sets clear learning objectives at the start of each lesson so that in most lessons pupils are clear about what they are expected to achieve. However, on occasions, teaching does not always make good use of assessment information to set tasks appropriate to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils. Consequently, the pace of progress drops because some pupils find work either too difficult or too easy. Teaching makes good use of ICT to add clarity and interest to what is being taught. Teachers mark pupils work regularly. However, their comments are inconsistent in making it clear to pupils how well they are doing and what to do to improve. The good curriculum uses themed topics effectively to capture pupils' imagination and spur their interest. Pupils say how much they have enjoyed topic work. Increasingly, the school is planning topic work to add relevance to pupils' writing and so raise attainment. There is a good range of after-school activities in sports and the arts which add to pupils' enjoyment and adoption of healthy lifestyles. Good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils are known and valued as individuals. Pupils are comfortable in seeking help and guidance from adults working with them. Transition arrangements into the Early Years Foundation Stage and to secondary education are thorough and enable pupils to settle quickly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Good leadership and management promote good levels of teamwork across the school. They provide a sharp focus on improvement. Leaders and managers are constantly on the lookout for ways to make the school even more effective. For example, a whole-school approach to developing writing skills and the introduction of assertive mentoring to involve pupils more effectively in assessing their own progress are being introduced. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are effective in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, outcomes have improved strongly and demonstrate the positive impact of leadership in embedding ambition and driving improvement.

Good attention to providing equal opportunities and tackling discrimination ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable are integrated seamlessly into the everyday life of the school. As attainment and achievement improve, so the gaps between different groups of learners are closing; all pupils now make at least good progress.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school adopts recommended good practice for its procedures and policies relating to safeguarding. Meticulous attention is paid to risk assessment. Staff training in safeguarding and child protection is regular and of good quality. Good links have been established with outside agencies to provide specialist support when need is identified.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school's leadership understand the school's context and plans accordingly. It is especially effective in promoting a harmonious school community. The school is active in its local community and works well with other local schools. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum and through visits and visitors to raise pupils' awareness of other religions and cultures. Evaluation of the impact of activities to promote community cohesion is not conducted systematically, however.

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

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

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress and achieve well because teaching meets their learning needs well. Children play well together in a harmonious atmosphere where every child, regardless of ability or background, is valued equally. Overall, children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those normally expected. By the end of Reception the majority of children attain the expected age-related levels. Solid foundations are being laid, therefore, for children's future learning and progress. Children work and play in a welcoming and stimulating environment. Teaching is enthusiastic and supportive. Children's progress is checked on effectively and the outcomes are used to plan activities according to individual children's needs. Children are very happy and obviously enjoy their learning in the safe and nurturing environment. Parents and carers are informed on a regular basis of their child's progress. There are effective arrangements for ensuring that children settle quickly and smoothly into their new surroundings. Where necessary, effective use of outside agencies provides support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. They provide a good vision for future success, a strong sense of purpose for its work and a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities to stimulate and engage children in work and play.

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

Questionnaires returned by parents and carers indicate overall satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work adding support to inspectors judgement that this is a good school. A small minority of parents and carers expressed some concern about the school's handling of unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors looked carefully at this aspect and concluded that behaviour is good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at All Saints Upton Church of England Voluntary 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 168 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	64	13	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	72	9	25	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	53	16	44	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	64	11	31	1	3	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	20	56	15	42	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	53	14	39	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	44	20	56	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)	18	50	17	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	50	17	47	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	33	19	53	4	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	36	21	58	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	47	18	50	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	50	17	47	1	3	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). 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.



16 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints Upton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Widnes WA8 4PG

Thank you for your warm welcome during the recent inspection of your school. It was a pleasure to meet you and see you at work and play.

You will be pleased to hear that you go to a good school which has improved greatly since it was last inspected just over three years ago. You get on very well with each other and with the adults working with you. Your teachers provide you with good teaching and interesting things to do so that you all make good progress and achieve well. You behave well and are keen to do your best – well done!

Your school is always looking for ways to make things better so to help it do this, there are a few things I am asking it to do:

- Raise attainment further, especially in English, by:
- making sure that you are always clear about what is expected of you, how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve, especially in developing your writing skills
- making sure that the activities you are set in lessons are always appropriate to how easy or difficult you find learning.
- Making sure that the school knows how successful it is being in promoting community cohesion.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard and help your school go from strength to strength in the coming years.

I wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Wall

Lead inspector

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