

Ibstone CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110464
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	356751
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nikki Gracey
Headteacher	Michelle Masters
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by three teachers as well as making other observations of teaching and learning. Meetings were held with parents and carers, governors, pupils and the headteacher. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documents relating to safeguarding, the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and progress, baseline assessment of when children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, various reports written about the school and the headteacher's evaluation of teaching and learning. Questionnaires completed by 23 parents and carers, 16 pupils and eight staff were scrutinised.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Pupils' achievement in writing across the school with particular reference made to boys' achievement.
- The acquisition of basic skills through play in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The effectiveness of the new leadership team and the governing body in providing clear educational direction for the school.

Information about the school

Almost all the pupils at this very small rural school are of White British heritage. Pupils are taught by three teachers in two mixed-age classes comprising a Nursery and Reception, and Years 1 and 2. No pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The nature of their needs is linked to speech and language difficulties and autism. The headteacher, who had only been in post two weeks prior to the inspection, was previously the acting headteacher of the school. Prior to her appointment, the school went through a period of disruption, with five different headteachers managing the school. The after-school Kites Club, run by a private provider, uses the school hall. The school has gained National Healthy School Status and Financial Management Standard in Schools.

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

This is a good school. It is improving rapidly under the good leadership and management of the headteacher and the excellent involvement of the governing body. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above average in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics, and is average in writing. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including boys, is good, other than in writing where it is satisfactory. Pupils are not writing enough in other subjects and they struggle with spelling and letter formation. The newly appointed headteacher has recognised that this is an area for development and has already put plans in place to rectify these shortcomings.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 having exceeded the expectations for their age in all areas of learning other than in writing and in developing their skills of independence. In these two areas, their progress is satisfactory. Parents and carers are delighted with the education their children receive. 'Our children are happy here, they are nurtured and loved', said one parent, representing the views of many. Partnership with parents and carers is excellent. They are seen as true partners in learning and are exceptionally supportive of all aspects of school life.

Both teaching and learning are good. The good monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and the introduction of effective assessment systems are now enabling teachers to plan lessons matched to the differing needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy learning, as demonstrated by their good attendance, good attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour. Relationships are outstanding; when asked what was the strongest feature of school life, pupils unanimously said, 'our teachers'. Staff provide good care, guidance and support for pupils and pupils feel safe in school. Every precaution is taken to ensure that pupils' welfare and well-being are at the heart of the school's good provision.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. They are well supported by teaching assistants who are relentless in implementing strategies suggested by other specialist support services, such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists.

Pupils have excellent knowledge of healthy lifestyles, reflected in the National Healthy School Status. They know about 'five a day' and the importance of making healthy choices. Pupils contribute well to the wider community. They make an outstanding contribution to the immediate community by participating in all aspects of village life, especially to church services run by the vicar. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge and experience of cultural diversity within this country and beyond. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know right from wrong and get on famously well with one another in all aspects of school life. Their secure knowledge of basic skills in English, mathematics, science and information and communication

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technology ensures that they are well prepared for their next school and attain good skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being.

The well-thought-out curriculum is enhanced with a good range of visits and visitors, including artists and sculptors. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum because the headteacher, through her very detailed monitoring of pupils' progress, ensures that no child gets left behind. Outstanding governance has ensured that school self-evaluation is accurate and, even through turbulent times, all statutory requirements have been met and resources have been deployed effectively. The school's capacity for improvement is good because in a very short time, all the correct areas for improvement have been identified and above average standards have been maintained in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write extensively in other subjects
 - implementing a rigorous handwriting and spelling policy.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that children write about what they have learnt using correct letter formation
 - providing more opportunities for children to develop their skills of independence, especially at snack time.
- Improve pupils' cultural awareness by ensuring that they have more opportunities to learn about cultures other than their own.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They attain above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. In writing, their attainment is average. The school has maintained similar standards over the past three years and there are indications that these standards are likely to be maintained at the end of this academic year. The recent introduction of target setting has contributed to pupils' good achievement as they are clear as to what they need to do to get better at their work. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able pupils, achieve well in relation to their starting points. Pupils respond very well to talking about learning with their 'talk partners'. In an excellent mathematics lesson, they quickly worked out equal numbers when dividing by two. However, pupils' rates of progress slow down in writing because they struggle with spelling key words correctly and a small minority of them do not form their letters correctly.

Pupils feel safe in school because they know to whom to turn for help should they need it. They say there is always someone to talk with on the friendship bench and that bullying never happens. They know that the school's Christian values of honesty, respect and tolerance are the cornerstone of the outstanding relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are very respectful. In assemblies they show reverence and their prayer trees demonstrate their capacity to think of those less fortunate than themselves. In an

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excellent religious education lesson, several pupils showed a deep insight into faith when they were asked why people need to worship. This contributed significantly to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils thrive on the responsibilities allocated to them, and as book monitors, classroom monitors and register monitors, they execute their duties well. Their excellent knowledge of healthy eating is demonstrated by the high percentage of pupils who make their parents and carers walk to school. 'We know that walking is better for us than sitting in a car', said one Year 2 walking enthusiast. Pupils are very proud of their immediate community. They eagerly talk about village f \diamond tes, the strawberry fair and harvest festivals. They raise funds for national charities and are collecting money to send a child to school in Sierra Leone and are raising funds to build a house for a family in Mozambique. Their good progress in developing workplace-related skills is illustrated by their good skills of group work and problem-solving activities.

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	1
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	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?

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and adapt lessons to meet pupils' needs well because of their good use of assessment. In an excellent mathematics lesson, the class teacher asked the pupils what they knew about fractions and this became the starting point for learning. Teachers have very good questioning skills and continuously check

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pupils' understanding so they know when to intervene. Teaching assistants make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who find learning easy play a full part in classroom activities. However, full advantage is not taken of the many opportunities in the curriculum to develop pupils' writing in other subjects. The school has analysed its data and its well-planned curriculum is taking into account boys' interests such as learning about fire fighters and undertaking instructional writing. Learning in this school is characterised by pupils concentrating closely on their work, asking teachers if they need help and listening attentively in lessons.

A good range of extra-curricular activities, including French, recorders and sport enhance the learning opportunities. Pupils enjoy their 'themed' days when they dress up as pirates or favourite characters for World Book Day. Good partnerships with other small schools enhance pupils' social development and the effective sharing of resources. Working with artists has contributed significantly to pupils' cultural development, especially the creation of an author's chair in outdoor play. Good links with a range of outside agencies provide effective support for pupils, especially those who are potentially vulnerable. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the transfer and induction arrangements, as the good quality of the care, guidance and support pupils receive contributes to them feeling safe in learning.

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 provided a very clear sense of educational direction to move the school forward. With the help of the governing body, she has implemented systems and procedures and accountability of staff. 'We know where we are going and support is at hand on our quest for continuous improvement', is a sentiment shared by the staff who are fully committed to developing the school further. The headteacher has embedded ambition across the school and is driving improvement through leading by example.

Teaching and learning have been accurately monitored and staff have been given targets for improvement along with well-focused training. The school meets all requirements for safeguarding well and all staff are fully aware of child protection procedures. Governors regularly review policies and procedures and parents and carers say that they know their children are very well looked after.

The governing body is fully representative of the community the school serves. All governors have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and hold staff to account for the outcomes attained by pupils. There is a clear commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to do well at school

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and to benefit from all that it provides. The school has implemented good strategies to address the relative weaknesses in pupils' writing to ensure that their attainment in this area improves to the level found in other areas. The governing body ensures that excellent links are maintained with parents and carers by keeping them regularly informed of all aspects of school life. A very detailed community cohesion plan has been drawn up and the school's effectiveness in tackling discrimination is demonstrated by the absence of any racist incidents. Excellent links exist with the local community but pupils are not yet learning enough about children's lives globally. The school has managed its budget well, giving a lot of thought to ensuring that principles of best value are applied. Sports partnerships and those with local schools are good.

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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Nursery and Reception class enjoy learning. Their skills and experiences when they enter the Nursery are typical of children of this age. They make good progress in their learning and development in almost all areas. In writing and in developing skills of independence, their progress is satisfactory. There are missed opportunities in the good learning opportunities provided, especially in activities initiated by the children, to capitalise on children recording their own learning and planning what they want to find out.

The well-resourced outdoor area is used well to support learning. Children play on the trim trail, and they enjoy gardening and mowing the lawn. Good welfare arrangements ensure that children feel safe because they are under close observation by adults at all times. Children have healthy snacks, but not enough opportunities are provided for them to cut their own fruit and pour their own milk, which limits their skills of independence.

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Teaching is generally good with clear explanations given but, on occasions, observations undertaken of children do not identify the next steps that they need to take. Parents and carers feel very welcome in the setting and they receive good-quality information about their children's progress. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The headteacher is very thorough in her evaluation of teaching and learning and identifying areas for development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of the responses to the inspection questionnaire were exceptionally positive. 'This is a fantastic school where our children receive a bespoke education' and 'an idyllic school in idyllic surroundings' are just a few of the very positive comments made by parents and carers. Parents and carers are very pleased with all that the school offers and they are very happy with their children's education and social experiences at school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ibstone C of E Infant 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 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	87	3	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	83	4	17	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	78	5	22	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	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	70	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	87	3	13	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.



16 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ibstone Church of England Infant School, High Wycombe, HP14 3XZ

Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school when I visited it recently. I enjoyed talking to so many of you and seeing you at work and at play. This letter is to tell you what I found out about your school.

I agree with you that you go to a good school which is led and managed well. I think your governors are doing an excellent job and you are very lucky to attend such a good school. Your headteacher has done a lot of things for you to ensure that you are safe and that you enjoy learning.

You learn well and you make good progress. Your behaviour is outstanding. I was very impressed by your politeness and courtesy towards one another. I agree with you that teaching in your school is good. You show an excellent understanding of the importance of eating healthily and many of you participate in sport. Many of you help one another by acting as 'buddies' and you get on well with one another. You know about keeping safe and you raise money for charities, so well done! You work hard in lessons but could try harder to learn your spellings and form your letters correctly. Those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage need to ask your teacher to give you more opportunities to develop your skills of independence and to make sure you have more opportunities for writing and planning your work.

In addition, I have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- make sure that you learn your spellings, form your letters correctly and have more opportunities for writing, especially the boys
- give you more opportunities to learn about the life of children in different countries.

I hope that this helps you become even better learners. You can help by working harder to learn your spellings, form your letters correctly and ask your teachers to give you more learning opportunities to find out about life in different countries.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley Lead inspector

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