

St Augustine's CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124247
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340524
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Fuller
Headteacher	Sarah Robson
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2007
School address	Pipehay Lane Draycott-in-the-Clay Ashbourne
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons, and held meetings with the head teacher, governors, support staff, teachers and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's most recent self evaluation form, the school development plan, pupils' work, the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, the detailed records held on vulnerable pupils including a close scrutiny of the individual education plans for those with additional educational needs, minutes of governing body meetings and school policies especially those relating to safeguarding of pupils and the reports from the local authority and the school improvement partner. The questionnaire responses from pupils, staff and thirty three parents were read and analysed.

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

- The school's records of attainment especially attainment on entry and the achievement of more able pupils in reading
- How well community cohesion is promoted and the impact of this upon pupils' cultural development
- The use of the new outdoor area upon learning and provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage of education
- How well learning is supported by the use of information and communication technology and the work of teaching assistants.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average school. It serves mainly the village of Draycott-in-the-Clay although a quarter of the pupils come from surrounding villages. The Early Years Foundation Stage includes nine places for Nursery children who attend in the mornings. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most pupils are of White British origin with only a few from other ethnic groups. Fewer pupils than average are entitled to free school meals. The school has a number of awards including Basic Skillsmark, Ecomark, Artsmark Silver and International Schools' Award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstandingly effective school. Pupils and staff have a real sense of belonging to one big family in which all are valued and supported to achieve their full potential. It is a learning community in which all share a common goal to get better in everything they do. Central to the success of this school is the excellent provision that is enabling pupils to grow in maturity and confidence and developing in them a desire to learn. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe and keep healthy. Pupils were very keen to say how much they enjoy school. They particularly like the way they can grow fruit and vegetables in the school greenhouse and garden and then have them as part of their school lunch. Visits to places of interest and the many visitors to the school make learning stimulating and fun for pupils. The school works very closely with parents to support their children's learning. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to both the school and local community showing a very strong understanding of their own local culture, but their understanding of the wide range of cultures in Britain is a comparative weakness. Extremely strong partnerships with other local schools, including the middle and high schools are used very well to provide activities and opportunities that enrich and enhance the pupils' learning experience.

Children get off to a good start in Nursery and build on this further in Reception due to outstanding teaching and an exciting curriculum. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is excellent and standards are well above average when pupils start Year 3. Pupils continue to make excellent gains in their learning in Years 3 and 4 and by the time they leave the school at age nine standards are well above those normally found at this age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils. Overall pupils' achievement is excellent and especially for more able pupils in reading. The school is particularly effective because it has a very accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and takes robust action to address any areas for improvement. The head teacher has formed all adults in the school into a high performing team that works together extremely well. She is particularly skilled at empowering others to make innovations and try out new ideas. Governors are very supportive of the school and work closely with the head teacher to enable the school to get even better. Nevertheless, some of the systems for governors to check on the work of the school are not as robust as other aspects of leadership and management. For example, procedures for ensuring that the impact of the good work done to promote community cohesion is evaluated effectively are not strong enough.

The school has built very effectively upon the many strengths noted at the last inspection and is clearly demonstrating an ambition to continue this improvement.

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Standards and achievement are continuing to rise as a result of well targeted action such as the strategies to improve pupils' writing through giving reasons for writing. All of this demonstrates that school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure the systems to check on how well pupils benefit from the links with the local community and the schools overseas are also used effectively to check on their understanding of the wide range of cultures found in Britain.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

This is a very small school and as a result academic standards attained at the end of Year 4 vary from year to year. Nevertheless the underlying trend over time is one of attainment well above that normally found at this age. Attainment on entry to the school also varies from year to year but overall children begin school with skills in line with those normally found at that age. The current Year 4 cohort started Year 1 with standards that were below average but the improvements over the last few years for the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage have resulted in rising standards and currently pupils are starting Year 1 with above average standards. Pupils make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the excellent teaching. For example in an English lesson observed pupils developed their understanding of alliteration very well to produce high quality poems. By the end of the session pupils were using phrases such as 'slimy worms slithering slowly across the ground'. Standards attained in national assessments at age seven are high in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons due to high quality support and achieve as well as other pupils.

The very positive picture in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics is only the tip of the iceberg. The rich experience that pupils enjoy not only makes a wonderful contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being, but results in high quality work in many subjects. The consistently good quality artwork seen in lessons and in displays, and achievement in other aspects of the arts such as ballroom dancing, show clearly why the school has twice been awarded the Artsmark Silver. This school's determination to provide a holistic education means that standards in many other subjects are above those normally found in pupils of a similar age. High quality work was also observed in design technology, science, information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography, music and French.

Pupils say confidently that they feel very safe in school. They say that there is no bullying in the school and they trust the adults to deal with any that might occur. Pupils demonstrate great maturity in the polite and courteous way they speak with visitors. They make an excellent contribution to school life by taking on a wide range of responsibilities such as School Council or Eco-warriors. Older pupils look after younger ones well, even in the Early Years Foundation Stage where Reception children help Nursery children. The skills they gain doing this along with their high attendance and the

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high standards attained help to prepare pupils very well for their future life. Pupils' very secure understanding of how to stay healthy and keep fit is evident in the enthusiastic way they take advantage of the many opportunities for physical activity after school. Pupils are passionate about the gardening club and their success in growing their own fruit and vegetables. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local community, for example, singing in a home for senior citizens or taking part in church services. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent but their cultural development, although good is a comparative weakness. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and show respect for themselves and for others. They say that they feel valued. They have a strong understanding of the cultures in some other countries through visitors to the school and other links such as the excellent link developed with a school in France or the link with an RAF squadron that was based in Afghanistan. However, pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of cultures to be found in Britain is more limited.

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	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

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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Pupils learn so well in this school because of the consistently high quality teaching. During the inspection all teaching observed was at least good and the majority was outstanding. Teachers prepare lessons that motivate and stimulate pupils to learn. ICT is used extremely well to support teaching and ensure that the different learning styles of pupils are addressed. Teachers are skilled at knowing just what question to ask to challenge pupils and extend their learning. This supportive questioning extends through the school. For example, in a mathematics lesson observed skilled questioning extended pupils' understanding of the statements that could be made about a large number. In most lessons, probing questions extend pupils' learning and assess their understanding. Assessment information is used very effectively to plan work that gently but very effectively challenges pupils to achieve their full potential.

Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress towards their targets due to the extremely good support given by talented teaching assistants and the strong links with outside agencies. Those pupils identified as gifted and talented are given learning targets that really challenge them. Additional support for these pupils is provided through the strong partnership with other local schools.

Perhaps the defining element of this school is the outstanding curriculum that makes learning so stimulating and interesting for pupils. The holistic approach to learning ensures many highly motivating and enjoyable experiences for pupils. The school has established very strong international links including a high quality link with a school in France. Extremely strong local partnerships including with the local authority enable all pupils to learn the violin in Years 3 and 4 and pupils across the school to learn ballroom dancing. Activities such as these and the many visits and visitors to the school make learning extremely enjoyable for all pupils. The school has identified the need to extend opportunities for pupils to learn about the wide range of cultures found in Britain and is investigating links with a more culturally diverse school to support this.

The care, guidance and support in this school are exemplary. All adults provide excellent guidance to pupils on how to stay safe and healthy. Child protection procedures are detailed and well known to all staff. Very great care is taken to ensure that pupils are given high quality guidance on how to stay safe, especially when using the internet. Extremely detailed records of the progress made by individual pupils are kept and used very well to set targets for learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The whole staff in this school work together as a cohesive team to bring about school improvement and ensure that the best possible education is provided for all pupils. In such a small staff all have many responsibilities but the outstanding leadership of the head teacher has developed a team that work as an entity and support each other extremely well. The great care taken to monitor the progress of all ensures very good equality of opportunity. Safeguarding requirements are met and procedures to keep pupils safe are meticulous.

Governors support the school well and share the drive to improve further. For example, the outdoor provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved greatly as a result of high quality budget management by governors enabling extensive alterations to the site. Parents and pupils are consulted regularly and their views taken into account in the very good quality school development plan.

As part of the drive for improvement governors are reviewing their systems for monitoring the work of the school. They have recognised that the minutes of governing body meetings do not always give a clear picture of all the hard work going on, for example in promoting community cohesion. The governors are currently exploring ways of addressing this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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

Children get a very good start in this school. The well-established routines help children

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new to the school to feel secure and cared for. The gentle introduction through part-time Nursery enables these children to gradually become used to the routines of school life. The systems for ensuring the welfare and safety of children are excellent. Staff are skilled at ensuring a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play. A rich and stimulating environment is provided for children with the new outdoor area used very well. A full range of activities covering all areas of learning is prepared inside and outside so that there is a free flow between the areas. Children develop independence very well as they choose whether to work indoors or outdoors. The strong teamwork between teacher and teaching assistant ensures that the needs of the children are met consistently. The very positive relationships allow children to grow in confidence and build on their previous experience. Children are really motivated to learn and all engage in activities. They clearly enjoy learning because of the well-paced lessons and are eager to talk about what they are doing. The excellent teaching ensures that children make outstanding progress to achieve above the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. The expertise and skill of the adults and the rigorous systems for checking on progress mean that all individuals are gently but effectively challenged to achieve of their best. This sets the tone for the rest of the school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents have an overwhelmingly positive view of this school. Many wrote in support of the school. Typical comments were:-

'St Augustine's is a great school offering an open door policy

My daughter has a strong sense of pride for St Augustine's

Extremely pleased with this school. Friendly and professional

My child is happy to come to school and chats happily about his day at school

Am really pleased with the school.

It's a wonderful school.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Augustine's C of E First 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 54 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	67	11	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	79	7	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	64	11	33	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	73	9	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	61	13	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	73	9	27	0	0	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)	18	55	15	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	64	12	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	64	12	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	64	12	36	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	76	8	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	82	6	18	0	0	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.



22 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's CofE First School, Ashburn, DE6 5BY

Thank you for making us so welcome and talking with us when we visited your school. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and the polite and mature way that you spoke with us.

Yours is an outstanding school. We think that the real strength of your school is the way that it looks after you and makes sure that you learn well. Here are some of the things that we liked:

Your achievement is outstanding and you attain standards by age 9 that are much better than those normally found at that age.

Your school makes learning interesting and fun because of the wonderful range of the activities provided for you. No wonder you enjoy school so much!

The school looks after you very well, which is why you know how to stay safe and keep healthy.

The teaching is excellent. The school has very talented teachers and teaching assistants who make learning enjoyable and interesting.

You make a big contribution to the running of the school through the school council and other jobs that you do.

The school is led and managed extremely well by your excellent head teacher and the other people who help her.

To help make your school even better we have asked the staff and governors to make sure the systems to check on how well you benefit from the links with the local community and the schools overseas are also used effectively to check on your understanding of the wide range of cultures found in Britain.

Thank you again for your help, and congratulations on a wonderful school.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake

Lead inspector

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