

# St Philip's CofE Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110840
<b>Local Authority</b>	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310437
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Wynford-Jones

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	301
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Cheryl Lowe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Siobhan Rouse
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	2 Vinery Way Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3DR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 508707
<b>Fax number</b>	01223508708

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves a diverse community and is slightly larger than most primary schools. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The proportions of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well above the national average. As is the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language. The school holds the Healthy School, Basic Skills and the International Schools Awards. The Headteacher was appointed in September 2004.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It provides sound value for money. The school's strengths are in its welcoming and inclusive ethos, the good care, guidance and support provided, and the promotion of the pupils' personal development. Inspectors understand why a parent wrote, 'St Philips is a caring school. It is good at promoting children's self-esteem and in valuing different cultures'.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are kind to each other and take pride in supporting each other by acting as playground friends. They have a good understanding of healthy living, attendance is improving and pupils are increasingly enjoying their education. Their behaviour is good. Pupils grow in confidence and feel safe in school. This is because all staff place significant emphasis on the well-being of pupils, know them well and the relationships are good.

Standards are broadly average in reading, mathematics and science, but standards in writing in most classes are below those expected. The school has recognised that raising standards in English, mathematics and science is a priority and that writing is a key area for development. In order to bring about these improvements, the staff are trying to achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. Currently, teaching varies from outstanding to satisfactory. As a result, the progress pupils make is uneven but overall, their achievement and the quality of teaching are satisfactory. The school is working successfully with the local authority to improve consistency in provision. Recent changes to the organisation and the way the curriculum is taught, the good range of extra-curricular activities, combined with improved assessment procedures and pupils' clear learning targets are leading to improvements in standards.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and comply with the latest government requirements. Leaders and managers have correctly identified the areas for development and put in place appropriate strategies to bring about improvements. This includes the setting of reasonably challenging targets. The school development plan is satisfactory but the measures by which its success is to be evaluated are not sufficiently clear. This is restricting the governing body in holding the school to account. However, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved and the attendance rate is nearer the national average, thus, demonstrating the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below expectations. Children settle quickly because of the high level of care and sensitive encouragement afforded them. New children are already beginning to join in with songs and actions. This positive start combined with good teaching in the Nursery and the Reception enables children to make good progress. By the time they start in Year 1, most are attaining the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning, although language and writing skills have been historically weaker. These weaker areas are being systematically improved through a revised curriculum and thorough assessment procedures. The curriculum is enlivened by innovative special days, when Reception and Nursery children

work together well on solving problems or activities with an international flavour. The outdoor area is used well to promote the children's physical, creative and social development.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that all pupils make good progress and attain higher standards in English, mathematics and science but particularly in writing.
- Refine the school development plan to include precise measures by which its success can be monitored and evaluated, and which place an appropriate emphasis on improving standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In 2007, standards at the end of Year 2 were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the Year 6 national tests, pupils' achievement was broadly satisfactory. Overall, standards were at the lower end of the average range. Standards in mathematics were below average and lower than the previous year. However, over the last five years, the results in the Year 6 tests show an improving trend. Standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are broadly average. Standards in mathematics in Year 6 are much higher than the previous year and close to national expectations, but standards in writing in Years 2, 5 and 6 are lower than those expected nationally. The steady improvements can be attributed to the better use of assessment to plan lessons, the tracking of pupils' performance to identify when pupils are falling behind and the setting of clear targets. However, the variability in the quality of teaching means that pupils' progress throughout the school is uneven. Pupils with learning difficulties and those speaking English as an additional language receive appropriate support enabling them to make satisfactory progress and reach reasonable standards by the time they leave the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' behaviour is good and they enjoy learning. This is because the school has good systems to help them to understand the importance of good behaviour and to ensure their learning is not interrupted by negative influences. Pupils' respond enthusiastically to the wide range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities provided. They enjoy the partnership work with a school in Ghana. This has helped them gain a well-developed understanding about some other countries and different lives. Closer to home, links with influential community partners and gardening on the school allotment ensures that pupils have a well-rounded sense of belonging and understand the importance of working to help others. Pupils are keen to take responsibility as playground friends or as members of the school council. Some are now ready to take on further responsibilities as school council officers. An increasing number know how to keep healthy and fit. The uptake of sports has increased because there is an expanding range of enjoyable activities on offer. Attendance is improving gradually, because of some very effective school systems. It is now almost in line with the national average, showing good progress since the last inspection. Pupils leave the school well prepared socially for secondary school and able to cope adequately with the academic demands placed on them.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

There are significant variations in the quality of teaching. In the most successful lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm infects pupils with the desire to learn. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to explain teaching points so that pupils have a secure base on which to build. As a result, they work rapidly, with high levels of enjoyment and make good progress. In contrast, in some lessons pupils make only satisfactory progress because the lessons lack pace and focus. In all classes, pupils' behaviour is managed well and with sensitivity. As a result, relationships are good and there is a calm learning environment. Teaching assistants provide valuable support but in some lessons are not always used to best effect. Lesson planning is otherwise thorough. The use of assessment information to plan challenging tasks for pupils, particularly for those capable of completing harder work, is inconsistent. Questioning skills are mostly well developed and most teachers use these skills well to engage pupils and give them confidence. However, questions are not always accurately targeted to consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and interesting. The school has reviewed the curriculum by placing more emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics, introduced the teaching of French, and more links between subjects to develop pupils' skills and ability to understand the work. This is adding further stimulus and meaning to learning and encouraging pupils to become independent learners. These changes are beginning to make an impact and result in improving standards. A good range of visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning. In addition, pupils enjoy activity days and weeks such as 'international week' and creative productions and such events make a strong contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. A large number of pupils attend a varied range of extra-curricular clubs, which meet a range of preferences including sports, creative and recreational activities. Personal, social and health education is a strong feature of the school and supports pupils' personal development well. It ensures pupils are aware of health issues and makes a strong contribution to the development of their moral and social skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The welfare of the pupils is central to the work of the school and the pastoral support provided is good. A caring and supportive ethos results in secure and well-motivated pupils who enjoy school. Safeguarding procedures are secure and regularly reviewed. Risk assessments are robust. The support provided for vulnerable pupils and those who may be experiencing difficult personal circumstances is good. Effective links with a wide range of external agencies ensures that support is matched well to individual needs. Marking is of variable quality but the best, particularly in English, recognises what pupils have done well and identifies an area that needs to be developed. Pupils know their learning targets and how well they are doing. They are involved in assessing their own and others' work and are aware of how to make judgements, including their understanding and use of 'success criteria'. To help older pupils understand

their progress better, the headteacher holds very helpful individual learning interviews with each Year 6 pupil each term.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school operates smoothly on a day-to-day basis. All staff work together effectively to promote the welcoming and inclusive ethos of the school. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to promote pupils' well-being. The headteacher and Chair of Governors work together well. They provide good leadership and have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Recent initiatives are having an impact and standards are rising. Senior managers and curriculum coordinators undertake their roles satisfactorily but need to evaluate the school's performance more realistically against external criteria. The school development plan is satisfactory. The format is good but the measures by which its success can be evaluated lack precision and do not link to raising standards in English, mathematics and science. As a result, expectations are not explicit and governors are unable to challenge the school sufficiently on the standards it is achieving. Governors are good advocates for the school; they are supportive and fully appreciate the work undertaken to support pupils' personal development.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Philip's C of E Aided, Vinery Way, Cambridge. CB1 3DR

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you. We thought you would like to know what we thought about your school. We were very pleased to hear that you like coming to school and to see that your attendance is improving. You behave well and are keen to take responsibility. It was very nice to see you look after each other in such a caring way. It is not difficult to understand why we found your personal development to be good. You know about being safe and have a good understanding of healthy living. You take part in sporting activities but some of you, although you know about healthy eating, do not always choose to eat healthy food.

Overall, the school provides you with a satisfactory education. The youngest children get off to a good start in the nursery and in the reception classes. Your headteacher, teachers and other staff look after you well. They make certain you are safe and give you guidance on how to improve your work. We know this because you could tell us your targets for improvement. When we looked at your work, we found that it is improving and that the standards you reach are similar to those reached by pupils of your age. Overall, you are making satisfactory progress, but we believe that the standards you reach in reading, writing, mathematics and science could be higher. To help you achieve this we have asked your teachers to make certain that they teach every lesson as well as they can. We have also asked your headteacher and governors to look at the school development plan to make certain it includes 'success criteria' (I know you know what this means because I have heard you refer to them in your lessons) that link to raising standards in English, mathematics and science.

We know that the teachers have plans for lots of exciting things for you to do. They have looked carefully at the curriculum and made some changes. We think the curriculum plans are good, especially as they include the links with schools in other countries. It up to you now to work hard and enjoy your education at St Philip's. Let us see those standards continue to improve. You can do it!

With best wishes

David Wynford Jones

Lead inspector