

Sunningwell Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123161
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359375
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Evans
Headteacher	Simon Handley
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 11 lessons and observed four teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's development plan, the school's records of pupils' progress and school policies. They scrutinised 29 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and also looked at questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- Has the school sustained improvements to outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2?
- Are the needs of all pupils met in mixed-age classes?
- Has the school done enough to ensure that pupils who join and leave the school at other than the normal times of the year make sufficient progress?
- Are data being used effectively by school managers? Are data being used effectively by school managers?

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than most primary schools. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The pupils come from a broad range of cultural backgrounds although the very large majority are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. A minority of pupils are from service families and, as a result, an above average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal times of the year. ♦ Currently, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a class that contains Reception-age children and Year 1 pupils. The other two classes also contain a mix of age groups. The school has Healthy School status and Activemark. The school provides an 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Sunningwell Church of England Primary School is a good school. It has improved many aspects of its work since the previous inspection. Parents, carers and pupils comment on the 'warm and friendly' atmosphere and appreciate the good quality of care, guidance and support it provides. Potentially vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are especially well supported. Those who join the school at other than the usual times of the school year receive a warm welcome and settle in quickly. The school works well in partnership with a range of external providers to ensure that pupils have access to a good range of support and enriching activities.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class, which offers a stimulating learning environment. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is rising and is now above average. Pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 because of good teaching. However, progress through Key Stage 1 is only satisfactory because the work set is not consistently well matched to pupils' needs and marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their work. Most teachers are good at checking pupils' understanding but in Key Stage 1 groups of pupils can be left to get on with their work and their attention can start to drift.

◆ The staff work well together as a team to create a climate for improvement. Many teachers in this small school have good management skills. The use of data is improving. For example, the school has recently introduced more regular checks on pupils' progress in both the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. It is using the information gained to strengthen the curriculum, as well as to ensure that those who are in danger of slipping behind are offered timely support. The school has a clear view of its overarching strengths and weaknesses. However, its ability to identify and address minor variations in pupils' progress is restricted because not enough has been done to ensure that assessment information is absolutely accurate in all year groups. Additionally, the school has not done enough to rigorously analyse the impact of intervention programmes or to check the progress of pupils who join or leave at other than normal times in the school year. The quality of teaching is regularly checked but occasionally insufficient links are made between teaching strategies and the amount of progress made by pupils. Nevertheless, the whole-hearted commitment to improving pupils' attainment and progress, as well as providing a nurturing environment, is reflected in improved outcomes at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 and illustrates the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring that the work set is always carefully matched to pupils' needs

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- making certain that pupils always receive clear guidance about how to improve their work
- checking the learning of those who are working independently more frequently.
- Enhance the way the school monitors the impact of its work by:
 - making certain that information about pupils' progress is always accurate
 - robustly monitoring the impact of interventions and the progress of pupils who join the school outside the normal starting points
 - making more effective links between teaching and outcomes for pupils when monitoring lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been average for many years and in 2010 no pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics. This is because able pupils in Year 2 are not always given challenging work to complete in lessons. When they have completed their work they are sometimes left relatively unoccupied and, in a sensible attempt to find something to do, occasionally resort to activities such as rigorously sharpening their pencils. Progress is faster in Key Stage 2 and these older pupils are very enthusiastic about learning. For example, in a lesson about reading comprehension pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 carefully read the texts provided and were able to understand them very well. A poem by Benjamin Zephaniah caused a great deal of interest in Year 6. Pupils really enjoyed exploring the challenging text and this formed the basis of many animated conversations. These pupils also make good progress in writing because they learn to use a good range of vocabulary and interesting ways of constructing sentences. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 improved substantially in 2010 and was above average in English and mathematics. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are on track to maintain these above average standards. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported by teachers and skilled teaching assistants who are able to reshape explanations and aid understanding. Those who join the school late make similar progress to other pupils in lessons. However, the lack of robust checks on their progress means that the school is not in a position to make precise judgements about their progress over time.

◆ Behaviour is good around the school and in lessons. Pupils say that there are some friendship issues especially among girls, but are keen to point out that bullying is extremely rare. They report that teachers are very good at helping them to resolve any problems. The importance of a healthy diet is recognised and pupils are very keen to take part in sport. Pupils are proud of their school and many will go out of their way to help those younger than themselves. However, formal opportunities for these confident and articulate young people to contribute to the school community are limited to belonging to the school council. Pupils develop a good level of maturity by the time they reach Year 6. This is reflected in the way they are able to express empathy with others, particularly in their writing, and are keen to challenge injustice. They have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and are developing self-discipline. Although pupils are interested in other cultures and are quick to disapprove of racism, their understanding of other ways of life is fairly narrow because they have limited first-hand experience of

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people from different backgrounds to themselves. There is a strong emphasis in developing independence in older pupils. This, combined with above average attainment and good attendance at school, means that pupils are well placed for future success.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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?

Although most teachers are skilled in ensuring that pupils are set work that is appropriate to their age and abilities, this does not happen as consistently in Key Stage 1 as elsewhere. In particular, able pupils are not always set challenging work in Year 2 and this holds them back. Most teachers are very good at checking pupils' learning and stopping lessons at appropriate points to provide extra guidance. Occasionally, pupils who are working independently do not get sufficient attention. Relationships are warm and supportive and give pupils' confidence. Skilled teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning and, along with the majority of teachers, ask challenging questions that move pupils' learning on. There is some good marking that provides pupils with very clear guidance about how to improve their work but this is not consistent, particularly in Key Stage 1.

The school provides many memorable experiences for pupils. For example, the pupils talk passionately about the school play and involvement in sporting competitions. Partnerships have brought about a stronger emphasis on creativity and pupils have enthusiastically embraced such diverse activities such as gardening and film making. There is a strong

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emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills and Year 6 pupils are especially appreciative of the extra lessons in English and mathematics where they are taught as a separate year group. These lessons make them feel grown up and valued. Consequently, they rise to the additional challenge supplied and are determined to achieve well.

◆ The school provides an extremely welcoming and friendly environment that is very much appreciated by pupils, parents and carers. Parents report that staff show great compassion for families of serving soldiers. Pupils move seamlessly through this small school and good links with the high schools mean that pupils feel very confident about moving on. Pupils are well known to staff and a considerable effort is made to supply each child with good quality personal support. In particular, close attention is paid to providing emotional support to potentially vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This, together with close work with external agencies, has ensured that these pupils make particularly good progress in their personal development. Pupils who attend the after-school club are happy and well cared for. They have access to a suitable range of interesting activities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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?

Senior leaders, class teachers and governors are ambitious for the school and are committed to securing a high quality education for the pupils. Improved procedures to track pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 mean that the school can now identify the exact areas where learning can be enhanced and has responded quickly to effect improvements. For example, there has been a sensible focus on improving reading comprehension and solving mathematical problems, so that attainment and progress have risen. The school has not matched assessment information with regular checks on pupils' work. This impacts on the school's ability to accurately identify and address minor variations in progress over time. Nevertheless, many areas of the school's work are well managed. This includes support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and provision in Key Stage 2. There is a good commitment to promoting equal opportunities and all groups of pupils achieve well.

◆ Although governance is currently satisfactory, it is rapidly improving because governors have undertaken training which has equipped them to provide the school with a better level of support and challenge. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. Even though adults clearly care about pupils' welfare, policies and procedures are not always rigorously applied and monitored. The school has a good understanding of its local context including

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meeting the needs of families who are in the armed services. However, its contribution to community cohesion is only satisfactory because its work to promote this beyond the school is limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage has secured good quality provision and led to improvements in outcomes for children. When children join the Reception class their skills are similar to those expected for their age. While they are often articulate and confident, their skills in writing and calculation are not always as well developed as their social skills. A strong emphasis on developing reading, writing and mathematical skills ensures that children make good progress. Consequently, some children often join Year 1 with skills that are above those expected for their age. Children's progress is carefully checked and assessment information is used well to plan activities that meet the requirements of individual children. There is a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that are chosen by children. Occasionally, some of the activities that children choose for themselves tend to just occupy them rather than moving their learning on. The activities available in the outdoor areas are not as exciting and structured as indoor activities. Children are well cared for and this, combined with a carefully structured induction process, ensures that children settle quickly into school. The local pre-school has just moved into a classroom within the school and this is helping to improve links between the two different types of provision. Parents and carers are pleased with the provision in the Reception class because they find the staff 'friendly and knowledgeable' and appreciate the many different experiences available to their children.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are pleased with their children's experience at school. They speak warmly of the good quality care and the wide range of opportunities available to their children. A few parents and carers have reservations about the way behaviour is managed. Inspectors found behaviour to be good around school and in most lessons but occasionally found that restlessness develops when the work set is not challenging enough.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sunningwell 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 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	69	8	28	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	62	11	38	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	7	24	20	69	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	45	13	45	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	55	12	41	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	59	9	31	3	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	45	16	55	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)	12	41	10	34	3	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	59	9	31	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	31	13	45	5	17	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	38	14	48	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	66	8	28	2	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	59	11	38	1	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.



19 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sunningwell Church of England Primary School, Sunningwell, OX13 6RE

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school. You have good manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. I really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to a good school that is getting better all the time. I think you are right to say that your school is very welcoming and friendly. I was pleased to hear that you feel safe. You have lots of interesting things to do at school. It is no wonder that you all enjoy school so much. I hope your Christmas play goes well.

Children get off to a good start in Reception. Those of you in Key Stage 2 are also making good progress and by the end of Year 6 you are reaching standards that are above those reached by other children in schools nationally. I was very impressed by the way Year 6 pupils are working so hard. I really liked reading your writing about Armistice Day and hearing your thoughts on the poem by Benjamin Zephaniah. ♦♦ Although teaching is good I have asked your teachers to make some improvements, especially in Key Stage 1. This includes making sure that the work set is never too hard or too easy for you, making sure that you get clear guidance about how to improve your work and making regular checks on you when you are working without your teachers' direct help.

You told me that the staff look after you very well and I agree. The people who run your school are working hard to make it an even better place. Although many members of staff are good managers, I have asked them to make some improvements to the way that they check on the school's work and how well you are doing.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh Lead inspector

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