

# Aberford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107985
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	356285
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Read

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Ray Alderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Heggie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Aberford, Leeds West Yorkshire LS25 3BU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and observed four teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, managers, staff, the School Improvement Partner and groups of pupils. In observing the school's work, they looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment records, school policies and school development plans. In total, 32 parental questionnaires were received, analysed and considered, alongside 50 questionnaires completed by pupils and eight completed by staff.

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

- Whether pupils, including the more able, are doing as well as they can, especially in reading and writing
- Whether teaching provides enough challenge, especially in reading and writing.
- Whether the Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children well enough for their Key Stage 1 literacy work and provides outdoor learning opportunities.
- How effective leaders and managers are in checking the school's performance and planning for improvement.

## Information about the school

This school is smaller in size than the average primary school and pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around half the average. A lower than average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and an average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds the Healthy School status and the Inclusion Chartermark.

An after-school Kids Club operates on the premises. It is run and managed by a private provider and is subject to a separate inspection and report.

The school has been through an unsettled period recently and three-quarters of the teaching staff have joined in the last two years.

**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

This school provides a satisfactory quality of education and is improving. It has strengths in pastoral areas so pupils' personal development, their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. There has been a concerted effort to boost pupils' achievement and this has resulted in some good improvements. Effective systems are in place for tracking pupils' achievement and for supporting those who are not meeting expectations. With an accurate view of the school's performance, senior leaders fully acknowledge that progress, although improving, needs to accelerate further. The headteacher is well regarded by the school community and has a clear, ambitious vision for the future. Morale is high and staff are keen to move the school forward. The capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in some areas of learning it is good. The indoor classroom is inviting and stimulating but opportunities for learning outdoors are limited. A new curriculum for the Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils involves a carousel of activities with some movement between teaching areas. When the Reception children are taught in their own classroom, they learn well, but out of this environment, their needs are not fully met and their progress is slower. Progress across Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, but there are occasions when more-able pupils are not fully challenged. In Key Stage 2, progress has improved and is often good. However, progress in writing is variable across the school and, when compared to reading, fewer pupils are working at the higher level. Some spelling is inaccurate and pupils are not secure in using different styles to suit the purpose or the audience of particular pieces of writing. Teaching has a satisfactory impact on learning and there are some strengths. For example, the subject leader for English has considerable expertise in the teaching of writing. There have been fewer opportunities, however, for sharing this with other staff in order to influence their practice. The curriculum is satisfactory with a good programme for personal education and some good enhancements to learning, such as sports coaching and after-school clubs.

The school provides good care for pupils who get on very well together in this harmonious, family community. They are actively involved in local events and make a good contribution to decision making through their elected school council. The school's promotion of promoting community cohesion makes little impact beyond the local area. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average. Pupils assert that they feel safe and know that bullying is not tolerated. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and well supported through strong links with the church.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:

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- developing the outdoor classroom to provide the same range of learning as in the indoor area
- ensure that opportunities for children to explore, investigate, follow their own interests and to work outdoors, are fully available throughout the day.
- Improve progress in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that more-able pupils are appropriately and consistently challenged.
- Ensure consistent progress in writing across the year groups, by:
  - making sure that all pupils are secure in applying their knowledge of letters and sounds in order to spell accurately
  - helping them to better write in a style that is appropriate for its purpose and audience
  - providing opportunities for the subject leader to share expertise and flair.
- Extend and consolidate the work that has already started to promote community cohesion beyond the school's immediate area.
- 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**

Boys and girls make equal progress and say they thoroughly enjoy school. During their 'Thanksgiving Day', for instance, pupils collaborated on some interesting practical projects, including art and dance work. All age groups have positive attitudes to learning and work hard. For example, pupils enjoy researching and developing their own style of recording when completing their homework projects. In one challenging lesson, Years 3 and 4 made good use of information and communication technology to draw and rotate three-dimensional shapes. Achievement and learning is satisfactory for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

When they enter the Reception Year, overall, most children's skills are as expected for their age. At the start of Year 1, their attainment is broadly average. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, but too few more-able pupils reach the expected higher Level 3. Across Key Stage 2, progress is accelerating and pupils are increasingly meeting the challenging targets that their teachers set. Many are making up for shortfalls in their previous learning; with the result that underachievement is being systematically eradicated, especially among the more-able. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average. A good proportion of Key Stage 2 pupils are now working at the higher level in reading and mathematics, but fewer are doing so in writing. A new programme for teaching letters and sounds is helping to boost progress in reading and writing, but some pupils have not worked through the whole programme and are experiencing some difficulties with spelling.

Pupils behave well, are very polite, care for each other and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. The 'prayer leaves', written by Years 3 and 4 pupils, clearly illustrate their awareness of spirituality and their appreciation of the less tangible things in life, such as family and friends. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living and thoroughly enjoy sport and exercise. They have good involvement with the local

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community, attending festivals in church, enjoying horticultural shows and running their own farmers markets after school. They demonstrate a good awareness of social responsibility and of enterprise, by raising money to fund projects and for charities.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Good relationships exist in all classes and pupils say their teachers provide lots of help. Where teaching and learning are at their best, teachers make the purpose of lessons clear and provide pupils with challenging but attainable learning goals. As a result, pupils know exactly what is expected of them, are becoming independent learners and evaluate how well they are achieving. Teachers have developed accurate assessments of learning which they generally use well to set work at different levels of difficulty. Sometimes, however, more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 are not fully stretched in lessons. Some inspirational teaching of writing was observed, but in some classes there is insufficient emphasis on using language, grammar and style to suit the purpose of or to engage the audience in a piece of writing.

The satisfactory curriculum effectively links subjects together to enthuse pupils. For example, pupils say they are thoroughly enjoying the current 'passion for fashion' topic that combines history and art in an imaginative way. An exciting range of themed events, such as those based around the World Cup or Bollywood, provide plentiful opportunities for active learning. The newly introduced planning for the core subjects of English,

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mathematics and science, has some merits. For example, pupils are taught in smaller, ability groups for literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is no better than satisfactory overall, because the shorter teaching sessions leave less time for pupils to work independently, and issues with accommodation and resources for the reception children have yet to be resolved. Some interesting after-school clubs, such as dance or gardening, are well attended and extend pupils' experiences and interests.

The school provides a safe, nurturing environment. Class rules are agreed, well known and followed; this creates an orderly, productive working atmosphere in which pupils behave sensibly. Good systems to deal with any incidents of bullying are established and pupils assert that adults act swiftly to address any concerns or worries they express. The school liaises closely with outside agencies to secure expert help when needed and this supports vulnerable pupils very well.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides strong direction for the school and both staff and the governing body share her ambitious agenda for long-term improvement. Plans to raise attainment and for further school improvements have a clear agenda and ensure that all staff know what is required. In this small school, staff work closely together, enabling subject managers to have a clear overview of provision and learning. Despite close cooperation and improvements in planning for this, there remain few opportunities for staff, to share their expertise and influence each others' practice, especially in writing.

Community cohesion is promoted well at the school and local level, but work in the national and global contexts is at an early stage of development. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity satisfactorily ensures that most groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have equal access to all activities. There are occasions, however, when more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 are not fully stretched. Safeguarding measures meet requirements and there are effective systems in place for child protection and supporting vulnerable pupils. Good links with parents and carers encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education and many now help in classrooms. The governing body contributes considerable expertise in supporting managers and offering active support, for example, by helping in classes. It has a secure overview of pupils' attainment and their progress but it is only just beginning to play a wider role in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and policies.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

As they enter the Reception Year, children's development varies widely between individuals and from year to year. Their progress is satisfactory overall. By the time children enter Year 1, their attainment is broadly average.

The indoor classroom is stimulating and inviting. Children's progress is assessed carefully and tasks are planned effectively to build on developing knowledge and skills. For most of the day, children have focused group sessions with an adult, but are free, at other times, to choose from a range of activities within which they practise their developing skills. During a recent theme day, based on Thanksgiving, for example, children investigated vegetables, weighing, cleaning and pricing them and then enjoyed selling them in their own market. These exciting, practical activities are not in evidence when children are taught out of their classroom. Plans are in place to develop outdoor learning and staff provide some activities in the shared playground. However, these are limited and not available on a continuous basis. Welfare arrangements are good. Good links with pre-school providers and effective induction procedures help children to settle quickly, and parents and carers are successfully encouraged to be partners in their children's learning.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers commend the provision and feel well informed. All of those who replied to the questionnaire agree that their children's experience of school is a happy one. Quotes include 'the enthusiastic staff put fun into learning' and 'my child loves going to school'. Parents and carers feel that pupils are helped to live a healthy lifestyle and that children are safe. The inspectors endorse most of their views. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about progress, behaviour and the effectiveness of provision in meeting individual needs. These comments are understandable since the school has been through an unsettled time. The inspection finds that current systems to encourage and support good behaviour are effective and the school works hard to cater for individual needs. Any remaining shortfalls in learning from past years are being swiftly addressed. However, inspectors find that there are occasions when progress in writing and for those more-able pupils, is not as good as it could be.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Aberford Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 inspector received 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 96 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	59	12	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	56	13	41	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	11	34	19	59	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	44	14	44	4	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	53	14	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	34	17	53	3	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	41	17	53	0	0	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)	11	34	16	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	38	16	50	4	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	25	19	59	4	13	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	47	13	41	3	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	59	10	31	3	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	50	15	47	0	0	0	0

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Aberford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Leeds, LS25 3BU**

Thank you for the very warm welcome and lovely smiles you gave my colleague and I when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us. In return, I would like to tell you what we found out.

Aberford Primary is a happy school. It provides you with a satisfactory standard of education and promotes your personal development well. You get on very well together and take good care of each other. You are a credit to the school and your families. Well done! Thank you to the pupils who filled in their questionnaire and those who chatted with me. You are very pleased with your school and feel that your teachers do a good job.

You are keen to learn and work hard. You are learning at a faster rate now but I think that there are some areas for further improvement, so I have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- ensure that the reception children are always able to investigate and explore if they want to, and to develop an outdoor classroom for them that includes a wide range of activities, just like indoors
- make sure that the faster learners in Years 1 and 2 have lots of challenge to keep them busy
- make sure that you make good progress in writing in all classes not just some
- provide opportunities for you to engage with people in other parts of this country and abroad.

You can help by continuing to attend regularly, be keen to learn and work hard on your homework projects. Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Lynne Read

Lead Inspector

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