

# Alverstoke Church of England Aided Junior School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116392
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	357954
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Laver

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	271
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	jean morgan
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Bailey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	The Avenue Gosport PO12 2JS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner, minutes of governing body meetings and assessment data on pupils' recent and current progress. They observed the school's work, and also analysed 83 questionnaires from parents and carers and 54 pupil questionnaires.

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

- Are girls and the more able pupils previously identified as underachieving now making sufficient progress?
- Are pupils achieving as well as they should in mathematics and is attainment improving in this subject?
- How far is teaching, particularly lower down the school, having a positive impact on attainment and progress?
- To what extent is the new theme-based curriculum having a positive impact on pupil motivation and improving attainment and progress?
- How effectively are subject leaders and other middle managers monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and promoting good progress?

## Information about the school

Most pupils in this slightly larger than average school are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include a range of emotional, behavioural and learning needs, is above average. The proportions of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are both well below average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2009. The school has Healthy School status, the Activemark and the Green Flag Award for Sustainable Development.

**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

Alverstone Junior provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is an improving school, which is building on several existing strengths, mainly in pupils' personal development. Attendance is above average, pupils enjoy coming to school, they feel very safe and they behave well. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community. Significant improvements are now being made in pupils' academic attainment and progress. Until recently, as reflected in national test results, pupils were reaching age-related expectations in English and mathematics but were underachieving in relation to their ability. The leadership team, which has been in place for little more than a year, has fully recognised the need to improve attainment and progress. The headteacher, supported by all staff, has introduced several initiatives to improve the overall quality of teaching and the curriculum. These initiatives include measures to encourage more pupil initiative and independence in learning about particular themes or topics. They are having a positive impact on attainment and the progress of all groups, including the more able pupils. The school is now on track for the first time in recent years to meet appropriately challenging targets. Some of the leadership's other initiatives are relatively recent and not yet fully embedded, and so there are still inconsistencies in performance. The able leadership of the headteacher, the quality of self-evaluation and whole-school strategic planning, and the evidence of better progress and attainment, together show that the school has a satisfactory and improving capacity for sustained improvement.

There is no unsatisfactory teaching, and there is an increasing amount of good teaching and learning, usually in lessons which display pace, challenge and high expectations. However, there is still too much teaching which is satisfactory, with teachers missing opportunities to make full use of pupils' keenness to learn and extend their learning more. There are now examples of better use of assessment in lessons, with pupils being given good feedback on how to improve their work. However, in general, teachers make limited use of pupils' targets and some feedback, including the marking of work, does not give pupils clear enough guidance. Although the headteacher's own monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and accurate, monitoring by subject leaders is not as rigorous or systematic. One result of this is that teachers have limited opportunities to share good practice.

The curriculum, which underwent a major revision under the present leadership, is an increasing strength of the school. Although pupils' achievement has only recently begun to improve significantly, the introduction of themes or topics such as the 'Great Exhibition' has greatly motivated pupils, and has been successful in improving skills such as numeracy and writing in a range of different contexts. There is also a wide range of enrichment activities such as clubs and visits to local museums. Provision for music and modern languages is another strength. All pupils, including the most vulnerable, benefit from a good level of care and support. The very inclusive ethos of the school is evident in

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the good relationships and its welcoming nature. The school is beginning to develop links with other communities in Britain and overseas, although pupils have a limited understanding of what it is like to live in a multicultural society beyond their own locality.

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

- Improve the overall quality of teaching, so that a significant proportion of pupils achieve levels of progress and attainment above age-related expectations, by ensuring a more consistent level of challenge in lessons.
- Make better and more consistent use of assessment in lessons, including use of targets and marking of work, so that pupils have more precise guidance on how they can improve their learning and quality of work.
- Develop leadership skills at a level below the senior leadership so that there is more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and more opportunities to share and spread the best classroom practice.

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

**3**

Although attainment on entry to Year 3 varies from year-to-year, it is usually above average. Pupils make satisfactory and now improving progress, increasingly so as they move up the school. Standards of speaking are well above average, with many pupils engaging articulately and confidently in discussion. Progress in writing and mathematics is improving, with many pupils now being given additional support to reverse previous underachievement. Far more pupils are on track to reach higher levels of attainment by the time they leave Year 6. Previous variations in attainment and rates of progress, marked in particular by the underperformance of many girls, have been eradicated. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and share in the satisfactory but improving progress, as do the more able pupils. There is now good learning in many lessons. This was observed, for example, when younger pupils were working on how to join up sentences effectively: the teacher used examples of their earlier work well, along with success criteria, to show them how their writing could be made more interesting, while pupils' interest was sustained by good questioning and discussion, allied with a brisk pace and good level of challenge. In contrast, learning is held back in lessons in which there is too much teacher direction, for example when discussion is unnecessarily interrupted by the teacher, or there is too little challenge for pupils who have already grasped essential concepts, as was observed in a mathematics lesson for older pupils.

Pupils are friendly, cooperative and well behaved both in class and around the school. Their enthusiasm for school is reflected in above average attendance. Parents, carers and pupils agree that the school provides a very safe and welcoming environment. Pupils talk articulately about why aspects of health such as diet are important, and they benefit from many sporting opportunities. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community. The school council is valued highly and pupils are active in church and other local events. Junior safety officers talk to children in the nearby infants' school. Current levels of attainment mean that pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage of education academically, but they are already developing well as confident young citizens. As well as showing strong social and moral development, pupils benefit from very

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good cultural opportunities. The school orchestra and choir produce outstanding performances. Good spiritual development is evident in opportunities for reflection and there are challenging discussions, as when pupils discuss topics such as 'Is there a difference between a scientist and an inventor?'

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</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?

Teachers are skilled in establishing classroom routines and conventions so that pupils know what is expected of them and move smoothly and cooperatively from one activity to another. This results in good learning, seen for example when pupils moved briskly between activities when learning how to build up suspense in their creative writing. Good progress is not sustained in all lessons, especially when there is insufficient pace or challenge in the work. Sometimes activities are too teacher-directed and pupils' speaking and independent learning skills are not encouraged sufficiently. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own and each other's work, and they have targets for improvement, but the quality of feedback is variable. Pupils get too few opportunities to respond to feedback, or do not consistently get the information that would help them move to the next level of learning. The school's recent emphasis on developing a curriculum that builds on pupils' interests and suggestions, and which encourages the development of skills such as literacy across various subjects, is having a very positive impact on pupils' motivation and improving attainment. A high proportion of pupils enjoy instrumental tuition, and the

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school orchestra and choir demonstrate very high standards. The school has established close links with the nearby infants' school, for example to moderate the quality of work in both schools. The links ensure good transition for pupils moving between the schools. There are several opportunities now for pupils in danger of underachieving or who would benefit from extra challenge to work in smaller groups for some activities. There is also good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, with detailed planning to focus support where it is most helpful. The good quality of care in the school firmly underpins pupils' strong personal development.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team, which is relatively new, monitors the school's performance closely. There is accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, allied with appropriate planning to take the school forward. All staff have taken on board the leadership's drive for improvement, supported by a governing body which is active, committed and now more knowledgeable about its role in the improvement process. Staff are now more accountable for pupils' progress. Subject leaders play a prominent role in helping to develop the curriculum, but have limited opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning in a systematic way and spreading good classroom practice. The school successfully cultivates strong links with parents and carers, who warmly welcome events such as mathematics workshops. Good links with other local schools have a positive impact on pupils' performance: for example, pupils use the science facilities in a local secondary school. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, but is improving as academic progress improves. The school has a clear and successful focus on averting discrimination, and issues to do with equality are addressed sensitively in lessons and assemblies. There are secure safeguarding procedures, known by all adults in the school, with regular monitoring and updating and clear lines of responsibility. Pupils are taught about all aspects of safety awareness. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. The local contribution is strong, for example involvement in charity work. The school is developing links with a London school, as well as links with several schools elsewhere in Europe, but these links are at an early stage. Many pupils have a limited awareness of how people live and think in other cultures.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires were very positive about their children's experiences of school. They were unanimous in their belief that the school keeps their children safe and that they are helped to achieve a healthy lifestyle. Parents and carers believe that the teaching is good and that the school manages behaviour well; they are also very appreciative of the quality of care and support. A typical comment was, 'My son has had lots of support with all his extra needs and is improving every day, and he has never been happier in school'. They also praise the improvements in pupils' progress brought about by initiatives introduced in recent months by the leadership. A very small minority of parents and carers believe that the school does not do enough to help them support their children's learning. This concern was followed up during the inspection, and the evidence suggested that the school does involve parents well, for example in the mathematics workshops much praised by several parents. The evidence of the inspection supported parents and carers' positive views of the personal contribution of the headteacher, the curriculum, and levels of care and support. The evidence also showed that both pupils' progress and the quality of teaching were satisfactory but improving.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alverstone Church of England Aided Junior 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 271 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	66	24	29	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	66	28	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	42	42	51	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	48	38	46	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	46	55	35	42	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	39	44	53	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	45	46	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)	43	52	34	41	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	48	37	45	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	40	46	55	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	34	49	59	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	52	34	41	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	61	29	35	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"> <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.**



24 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Alverstoke Church of England Aided Junior School, The Avenue, Gosport, PO12 2JS**

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, seeing you in lessons and finding out about the school.

Your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education. Although we saw many of you doing well in lessons, some of you have not been making as much progress in your work as you should have done. Your progress is now improving, because your headteacher and all staff are working hard to help you do your best. We know that you enjoy coming to school, and you attend school more regularly than pupils do in many other schools. You feel very safe in school and behave well. We agree with you that you are looked after well, and you are taught interesting topics like the 'Great Exhibition'. We really enjoyed hearing the school orchestra, and the school provides you with a lot of interesting clubs and visits. Occasionally some of you find the work in class rather easy, and sometimes, although you have targets, you do not get enough information about exactly how you can make your work even better.

Therefore we have asked the school to do three things:

- make sure that your teachers always give you work that is not too easy and helps you make even more progress
- make sure that you get even more precise information, for example in your books, about how you can improve your work
- give teachers more opportunity to learn from each other how to help you improve your progress, so that your work becomes even better.

You can help your teachers achieve these things by continuing to work hard, just as we saw you doing during our visit. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Laver

Lead Inspector

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