

All Saints CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122096
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380402
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2012
Lead inspector	Joseph Peacock

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	385
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Allen
Headteacher	Judith Emery
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joseph Peacock

Additional inspector

David Bray

Additional inspector

Carolyn Wood

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team spent eight hours and 40 minutes visiting 18 lessons and observing all class teachers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They held meetings with the acting headteacher, representatives of the governing body and staff, and talked to pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data and pupils' completed work. They assessed the quality of the school's documentation, including minutes of meetings of the governing body, improvement planning and policies relating to safeguarding and children's welfare. The inspectors scrutinised 159 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds is average but very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. An acting headteacher started in October 2011, covering the absence of the headteacher. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection with nine new teachers being appointed and a 30% increase in the number of pupils in some year groups. The school meets the current floor standards, through which the government sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has Healthy School status. Pre-school sessions are available on the school site and there is a breakfast and after-school club in school each day. All of these are inspected 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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to the Early Years Foundation Stage and to Key Stage 1, where pupils achieve well. However, overall effectiveness remains satisfactory rather than good because achievement in Key Stage 2 is not as strong as elsewhere in the school.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make good progress in Reception and the Key Stage 1 classes but this slows to satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the good quality of the support they receive.
- Teaching varies but is satisfactory overall. It is good in Reception and Key Stage 1 but satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress is linked to the quality of teaching, which is more effective in some year groups in Key Stage 2 than others. Teachers do not always plan sufficiently challenging activities for all pupils, and marking does not always guide pupils on how to improve their work.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Behaviour in lessons is usually very good, only falling below this standard when teaching does not engage or motivate pupils sufficiently well.
- The effective partnership between the acting headteacher and inclusion leader, who is supporting as deputy headteacher, is galvanising staff to work as a team to bring about improvement. The leadership of teaching is satisfactory but the evaluation of teaching does not always take sufficient account of pupils' progress or flag up clearly to teachers how they can improve their performance. The governing body is developing a healthy core of active governors but their role in driving forward improvement, though satisfactory, is not yet completely well-informed.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by Year 6 in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that there is sufficient challenge for more-able pupils in lessons
 - planning lessons that more effectively meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils
 - ensuring that pupils take note of teachers' marking comments and respond to these in order to further improve their work.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching:
 - ensuring that the evaluation of teaching is more accurate and clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses
 - ensuring that governors have sufficient information to evaluate how well the school is performing and be more involved in helping to bring about improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are generally below those expected for their age with communication skills being the weakest area for most. There is a strong emphasis on developing these skills in all activities indoors and in the relatively small but well-organised outdoor area. Children are encouraged to share equipment, take part in role play linked to stories such as 'The Gruffalo' and write lists using clipboards. The exciting weekly trips to the forest school are highly effective in stimulating speaking and listening skills as children make treasure boxes to keep items found in the forest or use magnifiers to examine these. Daily sessions in five small groups to learn letters and their sounds are effective in ensuring most children make good progress and are able to spell out and write simple words accurately and independently by the time they transfer to Year 1. The effective leadership and management of this key stage and good teaching ensure that most children make good progress. Attainment is just above the level expected in all six areas of learning at the end of the Reception Year.

Good teaching ensures pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1. Pupils often work together to measure strips of paper accurately in centimetres or plan their own version of familiar stories. Their concentration is good and all are keen to complete tasks well. By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. Pupils build well on the firm foundations laid in Reception. Most are secure in the sounds some letters or groups of letters make due to the effective teaching of phonics.

Attainment by Year 6 is average in mathematics and English, including reading. The school has correctly identified that girls were doing less well in mathematics and boys in writing and this was holding back standards. Improving skills in reading to

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help with writing and revising the mathematics curriculum to relate problem-solving to pupils' everyday experiences are beginning to raise standards. Pupils generally listen attentively and work sensibly in groups or with a partner to compose a poem, match headlines to texts or write instructions about how to make a sandwich. However, the end of key stage assessments in 2011 and inspection evidence show that progress remains slow for a significant proportion of pupils by the end of Year 6. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that attainment in science is above average because the curriculum provides many practical experiences to encourage learning. These include testing the magnetic attraction of materials and analysing different food chains.

The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good because staff analyse their progress in depth and accurately identify their individual learning needs each term. Another key factor is the highly effective way in which the inclusion leader ensures that these pupils are fully integrated in lessons, are fully supported and barriers to their happiness and well-being are quickly eliminated. The very few with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress in each key stage.

In the returned questionnaires, parents and carers generally held positive views about the progress their children make. 'My child loves it and talks about it all the time' was a typical comment about the Reception classes. The vast majority of pupils agree that they learn a lot in lessons and school helps them to do as well as they can. Staff do all they possibly can to remedy the rare individual concerns parents have about their children's progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory overall and this is reflected in the satisfactory progress made by pupils by the end of Year 6. Staffing turbulence and the large influx of pupils have meant that teaching in Key Stage 2 has not been consistently good enough to improve rapidly on the legacy of underachievement identified previously lower down the school or raise standards for incoming pupils. Many of these are admitted with a history of underachievement in previous schools. However, where improvements have been made since the previous inspection in Reception and Key Stage 1, teaching is good, enabling pupils to make good progress. Children in Reception are proud of their model minibeasts and carefully matching tasks to the ability of pupils in Year 2 ensured a good understanding of centimetres and millimetres when measuring.

The good behaviour of pupils and their generally positive attitudes to learning are strong features in most lessons. Where teaching is effective, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, plan appropriately challenging work for all ability levels and make good use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. Year 6 tackled the difficult task of plotting the coordinates to create irregular shapes and further more challenging shapes were ready for any who finished early. The support provided by skilled teaching assistants for disabled pupils and those who have special educational

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needs is particularly effective in most lessons, enabling these pupils to complete their work and contribute to discussions. The vast majority of parents and carers agree and fully appreciate all that staff do for their children. Teaching is less effective when there is not enough challenge for more-able pupils and work is not matched closely to the ability of other pupils. A scrutiny of work shows that pupils rarely respond to teachers' marking comments, missing the opportunity to further improve their work.

Teaching has a strong impact on pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to collaborate and work sensibly together in lessons when discussing food chains or conducting scientific investigations. The school's positive ethos is promoted strongly through relationships, with staff clearly demonstrating how much they care for their pupils. No disruptive behaviour was seen during the inspection and pupils are very patient when they are expected to sit and listen for too long before being provided with activities. Teachers work hard to plan a broad and balanced curriculum. The many staffing changes have slowed some developments; for example, promoting key skills in reading, writing or mathematics in topic work. There has been a marked improvement to the mathematics curriculum because of the expertise and drive of the subject leader who has succeeded in making it more relevant for girls by linking problem solving to those in every day life such as money and handling data. Overall, the curriculum is having a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning.

Although the inspection evidence points to some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, parents and carers are happy that teaching is effective and that their children are learning and making progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour continues to be a strength of the school. In lessons, pupils are especially well behaved, listening carefully and working sensibly with others. A Year 2 pupil said 'People are kind' and most enjoy school because 'Teachers make learning fun'. Pupils are invariably polite to staff and towards one another. Their concentration only wavers when tasks are not sufficiently challenging or when teachers occasionally talk for too long during lesson introductions. A small minority of parents have minor concerns about behaviour. However, the general picture from both parental views and inspection evidence is of consistently good behaviour. A small number of minor bullying incidents raised by parents or children have been fully recorded along with the action taken to ensure it is not repeated. Incidents of bullying, harassment or homophobic behaviour are extremely rare and always dealt with decisively by staff. There has only been one fixed-term exclusion over the past two years. Attendance is consistently above average which is a further reflection of how much pupils enjoy coming to school.

Although a small number of pupils criticise others' behaviour, they say that they feel safe in school. The overwhelming majority of parents agree that the school keeps their children safe. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying, including racial or homophobic behaviour but do report some name calling. All agree that staff deal

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quickly and effectively with this. Children in Reception are well cared for and provided with a safe outdoor area which is adequate to meet their learning needs. There are plans to enlarge this area. Weekly trips to the forest school are extremely well planned and closely supervised with a very favourable ratio of adults to children.

Leadership and management

Many parents were full of praise for the way in which the acting headteacher and inclusion leader are robustly tackling past and present underachievement. Staff and the governing body are adding their full support with a clear plan of action with relevant priorities aimed at improving standards, teaching and the effectiveness of leadership and management. However, recent evaluations about teaching are over optimistic because sufficient account is not being taken of pupils' achievement in lessons. Governors are gradually developing their ability to hold the school to account through an improved understanding of performance. Overall, the school has a satisfactory capacity to go on improving.

The drive for improvement involves subject leaders and all staff. Recent improvements, to make the mathematics curriculum more meaningful to girls, have been implemented following a period of intensive training by the subject leader to become a specialist teacher. It is too soon to see any impact of this new approach to the curriculum. Staff are also heavily involved in developing an integrated curriculum where basic literacy, numeracy and computer skills are used in topics and other subject areas. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of activities and clubs during lunchtime or after school. Pupils learn to speak French and music has a high profile with a specialist teacher on the staff. All Year 5, for example, learn to play a brass instrument.

Leaders and managers try very hard to meet pupils' needs and they promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory rather than good. Some lessons lack sufficient challenge to ensure that every pupil makes consistently good progress. There is no discrimination and relationships are warm and positive throughout the school community.

Safeguarding requirements are met and staff work hard to ensure pupils' safety. This is reflected in pupils' comments and those of parents and carers which are very positive. The school enjoys a good partnership with parents and carers. Close links with the University of Northampton, which is next to the school, benefit both partners with regular contact between staff and trainee teachers being well-established.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



12 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints CofE VA Primary School, Northampton, NN2 7AJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for completing the inspection questionnaire. It was good to talk to you and to see your work. We found that while your school has some strengths, some of you are not making fast enough progress in English and mathematics by the time you leave Year 6. As a result, we judged that your school is satisfactory. Here are some of the strengths of your school.

- Your behaviour in lessons is often excellent. We were also impressed with how polite you all are and how well you work together in class.
- Your attendance is above average and has been for a while.
- Staff care for you, keep you safe and are especially helpful and supportive to those of you who need extra attention in lessons.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception and enjoy all their activities, especially the weekly visits to the forest.
- Those of you in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.

To improve the school further we have asked your acting headteacher, governing body and staff to do the following things. We have asked them to:

- help more of you to make faster progress in your English and mathematics and achieve above average standards by Year 6
- make sure that all your lessons are as good as the best ones and that you are all given work that challenges you
- give you time to improve your work, guided by teachers' marking comments
- improve the ways in which staff and governors check how good teaching is and how much progress you are making.

All the adults in your school want it to improve quickly and I am sure you do too. You can all help by always doing your best in English and mathematics lessons, and working with your teachers to raise standards.

Yours sincerely

Joseph Peacock
Lead inspector

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