

Austrey CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125624
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	359914
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Carol Worthington

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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Stephen Banks
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Parsons
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and all five class teachers were seen at least once. Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders, the chair of the governing body, and a group of pupils. Many other pupils and some parents were informally spoken with. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of assessments of pupils' attainment, tracking of their progress and samples of their work in books. All safeguarding documents were scrutinised. Inspectors analysed 57 parents' and carers' questionnaire returns, together with those completed by all staff and all pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

- How do school leaders ensure that teaching in Key Stage 2 results in pupils' consistently good learning and progress?
- How effective are measures put in place to improve girls' attainment and progress in mathematics, and boys' attainment and progress in writing?
- How does the school measure the impact of its local partnerships on pupils' academic and personal achievements?
- How effective is the school in making sure its pupils get first-hand experience of the diversity of cultures in modern Britain?

Information about the school

This smaller-than-average sized school is in a rural setting, but a significant number of its pupils come from further afield. All pupils are of White British origin, with none from minority ethnic backgrounds. All speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than in most schools, but unevenly distributed, so there is a greater proportion in some years than others. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is extremely low. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Three of the four classes have mixed age groups: Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in a Reception class. Before-and after-school sports clubs are run mainly by local outside agencies. The on-site pre-school is not managed by the governing body so this was inspected separately.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Austrey School has made good improvement since its previous inspection and now provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Academic standards shown by pupils' performance in national assessments and tests in English, mathematics and science are above average in both Key Stages 1 and 2. This attainment is reflected in work seen in the school. Pupils make consistently good progress throughout Reception and Key Stage 1. There is a small dip in progress in Year 3, due to pupils taking time to become used to the larger class size and less adult support. Progress is, however, made up in Year 4 and continues to be good in Years 5 and 6. This is as a result of good teaching and good use of accurate assessment.

The headteacher has been effective in improving the system for tracking pupils' progress since the previous inspection. Now meticulously done, it enables early signs of underachievement to be dealt with effectively. Recent successful measures have resulted in improved attainment in boys' writing and girls' mathematics, which is being maintained and improved further. All groups of pupils achieve well. Their reading, writing and mathematics skills develop well throughout the school and they use computers effectively in most areas of the curriculum. Sometimes, older pupils' writing is marred by spelling inaccuracies. The school provides well for its smaller than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who achieve well. The majority attain at least average academic standards.

The Christian ethos is apparent in all aspects of school life, particularly in the high quality of pastoral care shown by all adults for the pupils in their care. In turn, pupils learn to care for each other and their environment. Older ones act as buddies to younger pupils and lead playtime activities. Pupils feel safe and say they always have someone to talk to if they are worried. Behaviour is good and older pupils say that bullying is extremely rare; sometimes they fall out, but make it up the next day. Spiritual, moral and social development is particularly strong. Pupils have good knowledge of their own culture, but do not have enough opportunity to gain first-hand experience of the wide mix of cultures in modern Britain. As a result of their above average attainment, good achievement and acquisition of good personal attributes, pupils are well-prepared for the next stages of their education and future life.

Teaching and learning are good; there is some excellent practice in Key Stage 1, where pupils particularly enjoy a wide variety of stimulating activities. Active group work also motivates pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly when the large classes are split into smaller groups with adult supervision. The curriculum is being reviewed and now contains some exciting topics like 'volcanoes' which motivate pupils to learn more. Assessment is generally used well to determine the next steps for learning, and pupils are becoming more widely involved in assessing their own learning, using group targets effectively.

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There have been good improvements in the quality of leadership and management since the previous inspection. All members of staff share the headteacher's ambition for success and further improvement, and are effective in their own leadership roles. Because of the good all-round improvement since the previous inspection, and the effective self-evaluation, the school is now in a good position to make further improvements.

The school is a highly cohesive community where everyone is valued and their talents recognised. It is well regarded in its local community, where a recent school project about the village history drew in many visitors. Other partnerships with local schools and agencies have a significant impact on pupils' education by providing a much richer curriculum, and opportunities to share teaching and assessment expertise.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of pupils in Year 3 by:
 - providing similar good advice and guidance to pupils moving between Key Stages 1 and 2, as that provided to pupils entering and leaving school
 - providing more adult support in the Year 3/4 class so that pupils can be more regularly taught in smaller groups.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to gain first-hand experience of the wide variety of cultures in modern Britain.
- Improve pupils' spelling by extending the 'letters and sounds' programme to Key Stage 2 and helping pupils learn to spell subject vocabulary and 'tricky' words.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the school with early skills and knowledge which vary from year to year because of small numbers and a wide spread of ability, but are broadly at the levels expected. Good progress is maintained through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. Although it slows in Year 3, it accelerates again from Years 4 to 6, so attainment is above average in Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The main reason for the slowing of progress is that pupils find it difficult to acclimatise to being taught in a much larger class, particularly when there is no extra adult support. Year 3 pupils in particular found it difficult to concentrate through a whole class mathematics session about three-dimensional shapes. They made much better progress when actively engaged in adult-supported small group work, matched to their age and ability. In contrast, pupils in Key Stage 1 made excellent progress in learning about two-dimensional shapes in very small, well supported groups, throughout their mathematics lesson. In the Year 5/6 class, both boys and girls demonstrated an above average standard, when writing about wartime evacuees, but this was marred for some girls and boys by spelling inaccuracies. Younger pupils spell more accurately because of the successful programme focused on linking sounds and letters. Above average attainment is seen in a wide range of subjects, for example, in French, design and technology, music and humanities. The few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress with work well matched to their needs in class and in focused withdrawal lessons.

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Pupils come to school regularly and punctually. They enjoy learning and attendance is above average. They enthusiastically take part in schemes to improve the school environment, particularly gardening and observing wildlife in the on-site 'forest school' facility. They have a good knowledge of their local village through history and geography projects. Pupils have a strong voice through the school council in making decisions relating to their education and well-being. The 'buddy' system works well and is thought highly of by parents. Pupils know how to live healthy lives by eating well and being active. A high proportion regularly take part in the many sporting activities provided through partnerships with local agencies after school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Teaching has improved because of initiatives put in place since the previous inspection and is now good throughout the school. Major strengths lie in the sharing of good practice, training, and subject expertise with local partner schools. These have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Good assessment enables work to be pitched well to challenge the wide range of ability in all classes, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In the Year 3/4 class, this is more successful when the teacher has additional adult support for pupils working in smaller groups. Marking is done regularly, praising success and indicating how pupils can make progress against their targets. In the

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Year 5/6 class, there is an especially effective marking dialogue with pupils, who are becoming adept at judging their own progress and recognising the next steps in learning.

The curriculum is well planned to make sure that all requirements are met in a context where two different years are taught together in most classes. Good provision is made for literacy and numeracy, increasingly through projects which link the learning in different subjects. Computers are used regularly in most classes. The curriculum is enhanced by a very wide variety of clubs and activities. These change frequently so that pupils can choose to work towards gaining much-prized awards from the 'children's university'. Partnerships with other schools enhance provision, particularly in sport, music and extension activities for gifted and talented pupils.

The school has well-organised arrangements for the care of all pupils which result in their good personal development and well-being. There is good support for pupils and their families who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances. The school works well with outside agencies to help these pupils to overcome barriers to their learning. Advice and support for pupils entering and leaving school is a strong feature in Reception and Year 6, but there is not such comprehensive support for internal transfer between Key Stages 1 and 2.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership has been effectively distributed by the headteacher to other members of staff since the previous inspection. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning have resulted in good improvement, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Accurate self-evaluation results in identification of the right priorities for improvement. Challenging targets are set, regularly met and often exceeded. The effectiveness of the Governing Body is satisfactory. It ensures that all statutory requirements are met and is becoming influential in deciding priorities for school improvement as new governors are trained.

The school's procedures for safeguarding are good. It adopts recommended good practice and all staff are well trained in child protection issues. There are well developed quality assurance and risk assessment procedures. The school's very effective and comprehensive assessment systems ensure that the majority of pupils make good or better progress. Funding is supported by parent contributions to ensure that all children have the opportunity to take part in all activities, including trips and residential visits.

The school has analysed its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context and used this to promote community cohesion strongly within the school and in its outreach into the local

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village and parish communities. It has effective plans to engage with communities further afield on a national and global scale.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge expected for their age. Consistently good teaching by all adults who work with the children ensures that they make good progress, regardless of their different starting points, and thoroughly enjoy learning. Achievement is good, and the majority attain the learning goals for children of this age by the end of Reception.

Children are confident and happy in a secure and welcoming environment. They settle quickly to class routines when they enter school in the mornings, confidently self-registering and becoming 'busy bees' with a wide variety of activities to develop manipulation and co-ordination. Their good social skills enable them to initiate learning activities when playing amicably in small groups together, for example, building a 'bonfire' in the outside area. Early numeracy develops through activities such as learning about 'halves' and 'whole' when making a pizza. Early literacy develops through finding out about 'letters and sounds' and imaginative activities such as responding to a request from 'Wendy the witch' who has lost her spell book.

Activities are planned effectively across all the areas of learning. The learning environment indoors is well equipped, but outdoors there is limited access to water play or wheeled vehicles. Good leadership ensures planning is thorough and assessment is used effectively to match adult-led activities to the range of children's abilities. The safety and care of all children has a very high profile. Good relationships with parents and carers extend children's learning into their homes.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaires expressed overwhelmingly positive views about the school. Many wrote praising the school for its values and the quality of education. Parents particularly appreciate the way the school involves them in their children's education, the easy availability of the headteacher and other staff to discuss concerns. A few parents identified that their children made less progress in Year 3. Inspection evidence indicated that this is something the school could improve. In response to the few negative returns about behaviour, inspectors found that behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Austrey CofE 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 inspection team received 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 104 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	56	25	44	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	65	20	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	46	29	51	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	35	33	58	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	44	28	49	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	49	27	47	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	53	25	44	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)	34	60	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	51	23	40	5	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	32	35	61	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	35	31	54	5	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	53	24	42	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	63	19	33	2	4	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



15 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Austrey CofE Primary School, Atherstone, CV9 3EQ

Thank you very much for being so helpful to my colleague and me during our visit, which we really enjoyed. I agree with you that yours is a good school, and here are some of the reasons.

Your headteacher runs the school well. Teaching is good so you enjoy your lessons and work hard. You learn best when you can do practical activities in groups. You do well in English and mathematics. You come to school regularly, behave well and have good attitudes to learning, which prepares you well for secondary school.

All the adults take good care of you and in turn, you take care of your younger 'buddies' at play and lunchtimes. You can always talk to someone if you have problems. You learn how to keep yourself safe and healthy and are very keen on the sports and other clubs which can help you get 'children's university' awards. You also enjoy 'forest school'. You have good links with the local community and church. Your village project was really well done, but you don't get enough contact with people from other cultures living in Britain.

All the adults in your school want it to be even better. To make this happen, I have asked them to:

- make sure that you are well prepared for the transfer from Year 2 to Year 3 and that pupils in Year 3 get more adult support in smaller groups
- find ways of giving you more contact with people from a wider range of different cultures who live in Britain
- help you to improve spelling for those of you in Years 3 to 6.

You can help by always doing your best to succeed!

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead inspector

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