

The CofE School of St Edmund and St John

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103852
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	355474
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Morrison

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	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glyn Cape
Headteacher	Philip Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. A total of 17 lessons taught by ten teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school leaders and other staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at curriculum planning, data on pupils' achievement including their current progress, documents relating to safeguarding, plans for improvement, pupils' work and records of the school's monitoring of its performance including behaviour records. They also analysed 29 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, together with 30 from pupils and 31 from staff.

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

- How well do all pupils attain and how much progress are they making, particularly those learning English as an additional language in the Early Years Foundation Stage and all pupils in Key Stage 2?
- How effectively do teachers ensure pupils make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics across the school?
- What is the impact of actions to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence?
- Have leaders and managers successfully tackled the issues from the last inspection and what is the school's capacity for sustained improvement?
- How well do pupils behave and how well is their behaviour managed?

Information about the school

Just under a half of pupils at this average-sized primary school are from White British backgrounds and about a third are of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during the school year is above average.

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?**4****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the ways in which the school promotes good behaviour and pupils' attendance.

Discussions with pupils, staff, and parents and carers indicated a significant level of concern about the amount of misbehaviour in school, particularly at breaks and lunchtimes. School records confirm high numbers of incidents often involving pupils who have been in trouble more than once. Play areas, although cramped, are not used well enough to ensure that pupils do not play vigorous games such as football alongside others who want to chat quietly. Pupils and staff say this causes disputes that often escalate and which are not effectively dealt with. There is insufficient play equipment to occupy pupils in Years 1 to 6. Observations during the inspection indicated that any instances of poor behaviour in lessons were effectively dealt with by staff so that learning was not disrupted. However, the frequency with which behaviour was raised as a concern by stakeholders during this inspection indicates that senior leaders have not taken a sufficiently robust stance in dealing with the root causes of the problem. Although pupils, staff, and parents and carers have good suggestions for improving behaviour these have not been used well enough to inform the school's policy and practice.

Since the last inspection the school has introduced several initiatives to improve attendance but these have had limited impact. The support provided to families by the attendance liaison worker has improved the attendance of some pupils with the highest absence. The importance of good attendance is highlighted in regular parents' newsletters and classes with the highest attendance are rewarded each week. Despite these initiatives attendance remains low and too many pupils are persistently absent.

Pupils' progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory. In 2010 attainment in English and mathematics rose sharply at the end of Key Stage 2 so that pupils achieved satisfactorily. Current work in pupils' books shows that this improvement has been maintained. The work of the advanced skills teacher has raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve particularly in literacy across the school and, coupled with the introduction of a structured programme linking sounds and letters, has extended pupils' vocabulary so that their writing has improved and is now in line with age-related expectations. Pupils' attainment in mathematics lagged behind that in English but initiatives this year, such as the link with a local primary school, have been successful in accelerating pupils' progress so that attainment is now average. Teaching is satisfactory

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and has good features in some lessons. Weaker areas include an occasional slow pace and some opportunities missed to provide challenging work. Pupils who join during the school year, particularly those in the early stages of learning English, settle quickly and make sound progress because they are satisfactorily supported.

The school has successfully addressed most of the issues raised in the last inspection, although attendance remains low. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and half-termly reviews use this data satisfactorily to highlight those at risk of falling behind. Prompt action is taken to help pupils catch up. Pupils enjoy a satisfactory range of science investigations, such as exploring the properties of solids and liquids and record their findings using literacy and numeracy skills. Broadly accurate self-evaluation has led to the identification of the right priorities for improvement. The short-term Raising Attainment Plans have been effective though the development of a longer term plan is only just beginning. The governing body's school improvement committee rigorously holds the school to account and has effectively ensured that improvements in learning and progress have been sustained. As a result the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- The headteacher and governing body need to take decisive action to improve the management of pupils' behaviour by ensuring that:
 - pupils, parents and carers, staff and members of the governing body are all involved in reviewing and implementing the school's behaviour policy and code of conduct
 - actions taken to improve the behaviour of pupils who frequently misbehave are rigorous enough to significantly reduce instances of poor behaviour.
- Improve pupils' behaviour, particularly at breaks and lunchtime, so that they play together well by:
 - separating quiet activities from boisterous games
 - providing a range of play equipment
 - ensuring that adults take prompt, effective action to address any misbehaviour that occurs.
- Increase attendance to at least 95% for the 2011/12 school year and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent by
 - developing further incentives for pupils to encourage good attendance
 - identifying schools in similar circumstances where attendance is above average and adapting their strategies to meet the needs of the school's community.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it consistently promotes good progress by:
 - keeping pace high throughout the lesson
 - ensuring able pupils are fully challenged throughout lessons
 - exploring ways of increasing pupils' independence.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Pupils from all ethnic groups, those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities enjoy a broad range of activities and, as a result, make satisfactory progress. However their attainment remains below average as they enter Year 1.

Although outcomes in Key Stage 1 have been well below average for several years, current work in pupils' books shows that attainment has risen and is now average.

Pupils' learning and progress is satisfactorily promoted in lessons which are based on practical activities which engage them and ensure they maintain concentration. For example pupils in Year 1 learned to add money and calculate their change when buying toys from their 'shop'. The learning and progress of all groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 is also satisfactory overall. On occasion progress is good, for example, Year 5 pupils used their learning about persuasive writing to write passionately about topics they chose, such as whether school uniform should be banned. Pupils in Year 6 are taught some mathematics at a local primary school and this has improved attainment and accelerated their progress. However pupils in some lessons spend too long passively listening to the teacher and this slows the pace of their learning.

Pupils say they enjoy school and usually feel safe, despite their concerns about misbehaviour, because staff care for them and feel reassured by the high staff presence at breaks. Although pupils understand the importance of being healthy and enjoy a range of exercise and sporting activities, they do not always eat healthily. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community through collections for local and national charities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Despite the problems at playtime, they know the difference between right and wrong and understand the consequences of their actions. Although pupils' basic skills are developed satisfactorily they are not adequately prepared for the next stage of their education and later life because attendance is too low.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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 use their secure subject knowledge to devise interesting and engaging practical activities which pupils enjoy; for example, in a science lesson pupils agreed criteria which they then used to sort materials according to their properties. Although lessons are carefully planned, the activities for more-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenging and some opportunities to promote pupils' independence are missed. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but written comments do not always make clear what pupils need to do to improve.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils satisfactorily and has an appropriate focus on basic skills. In some lessons learning is not related closely enough to pupils' interests and experiences though changes aimed at making lessons more exciting and appealing are being introduced. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits adds to pupils' experiences. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their individual needs diagnosed and appropriate provision made to meet them through support from an adult, variations to class work and small group work or individual work where necessary.

Despite shortcomings in the management of behaviour the school nevertheless cares satisfactorily for its pupils and staff are committed to pupils' well-being. A particular strength of care, guidance and support is the way the school works with a range of agencies to help pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Although some

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strategies to reduce absence have been successful, such as the work of the attendance officer and the learning mentor, attendance remains low.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are well-motivated and have focused effectively on the right priorities, using extensive support from the local authority so that attainment has improved and pupils now make satisfactory progress. Senior leaders are becoming increasingly effective in monitoring teaching and learning. Any areas of concern are carefully followed up so teaching is now satisfactory. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and half-termly meetings to discuss pupils' progress are based on the school's extensive analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils, so that any differences are addressed promptly. As a result, the gap between pupils' attainment and that of their peers nationally has narrowed and the progress of pupils in different year groups is becoming more consistent.

The governing body provides the school with a satisfactory level of support and challenge and ensures that the school fulfils its statutory duties. It has a helpful range of skills and experience and is actively involved in setting and monitoring the school's priorities, for example through its school improvement committee.

Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and staff receive regularly updated training so that pupils are secure in school. The school makes satisfactory use of its knowledge of the socio-economic, ethnic and religious make-up of the school and its local communities to promote mutual respect and understanding. As a result, pupils from different backgrounds generally get on well together. While the school's records show a decline in the level of unacceptable behaviour at lunchtimes, incidents are nevertheless, too frequent.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory despite its failure to convince some of the importance of regular attendance. Parents and carers say they feel well informed about their children's progress. There are no shortcomings in the day-to-day management of resources but, because outcomes are inadequate, the school is not providing value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

From low starting points, all groups of children, including those who speak English as an additional language, those of Pakistani heritage and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are satisfactorily supported by staff. Good relationships are developed with parents and carers so that children make the same progress as their peers. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed satisfactorily and the environment is carefully organised around the six areas of learning. As a result children enjoy a satisfactory range of activities that are well planned to meet their needs. There is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities and children move happily between their classroom and the outdoors. Although adults often make suggestions about what children might like to do next they do not ask enough open-ended questions to help extend children's thinking, help them to apply their own ideas and make decisions about what they want to learn. Although children make satisfactory progress they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with below-average skills.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

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Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned was comparatively low. Most parents and carers agreed that their children enjoy school and felt well informed about their progress. Although almost all said that their children are safe in school, a significant number of those parents who completed the questionnaire or spoke with inspectors in the playground expressed concerns about pupils' behaviour, including bullying, and how the school deals with this. Inspection findings endorse these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The CofE School of St Edmund and St John to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 238 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	45	14	48	2	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	45	14	48	2	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	45	14	48	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	28	18	62	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	38	16	55	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	45	9	31	4	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	38	14	48	1	3	2	7
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)	10	34	15	52	3	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	21	17	59	3	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	14	13	45	7	24	3	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	28	12	41	8	28	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	4	14	17	59	3	10	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	38	15	52	2	7	1	3

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



9 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The CofE School of St Edmund and St John, Dudley, DY2 7QA

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and sharing your views. We know from talking to you and reading your questionnaires that you enjoy school and being with your friends. Because you were so polite and helpful we found out quite a lot about your school. We saw how the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a satisfactory start to their education and that you all make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. However, we would like you to learn even more quickly and have asked teachers to make sure you always get challenging things to do. You told us how pupils who join your school during the school year are given extra support to help them settle in quickly and how those of you who find work difficult are given extra help too.

Although many aspects of your school are satisfactory we have judged that it requires a 'notice to improve'. This is because the school has not done all that it should to make sure you all behave well and come to school every day when you are well.

We are confident that the senior leaders, other teachers and members of the governing body will bring about the necessary improvements. We have asked them to involve you and your parents in deciding the school's rules about behaviour and to take action to deal effectively with those who misbehave, especially those who do so often. We want them to provide an area away from boisterous games for those of you who want to do quiet activities at lunchtime and break and to give you some play equipment to help you play together well. We have also asked them to try some new ways to make sure that more of you come to school regularly and praise those of you who do. But these will only work if families whose children have many days off school try their best to bring their children to school when they are well.

All the adults in your school want you to do well. You can help them by making sure you come to school every day when you are not ill and by always behaving well.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison
Lead Inspector

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