

Alveley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123353
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	359417
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Ian Jones

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	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Stephenson
Headteacher	Marilyn Locke
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed all four teachers during six lesson observations. Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher and two governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of self-evaluation documentation, the school improvement plan, assessment information and a sample of the pupils' work. Responses to questionnaires from pupils, staff and 32 parents and carers were considered.

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

- How good are attainment and progress in mathematics?
- How effective are leadership and management in driving school improvement?
- How effectively is assessment information used to match learning to pupils' needs and to inform them about their progress?

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds, and they all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. The school holds a number of external accreditations including Active Mark for sport and Arts Mark as well as the Healthy Schools status.

A privately run playgroup operates on the school site and this is subject to a separate inspection.

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

Alveley Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has a number of strengths including a calm and harmonious learning environment where pupils are well cared for and show good social and moral skills. Their behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good, and they enjoy the good curriculum offered to them. They respect the thoughts and opinions of others and make lucid judgements on moral dilemmas. Pupils of all ages demonstrate a clear understanding of how to keep healthy. They say they feel safe and know there are adults to provide support and guidance when they need it. Engagements with parents and carers is good and leaders and managers enjoy their confidence and support.

The headteacher provides appropriate leadership. She is motivated to seek further improvement and has identified the key areas for further development based on reasonably accurate self-evaluation. The school has demonstrated a satisfactory capacity to improve further by enhancing provision since the previous inspection, most notably in science where achievement has improved well and is now good. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils are making the progress expected of them. Leaders and managers have a secure plan to improve the school further. The staff share a sense of purpose and work together as a team to improve the quality of their own work and, consequently, the outcomes for pupils.

The headteacher and governing body fully understand what needs to be done in order to bring about further improvement and enable all pupils to reach their potential. While attainment is above average overall, it dipped in mathematics last year to a satisfactory level. The rate of progress is not as good as it could be, especially in mathematics, because expectations for more-able pupils are not high enough. The school is collecting useful assessment information on pupils' progress. However, this is not being used well enough to plan work which matches the needs of different groups of pupils and which, therefore, challenges all pupils fully.

The governing body discharges its responsibilities appropriately, for example safeguarding requirements and procedures are of good quality. However, it is not always influential enough in determining the strategic direction of the school or challenging enough to bring about the improvements required.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by ensuring more-able pupils are challenged enough in lessons to achieve the higher standards of work they are capable of.
- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching by ensuring that learning activities are carefully matched to challenge pupils of all abilities to make good progress.

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- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by more effectively holding the school to account and by developing a more strategic role in planning and supporting school improvement.
- Up to 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

Attainment on entry is broadly in line with national expectations but varies from year to year because of the small groups involved. There are four children currently in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils enjoy being at school and demonstrate good attitudes to their work. By the end of Year 6 attainment is above average. Over the last three years the rate of progress in English has improved and is now good. During the same period the rate of progress in mathematics has slipped from good to satisfactory. Attendance has improved in the last two years and is above average. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in lessons. An example of good progress was seen when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were challenged by an interesting task to develop their understanding of metaphors and similes. Pupils of all abilities enjoyed the lesson. The focus on developing opportunities to improve writing across the curriculum is quickening the rate of progress. However, the progress made by more-able or less-able pupils in other subjects is often not as good as it could be because the tasks they are set are not challenging enough to enable them to reach their potential. Work for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is planned appropriately to meet their needs. They receive sound support and their progress is tracked carefully. Consequently, they make the progress expected of them.

Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school by taking on responsibilities such as helping in assembly or working as playleaders. Pupils of all ages are represented on the school council which is effective in influencing the life of the school. They have a very good understanding of the needs of others and are keen to help those less fortunate than themselves. For example, the school has close links with an orphanage in Nepal. Pupils exchange correspondence and gifts with children there and help to raise money to help fund the orphanage. Recently, the school hosted the Pearl of Africa choir when it toured England and pupils took part enthusiastically in joint activities with the children.

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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	2
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	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?

The teaching of writing is often good reflecting the recent improvements seen in the good progress made by pupils in this subject. Classroom environments are calm and orderly with well-established routines. Teachers have a good understanding about what they are teaching and arrange interesting and appropriate activities to enable the pupils to learn. However, assessment information is not used well enough in planning. For example, pupils are occasionally required to complete straightforward tasks before moving on to work which extends their learning. On occasions, expectations are not made sufficiently clear and, consequently, the pace of learning slows. Teachers' marking provides pupils with a good understanding of what they have achieved. It also provides regular points for improvement, but this helpful guidance is not always followed up.

The school plans a thematic approach to the curriculum. This is used effectively to develop skills across a range of subjects. For example, information and communication technology is used well by pupils throughout the school and they achieve well in this aspect, and arts provision is particularly strong. Writing is taught well and the focus on developing writing skills across different subjects is effective in supporting the good progress. The school provides good opportunities to enrich the curriculum through a range of visits including a residential visit. There is a high level of participation in the good range of extra-curricular activities available.

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The school takes good care of its pupils and this is reflected in the good relationships they enjoy with the staff. Routines are clearly in place and these ensure that pupils are safe and that the school is an orderly and calm environment. A recent focus to promote attendance has been effective in raising attendance levels. Clearly targeted support for pupils facing challenging circumstances is of high quality.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are motivated to ensure continuous improvement, as shown by the challenging targets set for improvement. While the attention given to improving writing and raising attendance has been effective, the rate of progress in mathematics, although satisfactory, has slowed from a previously good level. There are appropriate systems to track the progress of pupils. The governing body is supportive and keen to develop a strategic role. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily. The headteacher has fostered strong partnerships with external agencies. All safeguarding regulations and duties are met well, and the school effectively incorporates safety issues into the curriculum enabling pupils to develop a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. It is actively promoted in the local community and there are some useful links established internationally, but the school recognises that more could be done to promote understanding of the national context.

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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	2
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's progress is satisfactory and they settle quickly into the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. They benefit from access to a well-resourced outside area, shared with the private playgroup. However, much of the learning is initiated and led by adults. There are fewer opportunities for children to choose activities, which they can explore and investigate, that capture their interest and imagination. As a result, this sometimes hampers children's ability to develop independence. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and staff work effectively to ensure that children are happy and safe. On occasions, planning focuses more on what tasks children are going to do rather than on what learning is intended to be gained from the activity. Suitable assessments are made. These are recorded in learning journals and used appropriately to inform planning. Leadership is satisfactory, and accurate self-evaluation is used to drive improvement. For example, action is being taken to develop more opportunities for children to make their own learning choices. staff enjoy productive relationships with parents and carers.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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

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Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the work of the school. Some wrote comments particularly praising the approachability of staff. A few parents felt that the school could do more to take account of parents' and carers' suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alveley 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 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	66	8	25	3	9	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	59	13	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	50	14	44	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	53	14	44	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	56	14	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	50	14	44	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	63	12	38	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)	19	59	10	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	59	12	38	0	0	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	53	10	31	2	6	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	41	12	38	4	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	34	18	56	2	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	56	12	38	2	6	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



9 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Alveley Primary School, Bridgnorth, WV15 6JT

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I very much enjoyed talking to you and finding out all about your school. I think yours is a satisfactory school. You behave well and I think you are polite and courteous. You have a good understanding about how to lead healthy lifestyles. You work and play well together and told me that you feel safe in school.

You enjoy good relationships with all the adults who look after you at school. Your lessons are interesting and help you to make sound progress. I think that you could make even more progress and I have asked your teachers to make sure that all of the work they give you is hard enough to help you to learn well. I have also asked the school to make sure that those of you who are especially good at mathematics are given challenging work.

The governing body are very keen that the school does well. I have asked them to keep a closer check on how well the school is doing.

I hope that you continue to enjoy all that school has to offer. You can help with these improvements by working hard and always doing your very best.

Yours sincerely

Ian Jones

Lead inspector

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