

St David's School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115743
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	357811
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Sullivan
Headteacher	Faye Heming
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and observed 11 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons and at break times. They observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including development planning, monitoring information, safeguarding procedures and pupils' books. They analysed 137 responses to the parental questionnaire and took account of the views expressed by parents and carers during informal meetings and conversations.

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

- The current picture of learning and progress in writing, especially for boys.
- The extent to which provision is promoting higher levels of attainment in mathematics. extent to which provision is promoting higher levels of attainment in mathematics.
- The success of leaders at improving teaching and learning.
- The effectiveness of tracking procedures to measure the progress of pupils, tackle any underachievement and to hold teachers to account for the progress made by pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There are few pupils who speak English as an additional language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a separate Reception class, which has its own dedicated outdoor learning area. Other pupils are taught in mixed-age classes with Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6 working together for most of the time. A new headteacher was appointed to take over from Easter 2010. The school provides extended provision through a breakfast and after-school club.

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

St David's is a satisfactory school, where pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards overall. Children in Reception feel very secure and rapidly grow in confidence. Attainment is currently better in Year 1 and Year 2 because teachers are building on the strong start made in Reception. Across the school, relationships are very positive and the pupils enjoy lessons. Their positive attitudes and enthusiasm contribute well to their learning. Many are very keen to answer questions and share their ideas. Adults know the pupils well and ensure that they are well cared for. Pupils with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities receive sensitive and effective support. Pupils across the school say they feel very safe and get on well together. Around the school and in the play areas, they are polite, well mannered and a pleasure to talk to. They contribute well to the school and local community, for example through their work as prefects.

A large number of parents and carers expressed their views about the school. Their many positive comments reflect the changes made by the new headteacher. For example, one commented that, 'The headteacher has made a big impression in the time she has been at the school.' Inspection evidence supports these views. Improved procedures for tracking the progress of pupils have been robustly implemented. As a consequence, leaders are clear about the progress being made by different groups of pupils and can address any underachievement. Pupils' progress in reading is stronger than in writing. Leaders have accurately identified a weakness in writing, particularly for boys. This is being addressed by linking writing to other subjects to make it a more relevant and purposeful activity. However, more remains to be done to improve both sentence structure and composition. In mathematics, improvement is securely established. Results show a growing number of pupils reaching the higher levels, and much good learning was observed in mathematics lessons.

The quality of teaching is improving and the quality of learning observed by inspectors matches closely the school's own view. Teachers expect pupils to listen and contribute in lessons and to work together in groups. These expectations are widely met. In satisfactory lessons, planning is not consistently effective enough in providing challenge for different groups of pupils and learning intentions are not sharp or clear enough for different groups of pupils. Pupils have targets to help them to understand what they need to do to improve. However, pupils do not use these enough to assess their own work and set personal goals. Although pupils have satisfactory basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) they are not being used enough to support learning in all subjects. The new headteacher, staff and the governing body now share the school's ambitions. Given this and school leaders' and governors' clear recognition of where action is needed as well as signs of pupils' rising attainment, the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in writing by:
 - ensuring that the work given to the pupils is well matched to their individual learning needs
 - providing more regular opportunities for the pupils to assess their own work and set personal goals.
- Ensure that the large majority of teaching is good or better by:
 - ensuring that lessons have a learning focus which makes writing expectations clear for different groups of pupils
 - providing relevant and purposeful activities, particularly to engage the interest of boys, and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of sentence structure and composition.
- Improve the use of ICT to support learning in different subjects. ♦

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children come into school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are in line with expectations. Attainment is rising across the school as the impact of improvements to teaching and learning filter through to year groups. Consequently, pupils' attainment is rising and is average overall by the end of Year 6. Evidence from samples of pupils' work confirms this picture and learning and progress in lessons are satisfactory and improving. In one mathematics lesson, for example, older pupils made good progress in developing their basic computation skills and applied these to problems. The pupils responded well to high levels of expectation and made good progress. Investigation work using Pascal's triangle enabled other pupils to think carefully about patterns in number. In another example, a wide range of vocabulary was developed in a discussion about the 'Charge of the Light Brigade'. This enabled pupils to make good gains in their speaking and listening skills. However, the match of work to pupils' needs is not yet consistently precise or challenging enough across the school. As a result, progress is uneven. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn effectively alongside their peers and they make similar progress to other pupils. Those with more significant needs are given good individual support and answer questions confidently.

Basic skills in mathematics are improving well. In writing, there is more to be done to help the pupils use more complex sentences when writing longer pieces. Some pupils use ICT confidently but others rely on support to enable them to complete tasks such as cutting and pasting information and resizing images.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend very regularly. They say that everyone is friendly and learning is a lot of fun. They have targets in English and mathematics, but say that are not used very regularly. They comment that there is some teasing but that this is quickly sorted out by the teachers. The prefects make a good contribution to dealing with the worries of younger pupils. Pupils enjoy going to the breakfast club and say the food is healthy. This provides a good start to the school day.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Behaviour in and around the school is good and sometimes excellent, for example during whole-school assemblies. The link with a school in Kenya has been beneficial in developing the pupils' understanding about different cultures. They have been made acutely aware of the contrasting climate because of recent flooding in the local area and a prolonged drought in Africa. However, their understanding of different cultures within the United Kingdom is less well developed. ♦

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
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?

Across the school there are a good range of different approaches to help pupils learn well. Questions are used well to capture pupils' imaginations and they are sometimes 'bursting' with enthusiasm to respond. Pupils quickly organise themselves and readily respond to instructions. On a few occasions, introductions and whole-class sessions are too long with information being aimed at the middle of the ability range within the class. Follow up work is not always matched well enough to the different groups of ability in the classes. This slows learning. In satisfactory lessons, the key elements of different types of writing are covered soundly but pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to apply skills or use adventurous vocabulary when writing. Teachers use the electronic whiteboards well to engage the interest of the pupils. There are some good examples of marking in books which identifies the next steps for improvement. However, this practice is inconsistent.

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Topic work is providing some memorable experiences for the pupils, such as the 'up in the air' project which involved a study of hot air balloons, birds of prey, and science investigations. Improvements to English include a stronger focus on writing in different subjects and the recent introduction of criteria so that pupils can judge how successful they have been. Improvements in the mathematics curriculum are ensuring that there are opportunities for pupils to reach the higher levels in national curriculum tests. The use of ICT as a normal part of lessons by the pupils is not sufficiently regular. Sporting provision is satisfactory and improving with the use of a sports coach and inter-school matches. The after-school club provides opportunities for the pupils to play or read books in a safe and calm environment.

The school provides a welcoming learning environment. There are meticulous arrangements in place to follow up on any child who is absent for too long and as a result persistent absence is low. Leaders have a good understanding of the needs of those pupils who are most vulnerable and they are well supported. The school's work with outside agencies to provide additional support is particularly strong.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The governors of the school, like parents and carers, express the view that considerable beneficial change has taken place since the appointment of the new headteacher. There is a strong focus on improving achievement and a common sense of purpose across the staff. The headteacher is galvanising the enthusiasm of staff and tackling areas of weakness robustly. Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities securely and are beginning to strengthen their role in holding leaders to account. Subject leaders have a clear understanding about what needs to be improved but have limited opportunities to monitor the quality of provision.

The progress of individual and different groups of pupils is monitored carefully. Those with pastoral needs are well integrated in lessons. Provision to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination for all pupils is satisfactory. Leaders have evaluated the provision to promote community cohesion. There are good local links and an effective global partnership. However, engagement with the wider community within the United Kingdom is at an early stage of development. There are established links with the local secondary school, for example, to support gifted and talented pupils in science and mathematics. Joint working arrangements have also been established with local schools to tackle improvements to boys' writing. ♦♦

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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All the necessary safeguarding checks for staff and other adults are in place. Training has ensured that staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress from starting points which are in line with expectations. Most of the children who have just moved into Year 1 reached or exceeded the expected goals across the different areas of learning. Although early in the term, the children show a good deal of confidence in choosing activities for themselves and most listen well in a large group. They join in singing and this is helping them to develop their understanding of rhyming words. They listen well to identify different first and last letter sounds in simple words. Although the outside learning area is spacious and well organised, it is not used as successfully as the indoor areas to promote learning. Leaders have promoted strong links with pre-school providers and induction arrangements for new children are good. Adults work well together to ensure the children are safe and secure. Parents and carers express positive comments about how well their children have settled.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: 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	2

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers strongly agree that the school keeps their children safe. The questionnaires, from a majority of the parents and carers, reflect very positive relationships with nearly all parents and carers. There were many very positive comments and a considerable number of these reflected changes made since the appointment of the new headteacher. Other comments include how communication has been improved through newsletters, the website and texting arrangements. A few parents and carers had concerns about the progress made by their children and how they receive information about this. Inspectors found that there is more to do to improve pupils' progress across the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St David's 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 137 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	63	48	35	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	81	59	53	39	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	55	40	65	47	10	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	47	54	39	11	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	75	55	57	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	45	68	50	7	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	45	69	50	1	1	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)	55	40	65	47	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	68	50	55	40	6	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	35	74	54	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	56	41	67	49	6	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	84	61	46	34	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	57	50	36	2	1	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.



1 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St David's School, Moreton-in-Marsh, GL56 0LQ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about your work. You were polite and friendly. We agree with you that your school is satisfactory. This means that there are lots of things that it does well, but also there are some things that could be better. Here are some of the things we liked about your school.

- Children in the Reception classes settle very quickly and are making good progress.
- You are happy at school and try your best.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and you make a good contribution to the community.
- All of the adults in the school look after you well. They give you good help when you are struggling with your work.
- The new headteacher is really making a difference to your school and all of the adults are working hard to make the school even better.

To help you make faster progress, we are asking your teachers to help you improve your writing by making the activities interesting and purposeful. You will also need better information about what you are aiming to achieve in your writing. We have also asked them to make sure that your work is not too hard and not too easy and to increase the opportunities for you to assess for yourselves how well you are doing and to set your own personal goals. This will help you gain an even better understanding of how to improve your work. The school is going to look at ways of increasing the opportunities for you to use information and communication technology to support your learning in different subjects.

We wish you all well for the future. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard all of the time.

Yours sincerely

Peter

Clifton Lead Inspector

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