

Coombe Bissett Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126382
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360069
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Anna Sketchley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Panes
Headteacher	Deborah Cockrean
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and observed four teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils, and analysed 49 questionnaires from parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including pupils' work, systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress, plans for improvement, and reports written by the local authority. Questionnaires completed by 42 pupils and five staff were also evaluated.

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

- How effective and rapid the strategies are in teaching, learning and the curriculum in arresting underachievement and improving the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils, particularly the more-able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The ability of leaders at all levels to ensure equal opportunities and improve the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils.
- How well pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve in relation to their achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Coombe Bissett is a small village primary school with four mixed-age classes that include Reception children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils are drawn from villages and hamlets in the surrounding area and the outskirts of Salisbury. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none is at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has achieved several national awards, including the Silver Artsmark.

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

Coombe Bissett is a good school. Parents and carers endorse this judgement, making such comments as: 'My child loves this school and has progressed very well.' The school's strong Christian ethos and excellent relationships underpin all its work. Pupils demonstrate just how much they enjoy school by their exceptional attendance and confident attitude to all aspects of school life. Their behaviour is excellent. These qualities, in a calm and happy 'family' atmosphere, create a very positive climate for learning.

The headteacher, staff and the governing body are determined to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The introduction of rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and good use of data and assessment to plan learning to meet pupils' individual needs ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to make the progress of which they are capable. Regular monitoring procedures ensure that the school's self-evaluation of what needs to be done is accurate. This has given rise to significant professional development for teachers, through which new strategies have been introduced in literacy and numeracy so that lessons are more practical and stimulating. Teaching is consistently good and pupils particularly enjoy the practical approach to learning, saying 'lessons are interesting and fun'. All pupils are making good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and more-able pupils. Attainment in Year 6 is above average. A previous dip in achievement has been successfully arrested and the leadership of the school demonstrates a good capacity for sustaining improvement because of a very clear shared vision and sense of team-effort.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. A warm and stimulating environment and outstanding teaching ensure that children in Reception make excellent progress. The school thoughtfully provides flexible arrangements for those Year 1 pupils who are a part of the Reception class. These pupils are incorporated, where appropriate, into the literacy and numeracy groups in the Year 1/2 class. This ensures that they are fully challenged and working at the correct level for their age. The exceptional start that young children make in Reception is now being securely built upon in Years 1 and 2.

Coombe Bissett school is a very cohesive community with good links to the local area. However, there are considerably fewer opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the diverse cultures that exist in the United Kingdom and internationally. The school is aware of this, an audit has been undertaken and plans drawn up, but the implementation of these plans to address this issue are still at a very early stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of cultures both in the United Kingdom and internationally by:

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- implementing existing plans to become a Rights Respecting School
- building on links with a school in Finland
- introducing more opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to study cultures other than their own.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter school with levels of knowledge and skills broadly as expected for their age, although some aspects of communication, language and literacy and calculation skills are below those expected. National tests show that over the last two years attainment in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 6 dipped significantly. This is partly attributable to the unusually high level of pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities in those years, where small groups led to fluctuations. However, the school responded rapidly to the drop in attainment and, during the inspection, evidence from pupils' work, lessons and assessment data showed that attainment for the pupils in Year 6 is above average in both English and mathematics. Attainment in Year 2 is above average and standards in reading are high throughout the school.

In both English and mathematics lessons, pupils are encouraged to talk through their ideas with a partner. All pupils were challenged well in a Year 6 literacy lesson as they worked with a partner to think of headlines for a newspaper report. They demonstrated clearly that they knew the value of alliteration and the effect of onomatopoeic words. At the beginning of a Year 1/2 mathematics lesson, pupils showed that they had understood their previous learning as they gave good explanations for the meaning of partitioning numbers. During a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, the good progress of a pupil with special educational needs was clearly evident when they were well focused on the task because of being successfully partnered with another pupil. The pupil's concentration level was appropriately supported by a skilled teaching assistant.

Pupils feel very safe in school and demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep safe, by, for example, creating posters and leaflets about internet safety for the younger pupils. They say they get on well together and are very friendly towards each other. The excellent relationships in the school mean that if there are problems, pupils know who to approach for help in sorting them out. When asked about healthy living, pupils replied 'We're good at that!' There is a high take-up of sporting activities after school as well as healthy snacks and a commitment to healthy lunch boxes. Pupils enjoy having responsibilities around the school and make a significant contribution to its life and work through the school council and the 'buddy' system for younger pupils. They are proud of the charities they support by raising money for those less fortunate than themselves. Life skills learned through these opportunities, their excellent behaviour and their good basic skills are preparing them well for the future. The spiritual, moral and social aspects of pupils' development are strong but there are fewer opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to gain a full understanding of cultural traditions and ways of life that are different from their own.

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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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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?

Due to the significant amount of professional development that has taken place, teachers' subject knowledge is good. They make it very clear to pupils what they are to learn, and careful questioning and opportunities for pupils to talk or work with a partner enable them to make considered responses. Occasionally, there is an over reliance on asking pupils who already have their hands up, and opportunities are missed to assess understanding and ensure that all pupils are participating in the lesson. Pupils know their targets and well-phrased marking shows them how they can improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants.

The curriculum has undergone significant review, establishing good links between subjects with plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. The two-year rolling programme allows pupils to build skills while studying different topics. However, the curriculum does not yet give pupils enough opportunities to learn about other cultures. They have good information and communication technology skills and a recently purchased set of new laptop computers is enabling these to be practised more across the curriculum. The school has been awarded the Silver Artsmark and music and art are particular strengths. All pupils learn to play a musical instrument. Listening to Year 5/6 brass band practice was uplifting and pupils' enjoyment was obvious. Sculptures linked to children's book characters were beautifully crafted. Extra-curricular activities are strong

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for such a small school and enrich pupils' experiences, for example the school gardening club with the help of the local community. Personal, social and health education is promoted well and clearly involves parents and carers.

The school is particularly sensitive in the way that it cares for each individual. Parents and carers show a high level of satisfaction with all safety procedures, making comments such as: 'When a school states "each child matters" ? this school really means it.' Safeguarding procedures are carried out diligently. Links with outside agencies are good, supporting the well-organised and effective provision for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is much appreciated by parents and carers, one of whom says: 'The school has been fantastic with my son and has done a brilliant job of making sure his needs are met.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The headteacher has built an effective senior leadership team which has been further strengthened by a recent appointment. Together with the governing body, they have welded together a strong whole-school team with a spirit of commitment to continuing improvement. Self-review and evaluation is very thorough, identifying the correct priorities which inform a detailed action plan. Governors know the school well through their links with subject leaders and classes, and are involved in the life of the school at both an operational and strategic level. They are committed to training and development, especially for a number of new governors. The governing body curriculum committee takes its responsibilities very seriously. It is well informed, monitors the work of the school carefully and is not afraid to ask challenging and probing questions.

The promotion of community cohesion at school and local level is strong, especially through links with the village community and the cathedral in the nearby town. Pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity that exists in the United Kingdom and internationally is less strong and there are fewer opportunities for them to improve this. The school has already made contact with a school some 40 miles away in an area very different from their own. They are seeking its help in order to become a Rights Respecting School. Through a parent, they have recently made contact with a school in Finland. However, in both cases, these projects are at an early stage of development.

The school engages parents and carers extremely well and has a good range of partnerships with other schools and agencies. Not only do these enhance outcomes for pupils, but they also enable the school to share some of its own good practice to help other institutions. Promoting equality of different groups of pupils is well managed through

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careful monitoring and is becoming more effective as provision and outcomes for all pupils continue to improve. Leaders do not tolerate any kind of discrimination. The governing body and school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are rigorous and regular training and monitoring ensure that this high quality is maintained.

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	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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	2
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

Outstanding teaching, excellent relationships and a safe but stimulating environment, together with the correct balance between adult- and child-chosen activities, enable children to make outstanding progress. As a result, almost all reach the goals expected, and many exceed them, by the end of the Reception Year. Progress in literacy, numeracy, and personal and social development is particularly good.

Adults interact very well with children in their learning, asking appropriate questions that facilitate their rapid development. The children's interest was entirely captivated as they talked with the teacher about the eggs one child had brought into school that had been laid by chicks reared in Reception the previous year. In whatever they are engaged, children's behaviour is exemplary as they share quality resources and learn together. They are confident and at ease in their surroundings because their independence is carefully fostered as they set about choosing their tasks. The curriculum and indoor learning environment is entirely appropriate for the learning and development of the Reception children. Opportunities for learning out of doors are restricted by the school site and there is no cover in inclement weather but the school make the best possible use of the small space available. Very good assessment procedures are used to plan the next steps in learning for individual children, and make a significant contribution to progress. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute instances of learning at home to each child's record of development.

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Thorough induction procedures, good liaison with local pre-schools and a 'buddy' system ensure that both parents and carers and children are very familiar with the Reception class and well supported before starting school. This continues with a regular written dialogue through the 'contact' book during the Reception Year. Parents and carers spoke of how pleased they were with Reception, one commenting: 'The general attitude of the staff is exceptional. We cannot praise the school enough.' Children are extremely well cared for and their welfare is paramount. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were extremely supportive of the school. Of the very small number of concerns raised, all were individual issues. A few percentages appear low because some parents and carers chose not to answer some questions. The outcome of the questionnaire validates the recent one used and analysed by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Coombe Bissett 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	59	17	35	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	76	12	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	47	24	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	49	19	39	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	53	21	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	51	22	45	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	49	25	51	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)	17	35	26	53	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	53	19	39	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	27	32	65	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	41	28	57	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	51	23	47	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	69	13	27	1	2	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	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).

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">■ 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.



13 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coombe Bissett Church of England Primary School, Coombe Bissett, Salisbury SP5 4LU

Thank you for the very warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently and for spending time talking to us. We really enjoyed meeting you. We agree with you that Coombe Bissett is a good school. You are doing well because of your hard work and the actions taken by your headteacher, governors and other adults in your school. These are some of the best things we found.

- You really enjoy coming to school, your attendance is excellent and you are very polite and extremely well behaved. This is helping you to do well.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and live a healthy lifestyle.
- You enjoy helping in school and get on really well together.
- Your teachers teach you well and make learning fun. You have a very good attitude to your work and find your learning really interesting.
- You are well cared for and you told us that you feel very happy and safe in school.

All the adults in your school want you to do your very best. Although they know what needs to be done next, we have asked them to do an additional thing to make your learning even better.

- We would like them to provide more opportunities for you to learn about all the cultures in the United Kingdom and the wider world that are different from your own.

Please keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Anna Sketchley

Lead inspector

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