



# St.Saviour's and St.Olave's School

Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number 100849  
LEA Southwark

Inspection number 275719  
Inspection dates 8 - 10 June 2005  
Reporting inspector D Singleton HMI

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

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Type of School	Comprehensive	School address	New Kent Road
School category	Voluntary Aided		London
Age range of pupils	11 - 18		SE1 4AN
Gender of pupils	Girls	Telephone number	020 7407 1843
Number on roll	747	Fax number	020 7403 9163
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Lady Jenkins
Date of previous inspection	March 2002	Headteacher	Dr. I.Bishop

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Age group	Published	Reference no.
11 - 18	July 2005	275719

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the school and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by five of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a small comprehensive voluntary aided (Church of England) school for girls aged 11-18 situated in a disadvantaged area near the Elephant and Castle in the London Borough of Southwark. The school is popular and oversubscribed, but follows a conscious policy of admitting girls from less affluent backgrounds. Many are from single-parent or low-earning families. The majority are of ethnic minority heritage, with some fifty languages spoken by pupils at the school, though few girls are at an early stage in learning English when they arrive at the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, or who are entitled to free school meals, is high. The school is a specialist college for science, a beacon school and a lead partner in a leading edge partnership. It also participates in a school-centred initial teacher training scheme.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

The school assesses itself as good, with some outstanding features, particularly in promoting the personal development and well-being of the girls. In general, one of the school's great virtues is the sharp clarity of its self-knowledge. Nevertheless, we take issue with the overall conclusion at which it has arrived, though not with the detail of its analysis. This is an outstanding school, strong in all areas and with many exemplary features. Through highly effective management and the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, well supported by the governing body, the school has improved considerably since its largely favourable previous inspection. It now promotes high achievement for all and outstanding achievement for many, through generally good teaching, a curriculum that meets most needs and is supported by additional provision of extraordinary richness and variety and a quality of support that renders pupils' time in the school a civilising and humanising experience for all girls, including the most vulnerable. The school has the full confidence of parents and works with a wide range of partners to improve provision for its own pupils, to give support to other schools and to act as a beacon in a wider sense, as an example of what an inner-city school, serving a disadvantaged community, can achieve. Above all, the school is fun. Teachers and children enjoy each other's company and share a joy in learning. The little girl who addressed a mystified visitor to the school with the words, "we love our school, you know," thinking him to be an inspector, may have been guilty of mistaken identity, but she spoke for many.

**Grade: 1**

### **The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

The school believes it has a good sixth form. It is right, and it is therefore a pity that it does not provide a range of courses suitable for all girls. The inspection team agreed with the school's analysis: considering their starting point, the girls make good progress on the mainly advanced courses that are available; in relation to personal development, they receive an exemplary preparation for adult life. The sixth form is well run and gives good value for money.

**Grade: 2**

## **What steps are required to improve the provision further?**

The school should:

Seek to raise achievement even further by:

- focusing the lesson observations undertaken by senior staff more sharply on pupils' learning
- setting a target for achievement at grade A and A\* at GCSE and for A and B grades at A level
- consider more fully the reasons for the variations in achievement between ethnic groups

Consider further the introduction of more vocational and work-related provision, initially in key stage 4 and subsequently in the sixth form.

## **Achievement and Standards**

### **How well do learners achieve?**

Standards in GCSE and in the KS3 tests are average or above for most pupils and are very high for some. There are wide variations between ethnic groups in the school, though no group of significant size does badly. There are also some variations between subjects, which the school has convincing strategies in place to address. Specialist status, for example, is beginning to make a difference in science. Standards have risen consistently over the last decade and for the last four years have done so at a rate that is well above the national rate of improvement. The school has good evidence to suggest that they are likely to rise again this year. Attainment on entry to the school is a little below the national average, and it therefore represents good, and for some pupils excellent, progress that they achieve the results they do. Those pupils who enter the school with the worst prior attainment, including those with learning difficulties, make the greatest advance. Paradoxically, the higher attainers make only satisfactory progress, and the school achieves fewer top grades at GCSE than it might. The school sets itself, and largely meets, challenging targets. Few schools working in comparably difficult contexts do better.

### **Grade 2**

### **How good are the personal development and well-being of learners?**

The pupils emerge from their education as a credit to their school and to their parents. In the early years of secondary education, they are enthusiastic, noisy, ebullient and well-meaning. Through the care, discipline and wealth of experience they receive, they become poised, articulate, responsible and

concerned for others. The older pupils readily take responsibility, and in fact make a valuable contribution to the smooth operation of the school through their cooperative and friendly relationship with staff. Pupils learn to care about their own well-being, health and safety and are generously ready to contribute to that of others through a range of charitable and community activities. Through the active and influential school council, they receive a valuable grounding in democracy. They learn teamwork, and though they are rarely silent, they behave well and attend readily, because they expect school to be fun. Their values are securely grounded in Christian principles, and by the time they leave, they have the self-confidence and sophistication to apply them to adult and working life.

## **Grade 1**

# **The Quality of Provision**

## **How effective are teaching and learning?**

The school believes that it offers teaching which is broadly good, with a little that is outstanding and a little that is just satisfactory. We believe that the teaching is more variable than this, with more at both extremes. We also agree with the school's assessment of the need to improve teaching in few departments. Its strategy for doing so is convincing, but not yet complete. The joint observations of teaching undertaken by inspectors alongside senior managers convinced us that, while their observations were rigorous, they were inclined to focus too much on the details of teaching processes. The key point is whether the pupils are learning.

That caveat aside, teaching in the school, including the sixth form, is well informed, up-to-date, enthusiastic and well planned. The school has many long-serving teachers, and uses a variety of innovative strategies (such as the provision of day-care for the children of staff) to retain good teachers. Many staff move on to promotion elsewhere. Where there are changes in personnel, the school ensures by effective mentoring and a strong commitment to professional development that new arrivals at least maintain the current high standard of professional performance. The teaching supports good progress and is underpinned by detailed and effective assessment. Pupils enjoy their work, and have a good idea of how well they are doing at it. Their enthusiasm, particularly among the younger pupils, can occasionally turn into over-excitement. When this happens, it is well managed, despite the many constraints imposed by a cramped site and buildings some of which require updating and refurbishment, and are operating at the limits of their capacity.

## **Grade 2**

## **How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?**

Pupils are mostly well served by the curriculum. They make good progress, attend regularly and enjoy both their work and the extraordinary range of cultural opportunities open to them. Education for health, safety and citizenship is good, and the skills of literacy and numeracy are well developed. The 14-19 curriculum has had some recent development, but not enough. The relative lack of vocational alternatives closes progression routes which are potentially valuable for a significant minority of pupils.

### **Grade 2**

## **How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

The care, guidance and support provided to all pupils are exemplary. One pupil described her journey to school thus: "A typical day starts with a long walk through the old rotting building, then through the garbage house before getting to the bus stop. It takes about 10 to 15 minutes. The buses always take long, and traffic is bad." This is not typical of all pupils, but it is the daily reality for many. Outside school or the home, pupils neither feel safe, nor are they. Inside school, or on the approaches to it, they are as safe as the commitment and devotion of the staff can make them. Arrangements for child protection are in place, understood and followed, though more training is needed, in addition to what has already been provided, and some aspects of the policy require strengthening. Early warning and referral systems identify potentially vulnerable girls, who are subsequently well supported. In some cases, intervention by the school has had a crucial impact in ensuring the well-being of individual girls.

### **Grade 1**

## **Leadership and Management**

The school rates its leadership and management as merely good, largely because it believes that there is still much to be done. There is, but it is precisely that relentless refusal to be satisfied, that sense of worlds still to conquer that makes the school so rare and valuable a place. At the centre of this is the headteacher, well supported and challenged by the chair of governors and assisted by a committed and effective senior team. The headteacher has communicated her commitment to the achievement and development of the children to an unusual degree. She both sets a clear direction and, in her close and systematic attention to detail, exemplifies the behaviour she intends that all in the school should adopt. Courtesy, firmness, enjoyment and adherence to principle are the keynote. She and managers at all

levels have a keen sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and an outstanding record in bringing about improvement. The school asserts and believes in the primacy of the individual child and knows, more than most, how to dismantle any barriers to achievement. Management also has a strong commitment to the development of staff and has been successful in securing funds to support a series of initiatives, given cohesion by the values that infuse all the school's work. The school monitors the use of funding effectively, and secures good value for money. Through effective communication with parents and through links, local and national, with schools and other bodies, the school has done much to disseminate its compelling and kindly vision of what, at its best, inner city education can be.

### **Grade 1**

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## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</b>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	*	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>

**ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	<b>1</b>	

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING**

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
The behaviour of learners	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
How well learners enjoy their education	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

**THE QUALITY OF PROVISION**

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>How well does the provision promote the well-being of learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

**LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	<b>1</b>	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	<b>2</b>	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	<b>2</b>	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	<b>2</b>	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	<b>1</b>	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y/N</b>

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Y
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Y
Learners are taught about sexual health risks	Y
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Y
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Procedures for Child Protection meet the requirements of <i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i>	Y
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Y
<b>How well learners enjoy and achieve</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Support is given to learners with poor behaviour and attendance	Y
Learners' personal and academic development are monitored	Y
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Y
Learners, individually and collectively, are consulted when key decisions affecting them have to be made and their views are listened to	Y
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Y
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Y
Learners have opportunities to develop their enterprise and financial skills, and work in teams	Y
Education and training for all learners in 14-19 is co-ordinated to give experience of work based learning	Y

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## Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

St.Saviour's and St.Olave's School,  
New Kent Road  
London  
SE1 4AN

11 June 2005

Dear Students

My colleagues and I greatly enjoyed visiting your school last week. It was fun to talk to you, and to share your obvious pleasure in your school. Many of you said to us that you love and are proud of your school. We think you are absolutely right. It is a great school, with excellent teachers and outstanding pupils. The best part of our job as inspectors is to see children doing well. Last week was therefore a high point for all of us.

Apart from your outstanding headteacher, the main strength of your school is you. We saw you being a bit noisy at times, but apart from that you behave well, and are a pleasure for your teachers to be with. We do not think there are any real weaknesses in your school. The main strengths are:

- outstanding leadership by the head and senior staff
- good teaching
- a fantastic range of clubs, trips abroad, theatre visits and social and cultural opportunities of all kinds
- the relationships between staff and pupils; you like each other and work well together
- the way you take responsibility, for example through the school council
- the way staff look after you, teach you to adopt a healthy lifestyle and do all they can to make you feel safe
- the good progress you make in your work.

We have made a few recommendations, in order to make an excellent school even better. We think there are one or two things the school can do to improve the good teaching to outstanding. We would like a bit more emphasis on the most able girls, and we think there could be more vocational options in years 9-13.

In many ways, however, your school was one of the best we have ever seen. I want to end by congratulating you on your good luck in being there, and to thank you for being such a credit to yourselves, your parents and your school.

David Singleton OBE HMI