

Oldmixon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109104
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	377871
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Ian Hancock HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Norman Donovan
Headteacher	Martin Greenwood
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 November 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ian Hancock

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Hill

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed eight teachers. They visited 21 part-lessons and small group sessions such as those for teaching letters and sounds. The lead inspector also heard a sample of Year 2 pupils read. The inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Informal discussions were also held with parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, they observed the school's work and looked at safeguarding arrangements as well as plans for improvement, external evaluations and a range of pupils' work. A total of 149 questionnaire responses from parents and carers were analysed, together with 30 responses from members of staff and 110 from pupils.

Information about the school

Oldmixon Primary School is an average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage, but a few come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils that are known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than in most schools. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is around the average. The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a Nursery class and a Reception class. A privately run after-school club operates on the school site and was not visited as part of this inspection.

Since the previous inspection, the school's work has been recognised by the Every Child a Reader national award and the Healthy School award. In 2011, the school's performance met government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The school is moving forward securely on several fronts. Senior leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' achievement in English and mathematics has improved, but some underachievement remains. The high quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is one reason for the upturn in the school's performance.
- From low starting points, pupils are achieving well in several year groups. When they leave the school, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the average in English and mathematics. In some year groups, pupils' attainment remains low, particularly in writing, but is improving steadily. The proportions of pupils that attain the higher levels are not high enough.
- The teaching of reading is structured carefully and monitored rigorously. There is good teaching for the youngest and oldest pupils, but it is satisfactory elsewhere in the school. Pupils make slower progress in the lessons that do not proceed at a suitable pace and they are not questioned incisively about their learning. In general, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to evaluate their own writing and that of others.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength that permeates all aspects of school life. This accounts largely for pupils' good and improving behaviour. The quality of care for all pupils is good. As a result, pupils feel safe and demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning and each other.
- Leaders and managers are committed strongly to raising standards and seeking the views of pupils. They undertake regular monitoring, but the findings are not summarised succinctly. Leaders do not always have a clear overview of the emerging trends in pupils' attainment and progress because plans for improvement lack measureable targets and tracking systems are not utilised fully.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the autumn term 2012, raise attainment, particularly in writing, so that a very large majority of pupils reach or exceed the levels expected for their age by:
 - detailing the measureable improvement expected in each year group
 - providing sufficient levels of challenge for the more capable pupils so that more of them attain the higher levels
 - enabling pupils to identify for themselves what they need to do to improve by providing them routinely with opportunities to check and assess their own writing and that of others.
- Improve teaching so that it secures good progress in all lessons, particularly across Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 by:
 - maintaining a brisk pace of learning so that pupils achieve more within each part of the lesson
 - adults questioning pupils incisively to assess their comprehension and draw out more detailed responses
 - making better use of assessment information to focus teaching in lessons sharply on those that need to make the most progress.
- By July 2012, establish more rigorous systems to inform and support leaders in driving improvements by:
 - ensuring easy access to strategic information on the attendance, attainment and progress of different groups of pupils
 - collating information gathered through monitoring into succinct summaries.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Nursery with skills below, and at times well below, those expected for their age, particularly in communication and social development. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the well-planned play activities and the good teaching they receive. Children's social skills are developed particularly well. This was seen in the Reception class, where four boys shared materials, took turns and worked well together while building a spaceship out of foil blankets and wooden stakes. Pupils' progress slows across Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, but accelerates again in Years 5 and 6. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly similar to other schools. Some underachievement remains particularly in writing due to weaker teaching in the past. In several lessons seen, the capabilities of the more able pupils were not stretched by the tasks they were given. Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaires were satisfied with the progress their child is making, but the inspectors found that pupils' rates of progress varied across the school.

During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were seen drawing successfully on their

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knowledge of letters and sounds when reading confidently to an adult. Many pupils who spoke with the inspectors were enthusiastic readers and could name an author that they had enjoyed. In recent years, attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 has been low, but the school's tracking information shows that pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to attain similar levels to those in other schools.

In many lessons, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs made good progress as a result of the capable support they received from adults. Over a more sustained period, their achievements are similar to other pupils. A range of targeted programmes for underachieving groups and individuals such as a personal reading programme for Year 1 pupils are enabling them to make up ground rapidly.

Quality of teaching

In most lessons, teachers are successful in motivating pupils so that they work with concentration and effort. Teaching contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and enables pupils to grow in confidence and understanding. The vast majority of parents and carers express positive views on the quality of teaching. Inspection evidence confirms several strengths in teaching, but found some inconsistencies between year groups.

In lessons, teachers demonstrate early literacy skills confidently and provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to articulate their letters and sounds with a partner. Lessons are carefully structured because teachers have a good knowledge of different subjects. In the most successful sessions seen, teachers insisted on the use of technical language and challenged pupils with probing questions. A noticeable example was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson, where the teacher skilfully reviewed pupils' earlier learning and used examples of pupils' own work for them to evaluate against success criteria. Other adults questioned and supported pupils effectively in small groups. In this lesson, pupils made good progress because they were clear about what was required.

The school has made determined efforts to establish a consistent approach to lesson planning, marking and the classroom environment. In each classroom, purposeful displays build on and extend what pupils already know. In pupils' books, coloured highlighters identify what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. Year 6 pupils are given frequent opportunities to assess their own writing and that of others, but these opportunities are less evident in other classes. Assessment information is generally used well to match learning objectives to pupils' different needs and abilities. In some lessons, the more capable pupils are not challenged sufficiently and the teaching is not directed sharply enough towards those pupils that need to make the most progress. In other lessons seen, the pace of learning was too pedestrian and pupils were not asked to provide reasons for their answers.

The planned curriculum supports both academic and personal skills well. The

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stimulating range of learning opportunities found in the Early Years Foundation Stage contribute strongly to children's development across all areas of learning, ensuring that no time is wasted. For example, children in the Nursery class chose for themselves when to break for their snack. Once seated, they are encouraged to weigh their fruit before eating it. Such activities develop children's independence and their reasoning and number skills at the same time. In other year groups, the curriculum opportunities to extend more capable pupils are yet to be exploited fully.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Almost all parents, carers and pupils who completed the questionnaires supported the view that pupils behave well and are carefully looked after. This was endorsed by inspectors' direct observations and discussions with pupils. Pupils that spoke to the inspectors were emphatic that they feel safe and that occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively by the school. Pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe is promoted effectively through displays including pupils' work.

Pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are enthusiastic learners. They behave well in lessons and at other times such as during lunchtimes and when in the playground. Their positive attitudes, coupled with the high quality relationships they enjoy with adults, make a strong contribution to their learning. Pupils value the regular opportunities they are given to celebrate their behaviour and achievements such as being served lunch by staff at the Friday Banquet or being entered into a draw to receive a small prize. Attendance rates have improved and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has declined sharply.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, ably assisted by the two deputy headteachers, has galvanised the staff and established a clear vision for the school. Senior leaders involve pupils regularly in discussions about their experiences and to suggest improvements. Pupils are proud of their school and speak highly of improvements that have arisen from the mixed-age pupil voice groups. During the inspection, pupils praised the recent changes to lunchtime arrangements, especially the support of the class-based teaching assistants working alongside the established midday assistants. One pupil commented, 'Staff from our class come out now, it's good. They know us.'

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and literacy are strong. This can be seen in the improvements that have taken place in both teaching and pupils' achievement. The difference that training has made is evident in the consistency with which reading is taught across the school. Senior leaders have undertaken coaching roles within a comprehensive system to develop and manage the performance of staff. Individual training needs are informed by regular monitoring activities and linked strongly to pupils' achievement. However, leaders do not collate the findings from monitoring activities into succinct summaries to evaluate progress and inform self-evaluation. Leaders do not have easy access to key information on the achievement and the attendance of groups of pupils because data systems are not

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utilised fully. This hinders their ability to take prompt actions in response to emerging evidence of underachievement.

Members of the governing body know the school well, have a clear understanding of their role and provide challenge and support in equal measure. Self-evaluation is generally accurate and informs appropriate plans for improvement. These lack measurable objectives and interim steps that detail the improvement expected in each year group. The school has appropriate systems in place to keep pupils safe. For example, risk assessments are undertaken regularly and identified actions are followed up. Suitably trained staff respond promptly to any welfare concerns. The closing gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils, such as between children in the lowest 20 per cent and the rest are evidence of the school's commitment to equal opportunities. The improvements in pupils' achievement, behaviour and the quality of teaching are evidence of a satisfactory and growing capacity to improve.

The broad and balanced curriculum provides a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is evidenced by the harmonious relationships within the school and pupils' interest in cultures other than their own. Pupils' social skills are developed progressively throughout the school, enabling them to collaborate with others and perform to a range of audiences. Discussions with pupils and their work in books show they have regular opportunities to reflect on the beliefs of others. For example, while learning about Islamic pilgrimages, older pupils reflected on the key events from their own primary school experience.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oldmixon Primary School, Weston-Super-Mare BS24 9DA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. Oldmixon Primary School is a satisfactory school. The school has improved since the last inspection. We thought these were some of the best things about your school.

- You are making greater progress in lessons and more of you are reaching the levels expected for your age.
- The youngest children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Nearly all of you enjoy school, feel safe and behave well.
- You have lots of opportunities to say what you think about the school and to suggest improvements.
- Adults in the school take good care of you.

We have asked those leading the school to make some improvements in the way they monitor the school's work and plan further improvements. We have also asked your teachers to make every lesson as good as the best ones so that even more of you reach the expected and higher levels for your age, particularly in writing.

They will do this by:

- expecting you to achieve more in each part of the lesson
- providing harder work for those of you that are more capable
- asking you different questions to make sure that you understand
- giving you more opportunities to check you work so that you are clear about what is required.

You can help your school improve by working hard and carefully checking your work using the guidance you are given. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector

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