

Evesham, St Richard's CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116810
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	358037
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Vivienne McTiffen

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Vincent-Daviss
Headteacher	Elizabeth Spencer
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty lessons or parts of lessons and three assemblies were observed. All teachers were observed once and some were seen twice. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and school leaders, including a governor. Inspectors observed the school's work; development planning; tracking data on pupils' progress; teacher assessments and planning; safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work. In addition, 136 parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- attainment and progress in English and mathematics, especially for older pupils
- teachers' use of assessment information to plan for the learning of all pupils and especially for girls in mathematics and boys in English
- how well care and support promotes learning and well-being
- the involvement of managers at all levels in monitoring the effectiveness of provision.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized first school. It provides for Reception to Year 5. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below national levels but increasing, as is the proportion of those from a minority ethnic group. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There are currently two pupils with statements of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two reception classes. A new headteacher took up post in September 2010.

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. Richard's is a satisfactory school whose pupils reach average levels of attainment by the time they leave. The rich curriculum is an area of strength. A creative approach links subjects together through topics to inspire learning: one pupil comments, 'I like the way art and ICT link when we learn about the Celts because it helps me to understand'. Good partnerships with other institutions benefit learning and build confidence and self-esteem through sports and artistic activities. A caring ethos and good relationships support individuals well, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' behaviour is good. A strong feature is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. They are respectful of each other's feelings and enthusiastically embark upon new learning. They show an interest in moral issues and have a good understanding of their cultural history. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start. They thrive in an environment where personal development, exploration and curiosity are nurtured and encouraged.

A noticeable improvement since the last inspection is the way the school monitors the quality of teaching and learning. This has helped to identify and eradicate weak teaching, with positive results emerging in pupils' attainment, especially in English. Because of the 'Star Writing' initiative, more pupils, particularly boys, are motivated to write for a range of purposes. The school recognises the need to raise attainment in mathematics by making it equally enjoyable and well matched to ability. Although a start has been made, pupils do not do as well as they could, especially girls, and there is some way to go to develop opportunities for problem solving and the application of skills.

Better monitoring means teachers are better informed on how to improve. Although judged satisfactory overall, reflecting pupils' satisfactory progress, the proportion of good teaching is increasing. In many cases, teachers motivate pupils and work is matched to ability, based upon suitable use of assessment information. Generally, teaching assistants are well deployed, an improvement since the last inspection. They play an important role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, so they make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. However, inconsistencies remain in the way in which teachers help pupils to become independent learners and extend their thinking through the use of well focussed questions. Sometimes, there is too much teacher talk and insufficient time for pupils to show what they can do. Teachers' marking in books often indicates how pupils can improve but this is not always followed up rigorously enough in subsequent work. Individual targets are used in literacy and often referred to in lessons but are not so well defined or used in numeracy.

The newly appointed headteacher is keen to build upon the school's successes and has already infused staff with her enthusiasm. There is a shared determination to move the

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school forward and much work has already been carried out by the school's leaders, laying firm foundations for further improvement based upon a realistic evaluation of how well the school is doing. As a result, staffing arrangements for this academic year are designed to speed up the process of improving academic outcomes for older pupils. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school is suitably placed to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress, especially in mathematics and for older pupils, by:
 - motivating all pupils, and especially girls, by ensuring lessons are engaging and well matched to ability
 - increasing opportunities for problem solving and the application of skills
 - fine-tuning individual targets so pupils know what they are working towards.
- By September 2011, build upon existing good practice so that 75% of teaching is good by:
 - ensuring the right balance between teacher input and pupil participation so that pupils have time to show what they can do and become more independent learners and thinkers
 - creating a more meaningful link between marking and pupils' work so that teachers and learners know the next step has been achieved.
- 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

When children start in the Reception classes, most are at or just below the levels expected for their age. The youngest pupils make good progress but overall progress by the end of Year 5 is satisfactory. This is because progress for older pupils slowed due to a period of underachievement with insufficient time to catch up. The school is addressing this and progress is improving. Pupils are making up lost ground, especially in English, although this is not yet so evident in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities make satisfactory progress in line with their peers, as do the very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils enjoy school and engage eagerly in the interesting curriculum. This was seen to good effect during the inspection when, in preparation for a trip to Cadburys World, pupils discussed the differences and similarities between characters in the book 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. All were enthused by the text and the imaginative way the teacher helped them to explore the plot. They worked well together to discuss ideas, reflected in their own writing. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to remain safe. They behave well and keenly take on responsibilities. They enjoy roles as school- and eco-councillors and participate in a wide range of local community activities. Pupils develop the basic skills needed to prepare them for future economic well-being,

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especially in information and communication technology (ICT). For example, in a good ICT lesson, linked to art and mathematics, pupils were challenged to produce a wide range of symmetrical patterns which they did well and with enthusiasm.

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	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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and establish good relationships. Effective classroom management and plenty of praise for effort means pupils respond well. They are especially motivated when lessons are fun and interesting. For example, during a literacy lesson, before their visit to a Roman villa, pupils were enthralled when their teacher took on the role of a museum curator in order to inspire them to learn about daily Roman life. Such an approach resulted in a buzz of activity, with pupils keen to discuss ideas with partners. In a minority of lessons, however, where pupils are not so fully engaged, attention wanes and they do not make as much progress as they could.

Trips, visitors and a wide range of after school activities enrich the curriculum with positive effect on learning and well-being. A strong focus on literacy skills has led to improved writing, which is increasingly used across the curriculum. However, the application of mathematical skills is underdeveloped.

The school offers a warm and welcoming environment to all its pupils. Strong links with external agencies provide additional support for some pupils, especially those with specific

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needs, although the extent to which the school encourages parental involvement for these pupils is variable. Good arrangements exist for pupils moving to the next stage of education and for those starting school.

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?

Effective tracking systems accurately monitor pupils' progress and the school has moved forward in setting challenging targets for teaching and learning. The supportive governing body is actively involved in the school's work. Although generally positive links exist with most parents and carers, there is room for improvement in the way in which the school informs them about their children's learning and progress. Discrimination is tackled and information about precise groups of pupils used to identify areas of underperformance, although girls' underachievement in mathematics has yet to be addressed. Clear policies and procedures ensure the safeguarding and welfare of pupils, in line with government requirements. The promotion of community cohesion is developing. There are good local and parish links with well established plans to develop national and international links further in order to improve pupils' understanding of belonging to a multi-cultural and wider world.

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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	3
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	3
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 get off to a flying start in the Reception classes so that, by the time they enter Year 1, almost all reach the levels expected for their age and most exceed them. At the time of the inspection, newcomers were finding their feet and happily engaging in the exciting tasks on offer, indoors and outside. For example, enthusiastic teaching set children the challenge of creating a pipe system to carry water which they tackled with gusto. Children behave well and access activities safely. They have good relationships with adults. Strong emphasis is placed on developing reading, writing and numeracy skills and there is a regular programme to teach children how to link sounds with letters. Staff make good use of assessment information to build up a picture of each child's achievements and what they need to learn next. As a result, much of the teaching is based upon children's interests. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are identified early and appropriate support given. There is a clear focus on ensuring children are happy and their welfare promoted so they make good progress in their learning and development.

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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Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

Most questionnaire returns from parents and carers are positive. Almost all agree that children enjoy school and that they are kept safe. A very small minority feel the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection judged behaviour to be good. Discussion with staff and pupils revealed that the school has a range of effective strategies in place which are understood by pupils. A few parents and carers feel they could be better informed about their children's learning and progress which the inspection judged to be an aspect that could be better addressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Evesham, St Richard's CofE First 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 136 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 345 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	54	56	41	4	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	68	50	67	49	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	28	82	60	7	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	35	74	54	8	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	53	39	71	52	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	35	75	55	9	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	32	81	60	5	4	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)	40	29	80	59	7	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	34	75	55	8	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	25	76	56	16	12	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	31	80	59	6	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	45	33	73	54	6	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	46	67	49	4	3	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.



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Evesham, St Richard's CofE First School, Evesham, WR11 1DU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed observing your lessons and talking to you about the exciting things you do at school.

You attend a satisfactory school and this is what we found out about it. Most of you make satisfactory progress in your work so that, by the time you leave, you reach the levels expected for your age, especially in English. We were impressed by some of the writing we saw which shows you are improving in this subject, because your teachers make learning interesting and fun. You have a good understanding of how to be safe because the school takes good care of you. Your behaviour is good.

To help you to do better we are asking your headteacher and her staff to make the following improvements:

- to help you to do better in mathematics by giving you lessons that all of you enjoy and that are suited to your ability, with more chance to solve problems
- to help you to understand what you are working towards by improving your targets in mathematics
- to improve teaching so that you have more chance in lessons to show what you can do and become independent learners and thinkers
- to make a link between teachers' marking and your work so that you and your teachers know the next step in your learning has been achieved

We hope you continue to enjoy your learning and that all of you will help the school to achieve these things by always trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen

Lead inspector

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