

# Oundle Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121984
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359138
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Sadler

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>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	249
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Melanie Messenger
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet McMurdo
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Milton Road Oundle, Peterborough PE8 4AB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 17 lessons led by 13 different teachers, and other members of staff were seen. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff and from 144 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The degree to which Year 4 pupils are on track to achieve their end-of-year targets, and if these are sufficiently challenging.
- How successfully the curriculum promotes pupils' learning of the basic skills.
- Whether children make sufficient progress across all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable its overall effectiveness to be outstanding.

## Information about the school

Oundle Church of England Primary School is of average size and it caters for pupils up to Year 4. A large majority of pupils come from the town although an increasing number, currently about a quarter of pupils, come from surrounding villages. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is about half the national average. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

There is a breakfast club to provide care for pupils from 8.00am each day. This provision is managed by the governing body and is included within this inspection. The school has gained a number of awards, amongst them enhanced Healthy Schools Status and the Eco-School silver award.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Oundle Church of England Primary is an outstanding school. It provides an excellent well-rounded education in which pupils thrive in both their personal and academic development. The exciting and stimulating curriculum inspires the pupils and enables them to achieve highly. They are highly enthusiastic about school and learning. Parents and carers agree. They wholeheartedly support the school and appreciate all that it offers for their children. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly impressed with programmes the school puts in place to ensure that their children's needs are met. These result in these pupils making exceptionally good progress and achieving highly.

The outstanding commitment of the headteacher, and all the staff, to treat each child as an individual is one of the keys to the school's success. All the staff understand the needs of all pupils exceptionally well. Their progress is checked and carefully monitored from the day that they enter the Reception classes. Because the school values the pupils' personal and emotional well-being as highly as their academic needs, pupils learn in a secure and positive atmosphere which is underpinned by a strong ethos. This ensures they are challenged to reach their potential.

Children in the Reception classes get off to an excellent start. As one parent said, 'Reception is top notch! What a wonderful way for our child to start her primary years at school.' The wide range of exciting and stimulating activities in a supportive environment mean they learn extremely effectively and make rapid progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills. In Years 1 to 4, pupils continue to make outstanding progress. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is significantly above average, and by the end of Year 4 many pupils attain the standards usually expected at the end of Year 6 in reading and writing. All groups of pupils do equally well. Current Year 4 pupils are on track to meet their challenging targets and to sustain these high standards.

Senior staff, ably supported by the governing body, know how well the school is doing. The school has set highly challenging but realistic targets for future development. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, though occasionally a little cautious. The recent move to establishing teams of staff to monitor and promote areas of learning is starting to pay dividends, although as yet they are not sufficiently involved in checking the quality of teaching across the school. There is an outstanding capacity for further improvement. This is illustrated by the school's record of sustaining the pupils' outstanding personal development since the previous inspection and its success in improving provision and lifting progress to the current excellent levels.

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

- Embed the current plans to involve more teachers in the checking of the quality of teaching and learning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils are highly motivated and keen to do well, in response to the outstanding teaching they receive. This enables them to achieve high standards. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills and also their speaking and listening skills. Teachers in Years 1 to 4 build on these well-honed skills. They successfully ensure that lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to work independently and in small groups, and this helps to promote strong progress in learning. In an outstanding Year 4 literacy lesson, for example, all groups of pupils made excellent progress in learning how to improve their performance when reading poetry. Because the teacher asked the pupils to talk with their neighbour about the features that they thought were important, this gave all the pupils the opportunity to outline key factors. This led to some excellent poetry reading by the pupils, who spontaneously applauded when one pupil successfully incorporated all the success criteria identified. In an outstanding Year 3 numeracy lesson, the most-able pupils gleefully took on the challenge to write a set of instructions on how to find some treasure using an eight-point compass and 90-degree angles. Because all the problems relating to position and direction were set at a level according to ability, all the pupils participated well and thoroughly enjoyed the task. These examples typify the high challenge and well-matched activities that characterise almost all lessons and thereby lead to such high standards.

Pupils thrive in the nurturing atmosphere of the school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and their good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle is reflected in the enhanced Healthy School Status gained. However, this is not always reflected in the pupils' lunch boxes. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, assertive and confident, and they develop a strong moral code which is reflected in their pride in gaining the Eco-School award. The school council is influential and pupils enjoy the very many opportunities that are available for them to take responsibility. Behaviour in and around the school is outstanding and all the play spaces are happy and harmonious places. These well-honed personal skills, when linked with their excellent literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills, ensure they are getting an excellent grounding for the future.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

Provision is outstanding. Teachers ensure that lessons enthuse and inspire the pupils, and include excellent links across a range of subjects to make pupils' learning more relevant and meaningful for them. This has an excellent impact on progress because teachers ensure that pupils have many opportunities to apply the skills and knowledge they develop. Teachers invariably not only identify what is to be taught, but also what the pupils need to do in order to meet lesson objectives. Frequently, they use these success criteria to check progress during lessons and this helps the pupils understand what they have to do to meet the challenge of the next rung on the school's 'learning ladders'. These targets for improvement are used exceptionally well and are an important strategy in the involving of pupils in their own learning. Assessment is outstanding and staff question pupils well to check learning and to extend the pupils' thinking. They use resources such as interactive whiteboards skilfully. Planning is particularly effective. Tasks are carefully devised to meet the learning needs of all pupils so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. Pupils also benefit from high quality specialist teaching in French and music.

The school has made significant improvements to the curriculum since the previous inspection. It is very well planned and successfully integrates academic and personal learning. It also effectively promotes the basic skills. Topics and themes are successfully planned from starting points that interest and excite the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 4 spend a day exploring the River Nene as part of their work on 'Clean water, dirty

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water' and they set their own questions to answer as part of their studies. An exceptionally wide range of visits and visitors, as well as an excellent range of out-of-school activities, provide pupils with many additional opportunities to enhance their learning. Participation in after-school clubs is very high and almost all Year 3 and 4 pupils take part in at least one club.

Each pupil's needs are individually known and this is firmly bound by the excellent care, guidance and support provided. There is good provision for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. In addition, the learning mentor supports pupils' emotional needs very well and this helps to further strengthen links between home and school. A number of parents or carers commented on the benefits of the breakfast club. This is a high quality service provided for pupils, which they thoroughly enjoy. Transition arrangements both into and out of the school are effective.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is pivotal to the school's success, and is highly skilled in driving forward the ambitious programme outlined in the high quality school development plan. She works in close partnership with the effective senior leadership group to ensure that the school runs smoothly. The excellent governing body also plays an important role in the school's success. It ensures that all regulations are met in full and takes an active role in checking provision. Because of regular visits to the school, members of the governing body have an excellent overview of the school's direction and the priorities which they help to formulate. In addition, they ensure that the pupils' welfare lies at the heart of the school's management. This results in excellent and robust child protection and staff vetting procedures. There are very careful checks on all adults who work in the school, and health and safety checks as well as risk assessments are carried out rigorously.

There is a robust monitoring programme to ensure that the provision and standards are successfully sustained and improved upon. The ambitious 'strategic intentions' document complements the school development plan well, and taken together then form an efficient tool in driving the school forward. The staff work closely together as a team and morale is high. The beneficial move to curriculum teams for monitoring provision and attainment is successful because it ensures that leadership roles are devolved well. Even though there is very close monitoring of teaching, at present it is undertaken mainly by senior staff. The school has rightly identified that the next step is for the curriculum teams to take more responsibility for developing provision by monitoring the quality of teaching, as well as checking planning and pupils' progress.

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The school is a highly cohesive community and equality of opportunity for all pupils is promoted highly effectively. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. In addition, senior leaders promote excellent levels of community cohesion through close links with local schools and the community. Pupils make an annual visit to a mosque and synagogue as well as having a group of Muslim teenagers come to the school to explain their religion. The links with a school in Andresy in France enable pupils to enjoy exchanging letters with their pen pals in the Ecole le Parc.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are broadly at expected levels. Because the children's welfare and pastoral care are so successfully promoted, children settle quickly, learn to play happily with each other and rapidly realise the importance of sharing and taking turns. Their behaviour is excellent. Teaching is exhilarating and stimulating and the activities provided excite the children. For example, they gained much enjoyment in an excellent teacher-led activity when they were recognising shapes going from 'flat to fat'. All the children were excited at recognising two-dimensional shapes and then learning the name of the three-dimensional shapes. They were later thrilled at going on a trip round the school to find more three-dimensional shapes and videoing them for showing back in their classroom. The curriculum is inspiring and motivating. It reflects the needs of all the children.

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning. Staff provide an effective balance between activities that are led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. There are many opportunities for the children to learn, both indoors and outdoors. Excellent leadership and management are reflected in the way the school takes care to involve parents and carers in their children's learning from the start. Each child has a



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'learning journey' which meticulously records children's achievements, both at school and home, using a wide range of observations and photographs. These are complemented by outstanding reports to parents and carers about the children's progress in learning.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

There was a higher than normal response to the Ofsted questionnaire which represented the very large majority of families attending the school. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very pleased with all the school has to offer. This was shown in both the many positive comments made in person to the inspectors and also on the questionnaires. Almost all say that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and that teaching is good. There were few reservations. A small number parents and carers expressed concerns with the way in which unacceptable behaviour is handled. Inspectors found behaviour to be outstanding. There are excellent support strategies for managing behaviour, should any pupils stray from the high standards expected by the staff.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oundle Church of England 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 144 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 249 registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	104	72	38	26	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	108	75	34	24	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	75	52	63	44	5	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	55	57	40	6	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	89	62	52	36	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	84	58	52	36	6	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	56	61	42	2	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)	80	56	53	37	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	53	60	42	8	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	42	67	47	12	8	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	57	40	73	51	8	6	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	92	64	47	33	4	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	65	46	32	3	2	1	1

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



16 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oundle Church of England Primary School, Peterborough, PE8 4AB**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. It is an outstanding school. You told us that you really enjoy lessons and learning and we can see why! Your teachers make lessons interesting and they plan lots of exciting activities for you to do. This helps you to make excellent progress in your learning. We particularly enjoyed listening to your accounts of the topics and themes that you are enjoying.

You told us that your school is a very happy place and that the adults look after you well. We agree with you, and so do your parents and carers. We were impressed by how well you get on together. Your behaviour is excellent, you have a good understanding about being healthy and also you feel very safe in school. We think that your headteacher is doing an excellent job and she is helped by all the staff. They are always checking on how well you are doing because they want you always to do as well as you can.

Even in an outstanding school like yours there are things to improve. We have asked your headteacher and governing body to make sure that all the teachers have a chance to watch each other's lessons, so that they can make sure that they are all as good as the best ones.

We really enjoyed our time in your school. Thank you for taking time to talk to us and watch your lessons. We hope that you continue to find your time in school enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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