

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114230
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	325969
Inspection dates	12 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Graeme Clarke

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	364
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jen Smurthwaite
Headteacher	Mrs Dianne Mowbray-Pape
Date of previous school inspection	November 2005
School address	Crossgate Peth Durham County Durham DH1 4QB
Telephone number	0191 3847331
Fax number	0191 3841852

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors gathered evidence from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work, assessment information, documents, interviews and discussions with the senior management team, staff, pupils and a governor. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- the standards reached and progress children make in the Reception year of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics
- the consistency of teachers' use of marking and assessment information to promote learning
- the effectiveness of the new subject coordinators' contribution to school leadership.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found much evidence to confirm that the school's own evaluations are justified, and these have been included in the report.

Description of the school

St Margaret's is a larger than average size primary school which serves a locality of relatively high social advantage. A well below average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average. Many pupils have a White British heritage. Almost a fifth come from other backgrounds, mostly European, American and Asian and a minority of them are learning to speak English as an additional language. The school provides for children in the EYFS in the Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils' excellent academic progress and very high levels of personal development and well-being are at the heart of the outstandingly inclusive education St Margaret's Primary School provides. The school works tirelessly to promote extensive partnerships. Strong links with parents, the church, the university, heritage and outdoor centres offer huge benefit to pupils' education and development. An overwhelming majority of parents hold the school in the highest regard. One parent's comments reflect their confidence. 'The school has given my children every care, attention and opportunity I could ask for. ...The standards are excellent and they value every child's abilities and strengths and encourage them in all areas. I am extremely pleased with the school and the way they educate my children.'

After making rapid progress in the Reception class pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards and especially high skills in mathematics. Pupils build very successfully on these standards throughout Years 1 to 6. Achievement is excellent and pupils leave school with exceptionally high standards especially in English and mathematics. Results and teachers' assessments in all subjects in the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 statutory assessments have been significantly above average for several years and this is a truly impressive record. Pupils presently in Year 6 are making excellent progress and many have already reached standards beyond the level expected for their age. Boys and girls do equally well. Very effective support ensures pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make excellent progress.

The school provides very high levels of pastoral care and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a very detailed knowledge of the importance of diet, physical activity and the dangers of substance abuse. Many enjoy taking part in voluntary sports and other activities. The school deservedly holds both the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Pupils act sensibly and courteously in the communal parts of the school and follow well-organised routines closely. Pupils' attendance is above average as is to be expected in a school where pupils thoroughly enjoy every day and work with commendable endeavour. Their behaviour is impeccable. They take justifiable pride in their contribution to school life as school councillors and as buddies to support other pupils. This significantly minimises bullying, and improves the school environment. The school's choir and orchestra contribute valuably to the local community. Pupils willingly support charitable work to help worthy causes both locally and farther afield. The International School award reflects their awareness of global perspectives. Together with the feeling of inclusion in the school these aspects represent an outstanding contribution to community cohesion. The school very successfully develops very positive attitudes amongst pupils who show respect for others, confidence and maturity. Their advanced social development, experience of team-working and excellent basic skills prepare pupils exceptionally well for their future.

Excellent teaching inspires pupils to outstanding achievement. A very rich and exciting curriculum most successfully develops very high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Art, music, dance and work in history and religious education all contribute substantially to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural

development. Teachers and assistants crucially ensure that everyone, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or learning English as an additional language, participate fully in lessons. Teachers provide well-suited activities which strongly motivate pupils who, in turn, are enthusiastic, industrious and present their work very well. They successively extend pupils' knowledge by taxing them, especially the most able, to apply learning to new situations. Teachers set challenging targets and pupils feel satisfied that they know what is expected of them. Diligent marking congratulates pupils on their accomplishments. Most teachers, but not all, make exemplary use of marking to give pupils pointers and guidance about how they can improve their work.

The headteacher and senior team provide outstanding leadership and management. They very effectively ensure that the whole staff successfully uphold the school's Christian values and their philosophy that every child matters. New teachers are quickly helped to become vital members of the staff team and are very effectively supported in fulfilling their subject leadership and teaching roles. Governance is excellent. Governors' close involvement with the school means they have a first-hand view of the school's work which is extended by informative reports from senior staff and participation in evaluation. Together with senior leaders, they have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and plan clearly and appropriately to make improvements. They meet all their responsibilities and current government requirements to safeguard the welfare of pupils and promote exceptionally well community cohesion and the prevention of discrimination. The best value is gained from the school budget. The school has fully addressed issues from the last inspection. Together with its excellent track record of sustained very high standards and achievement, the school's expertise and determination to realise more ambitious goals indicate an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage **Grade: 1**

Children's starting points are broadly typical for their age in all areas of learning when they join the Reception class. They make remarkably good progress and by the end of the Reception year in 2008 their skills and abilities were above average in all areas of learning, especially in mathematical development. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning and each other are excellent. In this outstandingly effective EYFS children thoroughly enjoy the very effective use made of both indoor and new outdoor facilities to stimulate their natural curiosity, interest and imagination. Excellent teaching enables children to quickly learn to work well, both independently and cooperatively, through carefully planned directed learning and activities that foster play and social interaction. Outstanding leadership and management sustain a richness and wide range of opportunities which build diligently upon comprehensive records of children's accomplishments. Adults know the children well, and ensure they are safe and well-cared for. Parents are delighted about how well their children have settled, enjoy school, and make progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the consistency of marking in giving guidance for pupils to improve.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of boarding provision	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

¹Grade 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.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

13 January 2009

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Margaret's Church of England Primary School, Durham,
DH1 4QB**

Mr Kemp and I really enjoyed our recent visit to inspect your school. Thank you for helping us when we came into your classrooms and assembly to see you at work. You were very polite and helpful and we did enjoy talking with those of you whom we met. We were pleased to see how much you like to take part enthusiastically in activities during and after school, how you value the help you get and the friendships you make. You are very well behaved and polite to others in lessons and outside. We were pleased to see how you contribute to life in school and in the city and how you help others who are less fortunate than you. I know the headteacher and all the staff are very proud of you.

Your school is outstanding in every way. All the adults in the school look after you very well and that is why you feel safe and happy. You make excellent progress in your work and reach very high standards. We were especially pleased that pupils who get extra help did really well. When we spoke with some of you we found you clearly know the levels of work you aim to reach.

When we looked at your books we were delighted to see how much care you take to make your work neat. We saw how teachers tell you how well you are doing and that on occasions they suggest ways to help you improve. We have asked all your teachers to help you be clear about what you need to do to improve your work when they mark your books.

You have many excellent opportunities at St Margaret's to learn about life and these should stand you in very good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke
Lead inspector