

# St Andrew's CofE Infant School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	110443
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	288676
Inspection dates	15 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Mr John Earish

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

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Type of School	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5-8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	29
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Ms A Shedden
Date of previous school inspection	06 July 2005
School address	High Street Great Linford Milton Keynes MK14 5AX
Telephone number	01908 605515
Fax number	01908 675715

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small infant school. About a half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a small number are at the very earliest stages of learning English. Attainment when children start school is similar to that expected of four-year-olds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to that found nationally. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The number of children wanting to attend the school is growing rapidly.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

**Grade: 2**

The school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies.

St Andrew's has made good progress since the last inspection and its overall effectiveness is good. One of the oldest pupils commented, 'we really like our school because its fun, we learn a lot and the teachers are friendly and very helpful'. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and their children's education.

The school has been through a period of great change. The good leadership of the headteacher has created a calm, orderly and purposeful learning environment where all adults and children are equally valued. She has rebuilt staff morale and has gained the respect of parents and governors through her positive actions to bring about improvement.

Pupils' personal development is good because they are well cared for at school and as a result feel secure and happy. Pupils enjoy coming to school and excitedly participate in all activities. They treat each other with respect, behave extremely well and genuinely want to learn. Previous concerns about the rate of attendance no longer apply. It is now well above average. There are strong partnerships with the community and with outside agencies to promote learners' well-being. The school now fully complies with the arrangements for child protection.

Achievement is good because the quality of teaching is good. Teachers are making good use of the new assessment procedures to match work to individual pupils' needs and to set targets to help them to improve. This was previously a weakness. Pupils now make consistently good progress during lessons because teachers have higher expectations of how much they can achieve, and pupils fully understand the targets they are set. This is particularly effective in English and mathematics and enables pupils to improve their work. The school recognises the next step is to extend this very good practice to other subjects so that pupils have equally good guidance on the next steps in their learning.

The curriculum is of good quality, and is enriched through a wide range of out of class activities. It provides opportunities for all learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, to progress and develop well. The learning activities are challenging and exciting, which motivates pupils to engage willingly in lessons, concentrate well and produce a good amount of work. There are occasions, however, when opportunities for higher attaining pupils to learn independently and to show initiative are missed.

Good leadership at all levels has enabled the school to address successfully the serious weaknesses in leadership and management identified at the last inspection. This is because the educational direction provided is ensuring that the pupils make consistently good progress in all classes and achieve well. Self-evaluation involves staff at all levels and provides an accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, reflecting monitoring and analysis that are searching and rigorous. The resulting well-focussed actions are bringing about sustained school improvement. This confirms the school's good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the foundation stage

**Grade: 2**

The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. Children start school with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected of four-years-olds. They make good progress because teaching is of good quality and almost all reach and sometimes exceed the goals by the start of Year 1. The good curriculum promotes children's social, personal, emotional and academic very well.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to work independently and use their initiative in order to sustain rapid progress.
- Extend the very good target setting practice in English and mathematics to other subjects so that pupils have a clear understanding of how they can improve.

## Achievement and standards

**Grade: 2**

There are small numbers of pupils in each year group, which means that comparisons of results from year to year are not helpful. However, the most recent validated results for 2006 show that standards were above average in reading and mathematics and significantly above average in writing. Above average standards have been maintained in 2007. The school's own tracking records show that all groups of pupils are making good progress and are achieving well including that identified with learning difficulties and disabilities. Inspection evidence supports this view. There is no complacency and the school is determined to continue working hard to raise standards even further.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains good. Parents appreciate the strong emphasis on nurturing pupils' personal development. For example, one wrote that, 'this is the best infant school I have ever seen'. Pupils form good relationships with adults and with each other, and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, behaviour is outstanding. They greatly enjoy their education because 'teachers listen to you and help you when you don't understand' with many exciting activities that enrich their lives in school. Pupils are well aware of the importance of healthy eating and staying safe. The recently formed school council take their responsibilities very seriously and represent the pupil's views well. Attendance is well above the national average. This is further evidence that pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils rapidly acquire literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills that equip them well for later life and learning.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall at the last inspection. It has now improved and is good overall. This is because teachers have successfully addressed a serious weakness in the way they plan and monitor pupil's work. They are successfully using the new assessment arrangements to identify, track and support pupils' learning needs, and to set group and individual targets. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve, make consistently good progress and achieve well. Pupils work together well and learn from each other. Learning is interesting, enjoyable and challenging because teachers use a much broader range of teaching styles and methods including the use of interactive white boards and laptop computers. However, on a few occasions teachers fail to make the most of the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to learn independently and show initiative during lessons.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with a good range of additional activities, which pupils thoroughly enjoy. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and includes a good support programmes to boost the progress of pupils who need extra help. The quality and range of the activities in the Foundation Stage are good, with an effective balance between work chosen by the teacher and activities selected by the children. This provides children with a good start to their education. Throughout the school, there is a strong focus on the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. They also develop a strong sense of social responsibility through their work in personal, social and health education and circle time. For example, they recycle waste and make compost for the village. A good range of visits, visitors and extra activities and add much to the pupils' enjoyment of learning.

### Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 2**

The staff take good care of the pupils and know them well. The last inspection required the school to make sure that 'procedures for the protection of children meet statutory requirements and are well known'. The school now meets its obligations in all respects. The very good relationships foster pupils' confidence and build trust between all members of the school community. As a result, pupils say that adults deal with any problems they may have promptly and effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and guided in achieving the challenging targets in their individual education plans. Very good use of target setting in English and mathematics helps pupils understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work. However, this is not yet as effective in all subjects.

## Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership at all levels has enabled the school to eradicate the serious weaknesses identified in leadership and management at the last inspection. Progress had been affected by the local authorities decision to consult on the school's future. Morale had dipped and much time was spent preparing for the consultation. However, the future of the school has been secured. Since then, the headteacher has successfully rebuilt morale and gained the respect of parents and governors. As one parent wrote, 'There has been a remarkable change for the better' under the leadership of 'such a fantastic headteacher'.

The school has successfully implemented rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating provision to establish clear priorities for development. School review is now both searching and rigorous and results in actions to raise attainment and bring about sustained school improvement. This is because the school has clear and agreed criteria for measuring success. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and pupils are achieving well whatever their backgrounds or abilities.

The work of the governing body has also improved despite vacancies and illness. The governors are now more fully involved in determining the strategic direction of the school. For example, they have successfully reduced the large carry forward figure so that it is within national guidelines. Spending has been carefully matched against the priorities of the school improvement plan and monitored against clear success criteria. They are knowledgeable and fully understand the issues facing the school.

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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?	2
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 in the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

## Achievement and standards

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

## 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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

## The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

<sup>2</sup> IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

## Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Annex B

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

29 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's CofE Infant School, Milton Keynes, MK14 5AX

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I was impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other.

Here are some of the good things we found about your school.

- Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave extremely well and get on very well with each other.
- You listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and learn a lot in lessons.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are well looked after.
- Your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are good at making sure that you get the very best education.
- You are taught well, and when you find work hard you are given help.

I think that you go to a good school that prepares you well for the next stage of your learning. To make it even better, however, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities to use your own initiative during lessons and to work independently. They are also going to give you even more help to understand how to improve your work as they are already doing in English and mathematics. You told me you find this very helpful.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and to meet the targets set for you.

With best wishes,

John Earish  
Lead Inspector

