

# St Faith's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116374
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	290518
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Grove

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	139
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Dugdale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Burbridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2001
<b>School address</b>	St Faith's Road St Cross Winchester SO23 9QB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01962 854934
<b>Fax number</b>	01962 854461

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in a residential area of Winchester and is much smaller than the average primary school. The number of boys and girls is very similar overall but the proportion differs from class to class. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low, and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The present headteacher was appointed in June 2006, having previously been the deputy headteacher, and then the acting headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of St Faith's Primary is good. Its ethos reflects well the Christian values to which the school is committed. The school enjoys strong support from a large majority of parents, who are very appreciative of its family atmosphere. This sentiment is well captured by the parent who wrote, 'St Faith's is a wonderful, caring and creative environment for our children'. Most of the teaching staff, including the headteacher, are relatively new to the school, and this includes a newly formed team for Key Stage 1 from September 2006. In a short space of time, a good team spirit has developed among staff, which facilitates the high levels of cooperative working needed to support the school's complex curriculum and staffing organisation.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is good, as is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils greatly enjoy school, as indicated by their above average levels of attendance. School awards such as 'Workers of the Week' serve to reinforce this. Pupils enjoy healthy lifestyles through their participation in physical activities, and feel completely safe at school. They are developing good academic and workplace skills which offer good support for their future economic well-being. They make a satisfactory contribution to the community and to the school.

At the Foundation Stage, quality of provision is good and standards are typically above average. However, this is not the case with every year group. Pupils in Year 2 in 2006, in particular, had lower attainment on entry and had a high proportion of boys with learning difficulties and disabilities. Although pupils' reading attainment in Year 2 remained above average in 2006, their standards in writing were below average. The school has responded in the current year by focusing on pupils' writing across the school through the 'Writing Project'. As a result, inspection evidence shows that pupils' standards in writing at Year 2 are higher, and are now slightly above average, although few pupils attain the high Level 3 standard. Standards in mathematics have been average since 2004, and they remain broadly average because there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge.

In Year 6, pupils' standards were significantly above average in 2006 in English, mathematics and science, and this had also been the case for the previous four years. All groups of pupils attained above average standards. Achievement across the school is good.

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Teachers create good relationships with their pupils and have high expectations which, together, provide a good underpinning for work in class. Most lessons are well paced which engage pupils' interest. Teachers make good informal assessments of pupils' understanding and progress, and build this into planning future work.

The school's curriculum is good, with strengths in some specialist provision in information and communication technology (ICT), French, music and physical education (PE). A good range of extra-curricular provision is offered. Good pastoral care is provided for pupils. Academic guidance is also good. There are effective arrangements for individual target-setting. Support for all pupils is strong and especially for those who are vulnerable.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher has set a very clear direction for improvement including high expectations of achievement and personal development, and an inclusive ethos for the school. Overall, the school's self-evaluation is good, but the work of coordinators does not extend to checking pupils' learning and progress in different subjects. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and

weaknesses. The school has made a number of improvements in the light of the last inspection report. There is evident improvement in the quality and size of the accommodation, in areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and in boys' behaviour. This demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Raise standards of writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- Improve the opportunities for subject coordinators to monitor and evaluate all aspects of pupils' learning and progress in their subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are above average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average, and this is generally consistent year by year, with occasional exceptions. Pupils make good progress in their Reception year, and most pupils attain the nationally expected standards by the time they start Year 1. At Year 2, standards have been significantly above average in most years because progress has been good at Key Stage 1. However, in 2006, progress was only satisfactory for the lower-attaining year group in Year 2. At Key Stage 2, progress has been consistently good, as is shown by the fact that pupils in Year 6 have attained higher results each year since 2004 in all subjects, and most markedly in mathematics and English. In 2006, all groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 continued to make good progress. Inspection evidence shows continuing high standards and good progress at Year 6, so that overall achievement is good.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school and their attentiveness and concentration in lessons are good. Pupils value the positive relationships which they enjoy with their teachers. Their very good social development is evident in the confidence and maturity which they display, and this is well supported through the good role models that teachers offer them. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is good, which shows in their capacity to reflect thoughtfully in school assemblies. Pupils regard the school as a safe place. Participation in the twice-weekly PE and games sessions, and in the after-school sports activities, enables them to pursue healthy living well. Pupils' contributions to the wider community are satisfactory, through their participation in festivals and fund-raising for charities. Within school, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to make positive contributions, but members of the recently reformed school council feel that it has had little impact so far on the school. Pupils develop capabilities which will in future be of value in the workplace, through their good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. They also demonstrate good teamworking skills. For instance, in a task in the Year 4/Year 5 class, pupils cooperated well in groups to pool their individual knowledge to form a timeline of historical periods and events.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Lessons are well planned. Teachers are consistent in their effective use of language to explain and to question pupils. This provides pupils with a good model. The use of praise and

encouragement for pupils is also a consistent aspect of all classrooms. The pace in most teaching is good. Occasionally, teachers miss the chance to change pace at different stages in the lesson, to be more stimulating for pupils. Teachers make high demands on their pupils. In an English lesson in Year 6, for instance, the teacher challenged the pupils to write a paragraph of text using lively expression, and with some adventurous choices of vocabulary. When questioned, the more capable pupils also showed that they could spontaneously describe the sentence structures they had employed, using grammatical terminology such as 'ellipsis' or 'a phrase in apposition'. This illustrates good learning. Good use is made of small whiteboards to enable pupils to practise work quickly, for example in English and mathematics. Teachers make effective assessments of their pupils' progress, and this enables them to match work to their needs. Teaching assistants provide good support, particularly for lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Because of the size of the school, pupils are taught mainly in mixed-age classes, apart from those in Year 6, who are organised as a single year group. However, some literacy and numeracy work now takes place in single year groups of twenty pupils. This is an effective arrangement to facilitate a good match of work to pupils' previous experience. It also leads to good involvement in lessons, and thus promotes good progress. Effective use is made of the interactive whiteboards in classrooms to provide a good stimulus for pupils' work. For example, the teacher of the Reception class modelled how to form cursive letters before the children practised using their individual small whiteboards. Laptop computers are used by pupils to make more personal use of ICT. For instance, Year 6 pupils researched aspects of World War II. However, ICT is not as widely used in other subjects as it could be. A more recent innovation is the 'Writing Project', designed to help raise standards across the school, which is beginning to have a positive impact. Lessons in personal, social and health education support pupils' personal development well through improved understanding of issues such as bullying or substance abuse. Special needs provision is good through a part-time specialist teacher and teaching assistants who support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. There is also effective additional provision for pupils with hearing impairment. A good number of visits and visitors support the curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a strong caring ethos stemming from its Christian foundation. Positive relationships with pupils ensure that pastoral care and guidance are good. Teachers and teaching assistants exercise good care for pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes, including supervision when pupils cross the road to the school field. The persistence of governors has resulted in traffic-calming measures on the road outside the school. There are secure arrangements to ensure effective child protection, and adherence to safeguarding procedures is rigorous. Governors and the headteacher demonstrate a strong commitment to issues of safeguarding, risk assessment and health and safety. Target-setting arrangements are made on a half-termly basis, and the school is good at tracking the extent of pupils' progress. The individual education plans for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities also demonstrate effective target-setting. Pupils' work is regularly marked. This sometimes includes feedback to pupils about improvement, but advice about how to improve the quality of their work is not given sufficiently consistently.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Monitoring and evaluation activities by the headteacher have been effective in diagnosing strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievement and in the school's provision. Where necessary, concerted action has been taken to address weaknesses identified. For instance, the action to improve the quality of pupils' writing through the 'Writing Project' is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' standards, though more remains to be done. Similarly, the decision that pupils should line up at the end of breaktimes has resulted in a more orderly return to classrooms. However, subject coordinators are not fully involved in activities to monitor all aspects of teaching and pupils' learning in their areas, and hence are not well placed to make improvements. The partnership with other schools and services to promote pupils' well-being is good. The partnership with parents is also good. A small minority of parents, however, remain unconvinced about the school's organisation for the Year 4 pupils. Given its size, the school has done all that is practicable to address parental concerns, including an innovative approach involving single year group teaching in English and mathematics for two mornings each week. Attention has been given to improving communication with parents, for instance through the weekly newsletter, but negative responses by a minority of parents point to the need to continue to address this issue. Governors provide strong support for the school, but act also as 'critical friend' in questioning the school's performance and the rationale for any proposed change. The chair of governors offers good leadership to the governing body. Governors and the headteacher are strongly committed to the inclusive practice in the school. The school provides good value for money.

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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	<b>School Overall</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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	2
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

15 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Faith's Church of England Primary School, St Faith's Road, St Cross, Winchester, SO23 9QB

Following my visit to your school, I would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. I enjoyed seeing you at work in your classrooms and talking to you at breaktimes and lunchtimes. I think St Faith's Primary is a good school with many strengths.

These are the things I most liked:

- you greatly enjoy school, and your behaviour and concentration are good
- the team spirit among the staff is good which means they work well together
- at Year 6, pupils' standards of work are above average, and their progress is consistently good; although, at Year 2, standards in writing and mathematics are not as high as they could be
- your headteacher is leading the school well and is very clear about how he wants your school to improve further, but teachers in charge of subjects are not yet checking up on teaching and learning
- all the teachers and other adults in the school take good care of you, and give you good support and personal guidance
- the teaching is good, and your teachers are skilful in helping you to learn
- you feel safe at school and know it is important to have lots of exercise
- the range of extra-curricular activities is good and many of you take part in these.

I have asked your school to:

- do more to ensure that all pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1
- give the teachers in charge of subjects more chances to check up on how well you are doing.

I wish you all every success in the future. Thank you again.

Chris Grove Lead inspector