

# All Saints VA CoE Lower School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109616
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310041
<b>Inspection dates</b>	31 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Colin Henderson

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev. Mark-Aaron Tisdale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maureen Gravell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–23 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Church Street Clifton Shefford Bedfordshire SG17 5ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01462628444
<b>Fax number</b>	01462628444

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: current achievement in the school, the quality of teaching and learning, the care, guidance and support provided and how well the leadership promotes high standards. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, the pupils' work, discussion with pupils, the staff, some parents and two governors, and a scrutiny of school documents and parent questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the school's own judgements have been included in the report where appropriate.

## Description of the school

Most children come from the local village, which contains an increasingly broad range of social backgrounds. All pupils speak English as their first language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to most schools of this size, although no pupils have a statement of special educational need.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

**Grade: 1**

This is an outstanding school where pupils receive a first class education. It is valued highly by pupils and their parents, as reflected in many parents' comments such as 'a fantastic school' and 'We are lucky to have such a wonderful school within our village'. Parents spoken to during the inspection particularly appreciated the school's distinctive values education. This provides a strong moral grounding and promotes a very caring, Christian ethos within the school. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Relationships are excellent as everybody looks out for each other to ensure that they are happy, enjoying school and making excellent progress. Pupils behave excellently as they are keen to meet the staff's high expectations and gain recognition, for example, through leaves on the 'values tree'. Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes and clearly enjoy school, as shown in their high levels of attendance. They work well together and help each other to improve their work, particularly when improving their writing.

Pupils' achievement is excellent throughout the school because of outstanding teaching, their desire to learn, the consistently high quality support and guidance to improve their work and the rigorous and consistent focus of the headteacher to maintain high performance. Standards of attainment are consistently well above the national average, as reflected in the results of Year 2 tests, and are particularly high in reading and writing. The headteacher and her staff are very effective in using assessments to check carefully on the progress of every pupil and target extra support or extension work to ensure that they all continue to achieve well. As a result, more able pupils sustain high standards with some Year 4 pupils attaining levels that match those expected of Year 6. Those who find learning difficult make excellent progress and most attain nationally expected standards. The rigorous use of frequent assessments enables staff to identify any areas of under-performance and to refine their teaching to improve them.

Teaching and learning are outstanding and a key factor in helping pupils' to achieve very well. The headteacher has very good systems for checking the quality of teaching. She has encouraged staff to observe each other's lessons and share good practice. As a result, teaching is of a consistently high standard and all staff have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers plan carefully to match activities to the full range of learning needs. The excellent partnership with their teaching assistants ensures that all pupils are included fully and given very effective support individually or in small groups. Teachers use interesting methods, such as the creative use of interactive whiteboards, to gain pupils' attention and promote an enjoyment of learning. Their very effective use of improvement targets, checklists and marking ladders, particularly in literacy and numeracy, helps pupils to gain a clear insight into how well they are attaining and how they can improve. As a result, pupils make excellent and consistent progress as they continually strive to achieve their learning targets.

The outstanding headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership. An effective staff team and an active and influential governing body support her very well, for example, working jointly to set out the vision and development plan. They have developed very effective procedures that carefully check how well the school is doing

and set clear priorities for improvement that are rigorously tackled. The headteacher has encouraged a successful partnership with parents that improves their children's learning, especially reading skills. She uses assessment data very well with each teacher to agree challenging targets for their pupils' achievement by the end of the year. She regularly monitors the progress towards these targets and supports and guides her staff to ensure that all pupils stay on track to achieve them. She is supported very effectively by excellent subject leadership in literacy and numeracy. This provides a strong and consistent focus on pupils' achievement in these key subjects and sustains high standards. The leadership and management in some of the non-core subjects is less rigorous however, particularly with regard to assessment, and improvements here are planned as part of the school's further development.

Pupils enjoy the broad range of learning activities, especially the extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors. One commented that 'there is something for everyone'. They benefit from many sporting activities and their detailed knowledge and understanding of healthy and safe lifestyles reflects the Healthy Schools Award. The school works very closely with its local community, its main feeder middle school and other community organisations to enhance its provision. For example, gifted and talented children attend the Children's University and extend their skills and knowledge significantly. There are some good opportunities for pupils to extend their key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in different subjects but these are not always developed fully. The school plans to extend these opportunities through more integration of subjects and to enhance pupils' creative skills further.

The school has made excellent improvement since the last inspection, especially in the use of assessment, the challenge to very high attaining pupils and its provision for physical education. The headteacher, her staff and governors have established very effective self-assessment procedures that give the school the capacity to maintain its high quality education and standards of attainment.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

**Grade: 1**

Most but not all children start school with skills that are higher than those typical of this age-group. They settle quickly and happily into Robins class, mainly as a result of the very effective arrangements, which are valued highly by parents, to introduce them to school life. Children enjoy an interesting, well-organised range of learning activities that includes a very good balance between those that are directed by adults and those of their own choosing. They receive outstanding individual care and support that is particularly effective in improving their personal, social and emotional development. The very good teamwork between the teacher and her teaching assistants ensures that all adults continuously assess and note down how well each child is achieving. They share this information and use it very effectively to inform teaching and target the progress of each child. This excellent teaching helps children to achieve outstandingly well and most exceed the standards expected of them by the time they enter Year 1.

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

- Extend the effective procedures to assess standards in literacy and numeracy to check how well pupils are doing in other subjects.
- Develop the integration of subjects further to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their key skills and develop their creativity.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</b>	<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>	<b>1</b>
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	<b>Yes</b>
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	<b>1</b>
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	<b>1</b>
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	<b>1</b>

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	<b>1</b>
How well learners enjoy their education	<b>1</b>
The attendance of learners	<b>1</b>
The behaviour of learners	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	<b>1</b>
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	<b>2</b>

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	<b>1</b>

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>1</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	<b>2</b>
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	<b>1</b>
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	<b>1</b>
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	<b>1</b>
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	<b>1</b>
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	<b>1</b>
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	<b>Yes</b>
Does this school require special measures?	<b>No</b>
Does this school require a notice to improve?	<b>No</b>

**Annex B**

1 February 2008



Dear Children

**Inspection of All Saints VA CoE Lower School, Clifton SG17 5ES**

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you about what you do in school, looking at your work and watching you learn. You clearly enjoy school and, together with your parents, you think that it is an excellent school – I agree.

I was pleased to see how well you get on together. Your behaviour is excellent and this means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to school councillors about how they are helping to improve the school. I would like to say special thanks to the group of Year 4 pupils I talked to who told me all about life at All Saints.

You told me that you learn a lot in school and enjoy your work, especially the interesting after school clubs, visits and visitors. I think that your learning is excellent. Your teachers make your lessons interesting and you try hard to do what your teachers ask. You are very helpful to each other when suggesting ways to improve your work. Mrs. Gravell and her staff are trying to help you learn as well as possible. I agree with them that you need to use your literacy, numeracy, ICT and creative skills more in other subjects. It is pleasing to note that work on this has already started. I have also asked your school to provide more opportunities for teachers who are responsible for subjects other than literacy and numeracy to assess how well you are doing and see if they can help you achieve even better.

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

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson  
Lead Inspector