

Winterbourne Valley Church of England Aided First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113820
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357430
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	David Curtis

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Heaton
Headteacher	Rachel Horne
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, members of the governing body, pupils and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, the governing body minutes, notes of visits made by the School Improvement Partner, and documentation relating to safeguarding and child protection. Inspectors looked at the 35 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff and pupils in Years 3 and 4.

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

- Although above average, explore the reasons as to why attainment in mathematics is not high as it is in English.
- Pupils' attainment in other subjects, especially science and information and communication technology.
- Pupils' use and application of key skills across the curriculum.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average size first school. One third of pupils live in Winterbourne Abbas, with the remaining two thirds in surrounding villages and who are transported to school by bus or taxi. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, with most identified as having moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of Winterbourne Valley Pre-School (16 children on roll) and the Reception class. The Pre-School is not registered with Ofsted because the youngest children it takes are deemed to be 'rising threes'. There are two mixed-age classes, one for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and one for Years 3 and 4. The school provides 'Wraparound Care', including a breakfast and after-school club, from 8.00am to 6.00pm. At the end of Year 4, pupils transfer to middle school. The number of pupils who join the school at times other than of normal admission is proportionately higher than in other schools of this size. The school has achieved the 'Rights Respecting School Level One' award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Pupils' achievement is outstanding and they make excellent progress so that by the time they leave Year 4, their attainment is high in English, mathematics and science. Evidence from lessons, pupils' work and displays around the school shows that attainment in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history and music is significantly above expectations for nine-year-olds. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of high-quality individualised support. Pupils are very successful in using their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects, especially in science, geography and history. Attainment in mathematics has improved as the result of refining the curriculum to ensure greater consistency in the teaching of key skills as pupils move up the school.

Attendance is high and reflects pupils' great enjoyment of school and all that it has to offer. Behaviour is exemplary and a significant factor in pupils' excellent progress. Pupils make a significant contribution to their school and the local community through the very effective school council and eco committee. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, with older pupils showing a deep understanding of the significance of 'Icons' following a visit to Sherborne Abbey. Parents and carers expressed very positive views of the school in the questionnaires and the school works in very effective partnership with them to support their children's learning. Pupils' academic and personal development benefits enormously from the significant work of the Dorset Area Schools Partnership (DASP) in promoting, within the pyramid, high-quality learning from five to 16.

There are significant strengths in the quality of teachers' planning, especially in meeting the differing learning needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Marking is very strong and pupils have a deep understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, including setting their own targets in literacy and numeracy. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children benefit from high-quality provision and the success of the Pre-School working in partnership with Reception as an effective Early Years Foundation Stage unit. While assessment meets the learning and development requirements, children, parents and carers do not have 'learning journeys' that are individualised.

School self-evaluation is accurate. The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body work most effectively to maximise learning for all pupils and to develop the school's important role in the community that it serves. The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support provided to each pupil is a striking feature and a key factor in the school's success. Taking into consideration the significant improvements made in leadership and management, provision and academic outcomes for pupils since the last inspection, and

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the quality of school improvement planning, the school has outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that in the Early Years Foundation Stage each child, and their parent or carer, have ownership of their 'learning journeys'.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year because of the nature of very small year groups. Pupils really enjoy their lessons and are motivated to learn. In a letters and sounds lesson in Years 1 and 2, there were cries of 'YES!' when the teacher announced, 'We are going to play the "A and B" game.' Pupils then made excellent progress, for example in telling their teacher that 'cheer' (A) is correct and that 'chear' (B) is not. In a mathematics lesson, in the same class, pupils expressed great confidence in giving their teacher information about symmetry. In a literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils worked diligently to edit their writing, based on their teacher's marking of the previous day's work, and made excellent progress in the use of paragraphs. In the same lesson, pupils showed a very strong understanding of similes.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles, with many participating in clubs both in and out of school. They say they feel extremely safe in school and are totally confident that adults will help them with any worries or concerns. The impact of being a 'rights respecting school' is evident in the quality of mutual respect and support pupils give to each other in lessons and around the school. It is equally evident in their very strong understanding of issues relating to the diversity of life, in the United Kingdom and in other countries. The school council and eco committee make a strong contribution to the day-to-day life of the school, with a very strong focus on reducing the school's use of water and energy. Pupils are prepared exceptionally well for transfer to middle school and this was endorsed fully by a number of parents and carers who have older children at middle school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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 make imaginative and very effective use of the high-quality curriculum to provide pupils with a rich range of learning experiences which underpins their outstanding achievement. Topics, such as 'bananas' in Years 1 and 2, and 'The South Winterbourne Valley', provide pupils with excellent opportunities to use and apply their key skills in geography and history. Very effective links with the local authority's music service contribute to pupils' enthusiasm for and enjoyment of music, including every pupil in Years 3 and 4 playing the flute. The outstanding partnership with the secondary school is evident in the way in which that school's humanities leader supported and enriched pupils' learning on a field trip to a landfill site.

The significant strength of teaching is that teachers and teaching assistants know and understand in depth the learning needs of each individual. Any that are in danger of falling behind are identified promptly and intervention programmes put in place to support them. Equally, more-able pupils are challenged and extended, especially through setting their own targets in literacy and numeracy. Pupils value the quality of teachers' marking and appreciate how helpful it is in telling them how to improve their work and, as a result, they do. Relationships are excellent and contribute to lessons that are meaningful, productive and fun.

Events, such as the 'inclusion surgery' where the school provides teachers with the opportunity to meet together with the educational psychologist, underpin the significant

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strengths in the school's use of outside agencies. Parents and carers are very supportive of the quality of care, guidance and support their children receive, including the quality of induction into pre-school and then to middle school. Teachers and teaching assistants provide outstanding support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities because they know and understand their needs in great depth.

The breakfast and after-school clubs, together with the 'wraparound care', are valued by parents and carers. The provision is excellent and children enjoy their time there.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, the headteacher and staff have worked most effectively to build on the previous good performance to move the school to the next level. Through excellent teamwork and a common vision, they have been conspicuously successful in raising attainment. In such a small school, much of the monitoring of teaching and learning, and discussions on pupils' progress, are regular but informal. However, the formal monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and her staff is rigorous and accurate in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. The success of strategies to raise even further pupils' attainment in mathematics, through refining the curriculum, is testament to this.

The governing body is highly effective in supporting the school and challenging the headteacher and staff. It is rigorous in ensuring that all the welfare and learning and development requirements are met fully for children in the pre-school. All policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection comply fully with current legislation. Pupils, parents and carers express great confidence in the school's safeguarding procedures.

The exemplary focus by all staff on the individual contributes to there being no discrimination in the school and the excellent equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school's excellent commitment to community cohesion is evident in its 'rights respecting school level one' status and its current focus on achieving level 2. The headteacher and governors show a deep understanding of the importance of engaging pupils from this rural community in widening their experiences of the diversity of the wider world in which they live.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The integration of the Pre-School and the Reception class is a stunning success and plays a significant part in children's enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, learning. Children make excellent progress so that by the time they start Year 1, their attainment is above that expected for their age in all areas of learning. Children are very happy, secure and confident, with Pre-School children benefiting from their regular interaction with older Reception children. There are significant strengths in children's independence and confidence in choosing their own learning. They sustain interest and concentration exceptionally well, for example in using tissue paper to make African violets. Their enterprise skills are particularly strong. For example, when staff in the toy shop had no trains for the inspector to buy, they immediately said, 'If you buy the bus, you can have the ambulance free.' They duly provided the correct change and a written receipt.

There are strengths in the teaching of key skills, especially letters and sounds and writing. Staff provide an exciting range of activities both indoors and outdoors and children enjoy the opportunities for free-flowing activities between both. The school's excellent partnership with parents and carers is underpinned by the fact that parents and carers give support to the Reception teacher.

Partnerships with other pre-school providers and other first schools are most effective and benefit staff and children alike. Assessment of children's learning is very detailed and thorough, and linked very closely to the learning and development requirements of the Statutory Framework Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the 'learning logs' or 'learning journeys' for each child are kept in files, which means that individual children, parents and carers have no real sense of ownership of them. The system in use restricts opportunities for parents and carers to contribute, for example, to those 'wow' moments at home.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Forty-seven per cent of parents and carers completed the questionnaire. The vast majority are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and all aspects of its work. Fourteen parents and carers made positive comments, including 'Excellent teaching. My child is very happy and progressing well.' and 'Lucky to have such a fantastic school in our community. Children get a great deal of individual attention by staff and members of the community who help out with specific areas e.g. art.' The one individual concern was investigated during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Winterbourne Valley Church of England Aided 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 74 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	66	11	31	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	54	16	46	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	77	7	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	69	10	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	63	13	37	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)	19	54	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	74	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	43	18	51	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	46	18	51	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	60	14	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	77	7	20	0	0	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.



3 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Winterbourne Valley Church of England Aided First School,
Winterbourne Abbas DT2 9LW.**

Thank you for the very warm welcome I received when I inspected your school. I enjoyed meeting you in lessons and around the school. A special thank you to those of you in Year 4 who met me I very much hope that Years 3 and 4 enjoyed their visit to the landfill site on the second day of the inspection.

I am delighted to tell you that you go to an outstanding school. There are so many amazing things about your school and these are the ones that really stand out.

- Those of you in the Pre-School and in Reception get off to an excellent start.
- By the end of Year 4, your attainment is significantly higher than for most children of your age in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history and music.
- You really enjoy your lessons and appreciate how well your teachers help you to improve your work.
- All the staff really care for you as individuals and provide excellent support to help you learn successfully.
- All those who lead and manage your school seek every opportunity to give you the best possible education.

Although yours is an outstanding school, there is one thing that I have asked your staff and governing body to do in order to make it even better:

- make sure that those of you in Pre-School and Reception have a 'learning journey' which belongs to, and is special, to you.

I know that all of you can help by continuing to work hard and enjoying all the wonderful things you can do in your school.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis

Lead inspector

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