

St Mary's Broughton Gifford Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	126308
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	381211
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Stone
Headteacher	Angela McAuley
Date of previous school inspection	30 June–1 July 2009
School address	The Street Broughton Gifford Melksham SN12 8PR
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Rob Crompton

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice by a single inspector. The inspector visited 12 lessons and observed five teachers and four teaching assistants. The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body and staff, and talked with pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the school's work. He looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. The inspector examined questionnaires from 43 parents and carers, nine members of staff and a sample of pupils.

Information about the school

St Mary's Broughton Gifford serves a rural community and is much smaller than most primary schools. No pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to that seen nationally. Their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes: Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3, and Years 4, 5 and 6. The teaching in the Reception/Year 1 class, and also in the Years 4/5/6 class, is shared by two part-time teachers. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is a safe and harmonious community where pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The opinion expressed by one parent succinctly summed up the views expressed by many: 'This is a lovely caring school.' In order to become an outstanding school pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and leadership and management need to be raised to an outstanding level.
- All groups of pupils achieve well through the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage thoroughly enjoy learning and make particularly rapid progress in developing early communication skills. Levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils make particularly good progress in reading. Although their progress has recently accelerated, pupils do not do as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching motivates pupils to do their best. Underpinned by excellent relationships between adults and pupils, most lessons move at a brisk pace. Staff use assessment information effectively to ensure a good level of challenge for all groups.
- Pupils' positive attitudes, evident in lessons and around the school, contribute significantly to their learning. A consistent approach to behaviour management means all pupils benefit from an extremely safe and nurturing environment where children are taught to respect themselves and others.
- Every teacher in this small school willingly takes on additional management responsibilities and does so effectively under the strong leadership of the headteacher. The headteacher and middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching very effectively. The curriculum engages pupils and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. There are many opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills but opportunities for them to apply information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum are missed.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Narrow the gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing by:
 - building on pupils' increasing skills in using phonics (letters and sounds), by helping them to read quickly the most frequently occurring words
 - improving pupils' skills and confidence in spelling.
- Extend pupils' skills in information and communication technology by planning more opportunities for them to use computers for a wider range of purposes across the curriculum.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress across the school. Parents and carers are happy in the knowledge that their children achieve well. Reception children develop good social skills. Their speaking skills develop quickly and, because of a systematic programme, they soon learn the sounds letters make and increasingly blend sounds when reading new words. Levels of attainment by the end of Reception vary from year to year due to the different characteristics of each cohort. Children currently in Reception are on course to reach above-average levels across all areas of learning.

Although pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 dipped a little recently, this has been addressed successfully and pupils are now making good progress in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils read well but some tend to sound out even the most familiar words and this constrains their fluency and expression. An increasing emphasis on speaking in sentences using the correct grammar is having a positive influence on the quality of the pupils' written work. Good headway has been made in ensuring pupils have a secure grounding in basic number facts, such as $6+4=10$, $7+3=10$ and so on. This means pupils are increasingly confident when tackling mathematical problems relating to real life. Pupils are making good progress in identifying fractions, including, for example, $\frac{3}{8}$ of a shape, and in interpreting and constructing bar graphs.

By the end of Year 6, levels of attainment are above average. Pupils' reading skills are well developed and better than in most primary schools. Pupils make insightful comments about how authors create tension and suspense. This was evident as pupils discussed the literary devices, including repetition and alliteration, used by Alfred Noyes in *The Highwayman*. Pupils are well versed in the criteria used to assess their own writing, taking care to include graphic description in their written work. Most pupils use these well in their narrative writing. For example, one wrote:

'Cautiously, Daindelle crept into the cave of the vampire bat...she carefully tiptoed towards the beast, whipped on her invisibility cloak

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and, with a flash of silver, cut off its head'.

Pupils also use their writing skills well in other subjects, such as science. Recording an experiment, one wrote: 'I heard a sound as if someone was rustling paper. This shows that electricity runs through salt water.' Some pupils are not as confident in incorporating new vocabulary in their writing because they are unsure of correct spelling. This means they will often choose a simpler word rather than one they really wanted to use. Pupils reach above average levels in mathematics. They are adept at using the four main operations and gaining a good understanding of data handling, fractions and percentages, and the properties of shapes.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Those with specific difficulties relating to language and communication generally make good and often exceptional progress due to highly effective support.

Quality of teaching

Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations teachers set for behaviour and to the engaging approach adopted in lessons across the school. Parents and carers are very happy about the quality of teaching.

Lively and dynamic teaching promotes all areas of learning in Reception. Drawing on the wide range of stimulating resources indoors and outside, adults promote children's personal development very successfully, build well on children's early language skills and teach numeracy very effectively. This was evident when the teacher skilfully drew on children's knowledge of counting in twos to engage them in 'shopping for groceries' using real coins and real vegetables; encouraging conversations and the application of counting and adding skills in a realistic context.

Teachers interpret the flexible curriculum imaginatively and are careful to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils in the Years 2/3 class, for example, were held spellbound as the teacher told them a story in the centre of the school's extensive copse. They had built 'story dens' from branches the day before. At the interruption of the story with a 'cliff hanger', pupils came up with some highly imaginative ideas, revealing a deep personal response to the scenario. They gathered eagerly in their story dens to complete their own tales. Acting in role as Rosa Parks, a Years 4/5/6 teacher drew many sensitive responses from pupils about the American civil rights movement, and successfully encouraged them to record their thoughts. One pupil, writing a diary entry as Rosa Parks, wrote: 'I don't know what it was today. It felt strange, determined to do something! I felt God was with me.'

Teachers use questioning effectively to gauge pupils' level of understanding and extend their thinking, targeting their questions to individual pupils. Prompts for learning are clearly displayed in every classroom and teachers, through their dialogue and marking, ensure pupils are aware of what they are good at and how they can

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improve.

Across the school, teaching assistants play a significant part in helping teachers to ensure each group within the mixed-age classes is sufficiently challenged. Support for pupils with a range of aptitudes and needs is well organised. Pupils benefit from extra help in the classroom and from skilled intervention by well-trained and experienced support staff in small withdrawal groups. Occasionally, teachers spend rather too long introducing lessons, which limits the time teaching assistants spend supporting pupils' independent work. That said, the quality of teaching is consistently good and outstanding teaching was observed in every class.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning and a calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school. In lessons, their willingness to participate and high levels of cooperation mean that teachers confidently include imaginative, practical and independent activities in the knowledge that pupils will respond sensibly and maturely. Parents and carers expressed great confidence in the school's management of behaviour. One wrote, 'Teachers do not tolerate bad behaviour and deal with it appropriately on the rare instances it occurs.'

Pupils were keen to talk about the way everyone gets along. 'We all know each other, like one big family', was typical of their comments. Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after, and their parents and carers agree. They have a very good understanding of how bullying might take different forms but say any type of bullying is extremely rare and feel that it is dealt with very well when it does happen. They are well versed in internet safety and are aware of the potential risks in entering personal data on to websites or exchanging it with strangers. Pupils are alert to the potential hazards in the home and when outdoors, and offered very insightful ideas about how to avoid them. The building is secure and pupils are supervised closely at all times.

Leadership and management

Staff and members of the governing body share a common vision and drive for improvement. The monitoring of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning is a real strength. It has led to more consistency in the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, where there was previously some lack of challenge. The headteacher and subject leaders visit lessons regularly. They identify and share effective methods and address any emerging issues promptly through collaborative professional development. For example, further training has led to staff using a wider variety of questioning techniques. Within the small group of colleagues, this is handled openly and sensitively which draws the best out of staff. All feel valued and supported.

Curriculum topics interest and engage pupils, and the way pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted is outstanding. Every advantage is taken

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of the school's rural location, for example, in the study of history, geography and science. In addition, staff successfully broaden pupils' horizons through topics, assemblies, visits and other activities which incorporate learning about different cultures, faiths and lifestyles. This was exemplified during a religious education lesson when the oldest pupils were asked to reflect on the links between the civil rights movement and their own moral values and beliefs.

Opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum are good. For example, they frequently use their skills in mathematics when conducting investigations in science; measuring accurately and recording their findings in graphs. Every pupil from Year 2 to Year 6 has an individual netbook. Although these are used for tasks such as word-processing and internet searches, there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their computer skills in such areas as data handling and the use of sensors to record changes in the environment.

The governing body, headteacher and staff share a determined commitment to tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities, ensuring all pupils do as well as they can. Safeguarding procedures are well established and implemented effectively. Self-evaluation is accurate and strategic planning is well founded. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and any anomalies are quickly spotted. Members of the governing body gain first-hand information through regular visits. The school's track record including improving the quality of teaching and accelerating progress in Key Stage 1, together with a well-established process of self-review, indicates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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.



12 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Broughton Gifford Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School, Melksham, SN12 8PR

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school last week. I enjoyed hearing all about what you were doing.

You go to a good school where you achieve well and reach above average levels of attainment. All the adults look after you very well and you are extremely happy and hardworking. You said learning was fun and I saw this for myself when I visited your lessons. I also saw how much you enjoyed learning among the trees in the copse. I was very impressed by your excellent behaviour and how well you get on with one another and all the adults. You look out for one another, just as if you were a very large family. Everybody feels safe and it heartening to hear that bullying is extremely rare.

Adults keep a close eye on how you are getting on and make sure that each one of you makes good progress. They plan really interesting activities to choose from and I was enthralled by the way adults help you to think deeply about things, such as rights and responsibilities.

It was great to see how well you are doing in reading and mathematics. You are making real efforts to improve your writing. Some of you tend to play safe and avoid using more imaginative words because you lack confidence in spelling. I agree with your teachers, that if your spelling improved, it might take your writing to a different level. How fortunate you are in Years 2 to 6 to have your own netbook! I have asked staff to make it possible for you to use these more widely than you do at the moment, by building in more opportunities for you to do so in your day-to-day work.

Thank you again for making me so welcome and telling me about your school. Please carry on being cheerful, friendly and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton
Lead inspector

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