

St Edward's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102328
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	335878
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	705
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	The Reverend S J Waine
Headteacher	Mrs Petula Allen
Date of previous school inspection	6 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons, attended assemblies, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and two governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment information, pupils' books, pupils' records and improvement plans. The team received and analysed 272 parental questionnaires, 99 responses to the Key Stage 2 pupils' survey and 39 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- The accuracy with which the school judges the quality of its teaching and learning.
- Whether the decline in attainment as represented by Year 6 test results in 2009 has been reversed.
- How effectively both the academic and personal development of vulnerable pupils is supported.

Information about the school

This very large primary school serves an increasingly diverse community. Almost 20% of pupils are of Black African heritage. The proportion of pupils with a mother tongue other than English has increased but is still below average and there are no pupils at an early stage of learning English. Free school meal eligibility is much lower than in most primary schools as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has received the Silver Artsmark award and has achieved International School Status.

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

The headteacher has built on the school's strengths since the last inspection, in spite of the lower Year 6 test results in 2009 compared with previous years. Prior to 2009 Year 6 test results had been consistently well above average for some time and much improved in mathematics, demonstrating pupils' rapid progress from their average skills on entry. Last year, Year 6 pupils made slower progress than had previously been the case, particularly in English. As a result of a lack of consistency in tracking progress, the school was not able to intervene early enough to limit any emerging problems.

This dip was temporary and has been reversed for the current Year 6, because of the high quality of the teaching in this year group. Furthermore, across the school, the large majority of pupils make good progress because teaching moves their learning forward at a good pace. When not the case, it is largely because teachers in a small minority of lessons do not use assessment information well enough to plan lessons that address the learning needs of all pupils effectively. The pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour contribute very considerably to their learning and motivation. Nevertheless, some are not clear about the steps to take to improve their learning because their targets are not specific to an individual, and marking is not consistently helpful to them.

The pupils take very seriously their responsibilities for encouraging everyone to treat each other with great consideration and respect. They are very proud of and committed to their school, and are aware that their strong voice in decision-making is greatly valued. Pupils fully understand how to stay healthy. They thoroughly enjoy the extensive opportunities for sport and other physical activities. They also take a lead, through the school's nutrition group and by working with the 'Food Trust', in promoting a balanced and healthy approach to diet. Parents and pupils greatly value the high quality of the care taken to support and guide all pupils. For this reason, almost all pupils say they feel very safe when in the school, and as one put it, 'Our school is like a big family and we look out for each other'.

The pupils' learning experiences benefit very considerably from a wide range of interesting and exciting activities within and beyond the school day as recognised by the award for its work in creative arts. The headteacher's commitment to working with others enables expertise to be brought in to extend the pupils' experiences such as in sport and French. The wider world enters their lives in many ways as reflected in the gaining of International School Status.

The school has built good capacity for sustained improvement and can point to steady improvements in recent years and, with the exception of last year, outstanding outcomes for pupils over many years. Leaders at all levels undertake regular monitoring

activities, and consequently the headteacher, staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's qualities. However, in some instances the use made of monitoring information and assessment data is not fully effective. Consequently, there are occasions when there is not a sufficiently sharp evaluation of the impact of action on the pupils' learning such as improving lesson planning. Similarly, improvement planning is not consistently focused on a few key priorities aimed at better outcomes for the pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make better and more consistent use of assessment data and monitoring information to:
 - plan consistently for the next steps in each pupils' learning
 - help pupils to be clear about how to meet personal learning targets
 - evaluate more closely the impact of the school's work on outcomes for the pupils
 - track the progress of pupils more closely and frequently
 - sustain a sharp focus on key priorities for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The pupils' high levels of motivation, coupled with teaching that makes lessons interesting and enjoyable, results in good learning and achievement. Attainment is high and the pupils extend and apply their very well developed literacy, numeracy and computer skills very effectively for a broad range of purposes on a daily basis. They have enquiring minds and relish the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and ideas with others. Their hard work, regular attendance and very well developed skills of leadership, teamwork and collaboration provide them with a very secure base from which to be successful in the next stage of their education and beyond. All groups of pupils make similarly good progress whether they need support because they find learning difficult or need challenging because they are capable of the highest standards.

The pupils greatly enjoy school and, particularly, the additional activities provided for them. They have a strong appreciation of the customs and cultural backgrounds of others, and have a strong moral code based on the school's clear Christian ethos. They show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves and by the time they reach the top of the school many pupils are able to reflect deeply on the lives and experiences of others. This was demonstrated well when Year 6 pupils thoughtfully considered the plight of evacuees in the second world war, evoked by watching a very moving video clip. The pupils engage very effectively with a wide range of groups beyond the school including those associated with the parish and other community organisations. They are keen and frequent participants in local sporting and cultural events. Through their eco-council, the pupils show great concern for issues affecting them and the environment. As one pupil explained, 'As we get older we become much more aware of

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

things that go on in the world.'

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are very calm and well managed places in which to learn. This is because pupils understand and accept their teachers' requirements for their work, behaviour and contribution to lessons. In a large majority of lessons teachers effectively engage the pupils in their learning through questions that challenge and extend thinking. They use assessment well to provide activities that are varied, interesting and matched well to the lesson's aims as well as to the pupils' individual learning needs. In a small minority of lessons learning is only satisfactory because assessment is not used sufficiently well in planning to focus sharply on the needs of all pupils.

Teachers generally deploy support staff well, although on occasions their skills are not fully utilised during sessions led by the teacher.

Each day is a series of interesting activities designed so that the pupils can develop skills needed to become more independent and take the initiative for their learning. The pupils' experiences are greatly enriched by a wide range of activities to extend their

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

learning. These are a highlight of their life in school and include a varied programme to complement normal lessons. Highlights include themed history days, science week, the Year 6 residential trips and other educational visits to support learning and the pupils' personal development. Additional activities are organised to extend the experiences of those identified as being talented in a particular field.

The school now uses its assessment information well to provide carefully targeted support or adaptations to programmes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Even though this is a very large school, the specific circumstances of individual pupils are well known to staff so that there is no danger of personal or academic problems going undetected. Very good transition arrangements into the school, between stages and subsequently in preparing pupils for the next phase of their education, generate great confidence and rapid settling into new surroundings. The wide range of very effective work with families, supported by expertise from other agencies, sustains the learning and development of pupils who face major challenges in their lives.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The staff team pulls together well in supporting the headteacher's drive and ambition for the school and the pupils. One example has been the improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. The new leadership structure has enhanced the role and effectiveness of middle leaders in each curriculum area. While there is now a strong focus on improving classroom practice across the curriculum, not all teachers yet have a clear view of what leads to more effective learning for the pupils. Monitoring is well established at all levels of leadership and management although on occasions procedures and planning outcomes are not sufficiently sharply focused.

The school has secure arrangements for safeguarding the well-being of the pupils and to ensure that those working with the pupils are properly vetted. Governors check carefully the impact of policy in this area as well as on the performance of the school in general. The governing body is led well. Careful financial planning has enabled the school to eliminate the budget deficit faced by the headteacher on her appointment three years ago.

The school is a very happy and harmonious community in which pupils of all backgrounds feel safe and secure. Everything is done to ensure that no pupil is left

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

behind, and all are treated equally. The school is successful in removing any barriers that might impede individual development. It makes a strong contribution to the local and wider communities, reaching out to others in many ways. Staff and governors understand the school's context well and participate fully in activities to support pupils and their families.

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
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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The children's good start to their school life in the Nursery and Reception classes is based on teaching that makes the most of an interesting and stimulating range of learning activities. Teachers link learning between inside and outdoors well. They carefully balance opportunities for children to initiate activities along with those directed by adults. This enables the children to make good progress and to become confident learners. Consequently, by the time they leave Reception the majority of children have reached goals expected for their age in almost all areas of their learning. They are keen and motivated by the activities. Their good behaviour and awareness of safety contribute much to the happy and secure environment in all classes. The one area where their progress is slower is in aspects of their literacy development, particularly writing. This is because opportunities for developing writing skills play a less prominent role than the focus on other areas of learning. The school acknowledges the need to improve provision for literacy, with appropriate plans now in place.

Links with home and other local providers help to smooth the transfer of children into the setting. Teachers and other adults build positive relationships by understanding the circumstances and needs of each child. Where they are slightly less successful is in

consistently using this information to plan activities focused on each child's specific learning needs.

Those charged with leading the area have a clear idea about what is needed to improve outcomes for the children. As yet, the impact of any action taken is limited as several key developments are in their infancy. There is a common sense of purpose shared well by all adults within the team.

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

Parents are largely in support of the work of the school as shown by the proportion of positive responses and comments received to the inspection questionnaire. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school and the way they are helped to become safe and healthy. These are matters supported by the inspection team.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Edward's Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 272 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 705 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	158	58	107	39	5	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	168	62	92	34	6	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	133	49	127	47	9	3	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	128	47	125	46	9	3	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	157	58	105	39	7	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	134	49	115	42	19	7	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	168	62	92	34	8	3	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)	103	38	137	50	8	3	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	123	45	129	47	10	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	101	37	125	46	23	8	8	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	80	29	139	51	27	10	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	128	47	118	43	13	5	6	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	166	61	93	34	12	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Edward's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Romford, RM1 4BT

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We were pleased to see how much you enjoy school and we agree with you that your teachers take very good care of you. You also take very good care of each other. Well done. Your behaviour is excellent and those of you who have special jobs, like members of the school council, carry out your duties responsibly. Thank you for sharing your views with us. You make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future and becoming mature and responsible people. This is because you are taught well and have very interesting things to learn. You clearly enjoy the wide range of exciting activities provided for you.

Your headteacher, other staff and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. We have asked them to make better use of the information they gain about you from frequent assessment activities to:

- move learning forward more rapidly for everyone and check you are all making the best possible progress
- help you to understand the steps you can take to meet personal learning targets
- make sure that all the new ideas they introduce really benefit your academic or personal development.

I am sure that you and your teachers will work hard to make these improvements. You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to take such great pride in your school and continuing to be so enthusiastic about learning.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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