

All Souls' Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118870
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339313
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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	279
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Hilary Jones
Headteacher	Annie Wiles
Date of previous school inspection	5 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. On the second day of the inspection, only a small proportion of pupils were able to get to school following a heavy snow fall; classes were amalgamated as some staff were unable to travel to school.

Inspectors looked at a wide range of evidence. Close to three quarters of inspectors' time focused on pupils' learning. In total, 10 out of the 13 teachers were observed as part of the 13 lessons/part lessons observed. Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and evaluated their progress using the school's assessment information. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and two governors. Inspectors evaluated a range of documentation, including the school's improvement planning and safeguarding information. In total, 69 parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed, together with pupil and staff questionnaires.

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

- how well children do in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in developing their language, reading and writing skills
- progress and learning between Years 3 and 6 in writing, science and mathematics, focusing on White British pupils, those who have been at the school for a long time and those who joined the school more recently
- the support for pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how effectively teaching enables all groups of pupils to do as well as possible
- the effectiveness of community cohesion and how the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination.

Information about the school

All Souls' is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is average but has been rising in recent years. Just over 40% of all pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is much higher than average. Pupils' needs most often relate to behavioural and emotional difficulties, dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorders and visual impairment.

Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage Reception class. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, but the proportion coming from other ethnic groups has increased considerably in the last three years, as has the proportion speaking English as an additional language. A third of all pupils are from Asian heritages; within this group, a quarter of all pupils come from Ghurkha army or Nepalese service families. Pupils also come from other White European backgrounds. The movement of army families leads to a much higher than average proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school throughout the year. Some pupils leave the school for three to four years and then return. The school often takes in new pupils who have not thrived at other schools and need a fresh start.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

All Souls' is a satisfactory and improving school that is well led by the headteacher. She is supported by very committed staff and governors. All staff are dedicated to the pupils. Relationships and the care provided are outstanding. Pupils feel that the school is a haven of happiness and say they feel very safe. They are valued as unique individuals and help each other in a kind and friendly way. All pupils grow in confidence and gain self-esteem. Pupils who are new to the school settle in very quickly. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some lessons are good, but occasionally opportunities are missed to provide challenging activities for all groups of learners. Pupils work hard. The curriculum has been modified well since the last inspection to make learning enjoyable and fun.

Leaders and staff are outward-looking, seeking to capitalise on links both locally and in the wider community for the benefit of pupils and their families. As a consequence, the school is at the centre of the local community. Pupils demonstrate from outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff reach out to support and include different groups of parents and carers in an outstanding way. It is not surprising that parents have great confidence in the work of the school.

As a result of effective self-evaluation, leaders have taken action to raise attainment in mathematics. This is beginning to accelerate pupils' progress. For example, pupils are becoming more adept at doing basic calculations and then using these skills to work out real-life mathematical problems. Nevertheless, progress remains inconsistent in this aspect of mathematics. Writing remains an area for improvement. Children in the Reception class have too few opportunities to develop their skills and, throughout the school, teachers' marking does not show pupils clearly enough how to improve their writing. As a result, they are not progressing as quickly as possible from one level of attainment to the next. Well-focused plans are in place to improve learning in writing and mathematics in order to lift pupils' achievement from satisfactory to good.

In several ways, leaders show a good capacity to improve, especially through their drive, ambition and clear improvement planning. However, the very high incidence of pupils joining and leaving the school is a major barrier to raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress. This is a significant factor in why the capacity to improve is judged to be satisfactory rather than good. Leaders check individual pupils' progress well, but they do not evaluate the progress of all groups as systematically as they might, in particular by comparing the rates of progress of pupils who are relatively new to the school with those in the same year group who have been at the school for much longer.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment and achievement in writing and mathematics by July 2010 by:
 - ensuring tasks are challenging for all groups of pupils in lessons
 - marking pupils' written work as effectively as possible so that teachers' comments link directly to pupils' targets and give pupils very clear guidance about how to improve their skills
 - providing more opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to write for different purposes
 - providing consistently good opportunities for pupils to develop calculation skills and to increase their competence in tackling and solving real-life problems in mathematics.
- Build on the work started to help all leaders to analyse pupils' progress to very best effect by comparing the rates of progress of pupils who are relatively new to the school with those in the same year group who have been at the school for much longer.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Satisfactory academic achievement and average attainment enable pupils to leave the school adequately prepared for their future lives. To make this better still, the school is beginning to focus more on helping White British pupils to do as well as other ethnic groups. Those learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall but they do very well in overcoming emotional and behavioural difficulties, due to the good support they receive.

In the lessons seen, pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning. For example, they had great fun pretending to be sheep in pens during a mathematics lesson. This helped pupils to understand tens and units well. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to undertake problem-solving activities and, in particular, to record how they solve problems in a clear, step-by-step way. Achievement in science is improving, as was evident when Year 6 pupils experimented with light filters to design glasses for sun and snow. In all lessons, pupils behaved well. Many commented that they feel very safe and happy.

All pupils make a strong contribution to the community through such things as music, gardening and sports. During the inspection, pupils learnt about the cultural heritage of Australians, Mexicans, Chinese and Welsh, to name just a few! Pupils take an active part in church services and write sensitive prayers. They were excited to contribute to 'Voices of the Future' at the Royal Opera House.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The school places a very high priority on the training and professional development of staff. As a result, teaching is improving, learning is satisfactory and some lessons are good. For example, Years 5 and 6 were excited by making dragon puppets for Chinese New Year and this helped them to develop their understanding of mathematical shapes and accurate measuring. Teachers mostly plan lessons well to cater for pupils' wide-ranging needs, but sometimes there is insufficient challenge for the most able pupils. Teachers help pupils to use new vocabulary and to talk about their ideas confidently. This was seen when pupils shared their ideas for writing a story about a princess and a dragon. Sometimes the pace of learning slows and adults miss opportunities to demonstrate how pupils might extend their writing ideas. Although pupils produce some extended pieces of writing, marking does not guide them well enough in how to edit the text and improve their skills. Moreover, marking is not sharply linked to pupils' otherwise helpful individual targets. Teachers' skilful use of interactive whiteboards enhances pupils' understanding of what they are learning about. Pupils benefit from a very good range of clubs, activities and specialist music teaching. The curriculum helps pupils to understand about the wider world very well. Pupils have the chance to learn French, Spanish, German and Nepalese. They have Egyptian pen pals and do much fundraising for children in Uganda and for other charities. Links with All Souls' Church are very good and pupils have the opportunity to visit other places of

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

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worship, such as a Hindu temple.

Staff show a superb awareness of how to support pupils' emotional and social needs. Pupils learn how to cope with their emotions, behaviour and worries due to the excellent care and support given. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and visual impairment are given excellent support, and links with outside professionals considerably enhance this. Excellent liaison with Nepalese families helps them to support pupils' learning and strengthen community cohesion.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, the headteacher has successfully developed the management skills of other leaders, so that they show clear drive and ambition to help pupils reach their full potential. They evaluate the work of the school and have recently become better at taking prompt action to improve, especially in science and mathematics. They also ensure that any pupils who have made slow progress receive additional focused support. The improved tracking procedures are aiding this. Governors support other leaders well. They ask challenging questions of staff to ensure that the improvement plans are focused on the most important priorities to improve teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils. Safeguarding procedures are good and contribute to the outstanding care of all pupils and especially the most vulnerable.

The school works in a focused way to promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination by working to close the gap between the achievements of different groups, as recognised in its Inclusion Quality Mark award. For example, leaders recently reorganised the daily timetable to allow an extra half-hour a day to be dedicated to individual and small group work. These sessions are used to challenge the most able and give support to those who are struggling to understand an idea or skill. This initiative is new and the full impact is yet to be seen.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Parents' and pupils' cultural differences are shared and valued; this helps to make an inclusive and harmonious school. The Family Liaison Officer makes an outstanding contribution by forging valuable links with the local community. The school promotes global awareness well. Opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge of White British culture beyond the immediate locality are less well developed.

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

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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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved due to the impact of satisfactory leadership and by taking part in the 'Making a difference' project. This project is focused on helping to raise the attainment of children. Satisfactory teaching and learning are enhanced by excellent relationships and a very strong partnership with parents and carers. Children enjoy a suitable range of activities but opportunities are missed to extend their learning according to their various abilities. There are adequate opportunities for outdoor learning but the outside area is extremely cramped and some resources are rather worn. Plans are well underway to improve the outside area and these started in September 2009, but there is still more to do.

Children develop good personal skills, such as cooperating with others. They behave well and persevere with tasks. Their speaking skills are also developing effectively, as adults talk to children a great deal. Children were seen enjoying many modelling activities and role play, which helps them to develop their thinking and imagination well. Children were thoroughly excited by raising the pirate flag on the ship and invented an exciting adventure about sailing on the sea.

From children's lower than expected starting points, they make satisfactory progress. Nonetheless, standards remain lower than average by the end of the Reception Year in reading, creative development and, especially, in writing. In reading, assessment opportunities are not systematic enough to enable teachers to speed up children's progress. In writing, children enjoy making little books and learning handwriting skills, but opportunities are missed to develop writing through play and self-chosen activities.

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

A lack of exciting resources hampers better creative development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very pleased with the school overall and speak highly of the care given to their children. They feel that they learn well and make the progress expected to enable them to be ready for their next schools. A few parents wrote comments noting that they feel that the school could listen to their views more. Inspectors found that the school has an open door policy and regularly seeks parents' and carers' views. A few parents also noted that mathematics could be better taught. Inspectors confirm that the school is working to improve this. Almost all parents and carers feel that the school is well run and all say that their children enjoy attending. As one parent put it: 'The school is happy and teachers always put the children first.' The fact that the school was the only school in Folkestone that remained open following very heavy snow is testament to the commitment of staff to do the best for the pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at All Souls' C of E 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 279 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	65	24	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	61	27	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	45	30	43	8	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	41	34	49	6	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	55	25	36	5	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	45	32	46	3	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	41	38	55	1	1	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)	27	39	33	48	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	42	34	49	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	33	39	57	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	30	41	59	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	41	34	49	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	49	31	45	2	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 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.



13 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Souls' Church of England Primary School, Folkestone, CT19 4LG

You may remember that three school inspectors visited your school recently. Well done to those of you who managed to get to school in the heavy snow! Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we spoke to you. Your school is satisfactory and improving because the adults are very dedicated to making it a special place for you. We agree with you that you go to a very happy school. The staff are very caring. Everyone works very closely with your parents, which is fantastic as the school is at the centre of your local community. We were delighted to see you having fun and enjoying your lessons. We especially liked seeing you learning about so many different people's lives and different religions. Well done for behaving well, and being respectful and kind to others. Your teachers help you to learn new and interesting things and talk about your ideas, As a result you make steady progress.

We have asked the adults to make the school even better for you by:

- helping you to make even faster progress in mathematics so that you do even more interesting calculations and real-life problem-solving activities
- showing you more clearly how to improve your writing and making sure that the youngest children in the Reception classes also do more writing
- checking even more carefully how much progress you are all making, especially comparing those of you who have joined the school more recently with those who have been at the school for longer
- making sure that you always have challenging things to do.

It was lovely to meet you, and good luck in the future. Keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons

Lead inspector

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