

St Philip's CofE Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110840
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	356823
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Colin Henderson

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	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Rice
Headteacher	Siobhan Rouse
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2008
School address	2 Vinery Way
	Cambridge
	CB1 3DR
Telephone number	01223 508707
Fax number	01223 508708
Email address	office@stphilips.cambs.sch.uk

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St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 24 lessons involving 16 teachers and 16 teaching assistants. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school draft development plan, self-evaluation form and local authority reports. They also analysed 85 parent questionnaires, 97 pupil and 38 staff questionnaires.

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

- How the school's tracking procedures are used to identify and improve the progress of any boy or girl who falls behind in their work.
- Teachers' expectations and their impact, particularly on the progress of the different pupil groups.
- How the school's Christian ethos encourages pupils' personal development and well-being and promotes a desire to learn.
- How the school's leaders and managers focus on improvement, especially in extending pupils' writing skills.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school. Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. An above average proportion speaks English as a second language, and 17 pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools' status, the Basic Skills and the International School Awards.

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

St Philips is a friendly school where pupils enjoy their learning and get on well together. It correctly judges its overall effectiveness as satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, although their progress in mathematics is limited because many pupils have weak number recall skills. Children benefit from a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. This is built on satisfactorily across other year groups. Many pupils make good progress in lessons where teaching is good. However, this is not consistent as some teachers do not always match activities to the range of different learning needs within each class. Assessment data shows that the school is beginning to raise standards, for example, in writing. Various initiatives, such as the Writer in Residence, have had a very positive effect on the attitudes and achievement of groups of pupils, particularly Black and Asian pupils. Attainment is average at the end of both key stages. There is some yearly variation due to differences in cohorts and some above average levels of pupil mobility. Standards have been affected by a high level of persistent absenteeism. The school has developed rigorous monitoring procedures and worked very hard to improve the attendance of these pupils.

There is a strong sense of community within the school that is reflected in its caring, supportive Christian ethos. This is valued by parents; one commented 'the pastoral care is superb and all staff are attentive and helpful'. Parents are pleased that their children look forward to coming to school. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe and benefit from good personal care and support, for example through the school's focus on social and emotional aspects of learning. The effective partnership between teachers and teaching assistants provides good support and guidance particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of developing their English language skills. They make good progress towards their learning targets. Pupils enjoy many of the topics that the school is introducing into its curriculum, for example, Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically of learning about World War 2. They are extending their skills satisfactorily through these topics, although learning activities do not always build successfully on previous skills and knowledge. A good range of extra-curricular sporting activities helps pupils keep active and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Teaching is improving and there is some good teaching in each key stage. Teachers manage their classes very effectively to ensure that pupils stay focused on their work. Many use interesting resources to capture pupils' attention and use questions well to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas. However, pupils do not make as

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much progress in lessons as they could when they do not have the skills and knowledge to complete the learning task set by the teacher. For example, in several Key Stage 2 classes, some pupils could not solve the challenging maths problems that had been set, due to poor knowledge of number facts. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and many provide clear points for improvement that help pupils raise the quality particularly of their written work.

The school has established a good partnership with parents and the local community. The headteacher continually encourages them to help in supporting children's learning. For example, the effective use of bi-lingual staff to establish good links with the local Bengali community has raised the attainment of those pupils. The headteacher, staff and a supportive, increasingly pro-active governing body have a clear understanding of what they need to improve. Regular assessments track the progress every term of each pupil and are used to set end of year targets. These are increasing the number of pupils who attain the expected levels of progress, but they are not as effective in accelerating pupils' work to attain above expected levels. A newly-formed, cohesive leadership team is providing a satisfactory capacity to improve. They are introducing initiatives that are beginning to raise pupils' attainment, for example in writing, although procedures to check their effect on classroom practice are not yet sufficiently embedded to support consistent improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - improving pupils' mental number skills
 - using assessment information consistently to match activities to pupils' different learning needs.
- Extend the contribution of the senior leadership team by:
 - focusing more rigorously on monitoring
 - accelerating pupils' achievements and raising attainment.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and their achievement is improving, for example in writing, as the amount of good teaching increases. The school uses assessments successfully to track pupils' progress and identify those who are not achieving as well as they could. They have carried out a careful analysis of the achievement of different groups of pupils; for example, minority ethnic groups or those who take free school meals, this enables extra support and encouragement to

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be given to raise achievement. After a period of decline, a strong focus on writing led to a marked improvement in last year’s test results, particularly at Year 2. A dip in standards in mathematics in 2010 was affected by a high level of pupil change, especially in Year 6. The school recognises that pupils have weak number skills and that is a focus area for this school year. Current assessment data shows an increasing proportion is on target to attain nationally expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

Pupils make good contributions to the school and local communities. For example, the school council met with a local authority representative to improve the quality of school meals. This led to an increased take-up. Pupils’ understanding of the world of work is enhanced by their involvement in a mini-enterprise project to raise funds for their partner school in Ghana by budgeting for and organising a fashion show. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Social and moral aspects are particularly strong and pupils’ cultural development is enhanced by their good work in art and their links with schools in Africa and India.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
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	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school has improved the level of good teaching since the last inspection and all teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers make good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards and videos to capture pupils’ interest and stimulate their ideas. For example, in a good lesson, a video about a boy with ‘lots of worries’ was used very successfully to help pupils cope with any of their own. However, in other

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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lessons, teachers do not ensure that follow-up activities are matched well to pupils' abilities. For example, in a numeracy lesson, pupils were enthused by the very well-prepared video clip that introduced a number puzzle; but they did not have the number skills necessary to achieve a successful outcome. Teachers use questions successfully to encourage pupils to share their ideas, although they do not consistently use more challenging questions to extend more able pupils.

The school is extending its topic and skills-based curriculum. It is improving the opportunities for pupils to extend their key skills, especially writing, although these are not embedded fully across the school. Pupils clearly enjoy this developing curriculum, with art being a notable strength. Some topics generate enthusiasm for learning, but planning is not yet sharp enough to meet the wide range of learning needs. The curriculum is enhanced well by good French teaching, a broad range of extra-curricular clubs, visitors and visits, including a residential trip to Scarborough.

Pupils are well cared for, no matter what their needs or circumstances. Staff know their pupils well and interventions begin early to improve attitudes and build confidence. The school works very closely with families and other agencies to support and guide pupils. Induction into school is good as is transition between classes. Pupils feel confident going into their new classes, although assessment is not always used effectively at the start of the term to ensure that learning is built on successfully. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit particularly from close individual attention, and recording is meticulous.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides purposeful leadership and is ably assisted by an increasingly effective and influential governing body and supportive staff. They enable the school to follow its mission statement successfully and create 'a caring, creative and supportive Christian environment'. The headteacher makes effective use of assessment data to direct the work of the school and to target areas for improvement. Some of the procedures to check the school's effectiveness, for example the evaluation of teaching, are helping to raise standards. The new senior leadership team is in the early stages of developing their roles to check carefully how well the school is doing. These are not yet rigorous enough to ensure consistent improvement and better pupil achievement.

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The school promotes equal opportunities well and is successful in tackling any discrimination; all teachers use improved tracking procedures to ensure that pupils receive support and guidance when needed. It has a good partnership with parents and carers; this contributes successfully to their children’s learning. Safeguarding procedures are good. The headteacher and nominated governor have a very clear understanding of what is required and are proactive in ensuring that the school is kept safe and secure. All staff are suitably trained in child protection and there are good systems for recording any concerns. The school is successful in actively promoting cohesion within the school and local communities, for example, by valuing all faiths and encouraging the various ethnic groups to contribute to the life of the school. There is a well-established link with a school in Ghana and participation in an International Week held each May helps pupils to gain a better understanding of communities in other parts of the world.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	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

On entry to the Nursery, children have skills and abilities below those typically seen. They make good progress in most areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, most attain expected levels, although some weaknesses remain in aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children make good progress in their personal and social development as they benefit from good relationships and a safe, secure and interesting learning environment. Relationships with parents are given a high priority and they are actively encouraged to contribute to their children’s learning. Teaching is good. There is a good balance between adult led and child initiated activities, although occasional over-direction in the Reception classes limits elements of choice. All staff are well trained for working with the youngest children. They work well together as a team, planning in detail

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each week to meet individual children’s needs and to check consistency in their ongoing assessments. Nursery children benefit particularly from all round access to the stimulating outside area and respond enthusiastically to the activities covering all areas of learning. Reception children have restricted access in their morning sessions and this limits their all round provision.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is new in post. She is rapidly gaining a clear understanding of what is provided well and what needs further development.

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	3

Views of parents and carers

A high majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school. They value its friendly, caring and Christian approach, which helps their children to feel safe and enjoy school. They particularly value the way in which the children from different backgrounds get on so well together. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concerns upon the effectiveness of the school’s procedures for handling any unacceptable behaviour, the cleanliness of the school and the leadership of the headteacher. Inspectors judge that these procedures are effective and behaviour is good. The school building is maintained in good condition and the headteacher provides purposeful leadership focused on raising standards.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Philip's CofE 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 335 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	71%	23	27%	0	0%	1	1%
The school keeps my child safe	67	79%	16	19%	0	0%	1	1%
The school informs me about my child’s progress	51	60%	30	35%	1	1%	1	1%
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	62%	26	31%	2	2%	1	1%
The teaching is good at this school	62	73%	18	21%	1	1%	1	1%
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	65	76%	15	18%	1	1%	1	1%
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	71%	21	25%	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)	46	54%	30	35%	2	2%	1	1%
The school meets my child’s particular needs	49	58%	28	33%	1	1%	1	1%
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	56%	29	34%	1	1%	1	1%
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	60%	23	27%	3	4%	1	1%
The school is led and managed effectively	58	68%	24	28%	0	0%	1	1%
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	66	78%	16	19%	0	0%	1	1%

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 is for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring term 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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 September 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of St Philip's CofE Aided Primary School, Cambridge, CB1 3DR

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you. After spending two days in your school, talking with you and your teachers, looking at your work and watching you learn, we have judged that your school is satisfactory.

We were pleased to see how well you get on together and you are proud of your school. As your behaviour is good, teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to school councillors about how they contribute to your school community and raise money for your partner school in Ghana. You told us that you enjoy your work, particularly art and some of the curriculum topics like World War 2. We agree with your teachers that you could do even better in your mathematics by improving your mental recall skills. It is pleasing to note that work on this has already started. We hope that you continue to try hard to improve your multiplication tables and to use them to tackle some of the interesting number problems that your teachers challenge you to solve.

The headteacher, the staff and the governors work together well to try to improve your school. Some of the teachers in the management team are new to their roles. We have asked them to all be involved in checking on how well the school is doing and how they can improve it even more.

Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school and we hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson
Lead inspector

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