

Kington St Michael Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126332
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360053
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Alvis
Headteacher	Tracy Cornelius
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed nine lessons led by six teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, school staff and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data, pupils' work, the school's checks on the quality of teaching and a number of policy documents. The team received 87 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated those from pupils and the school staff.

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

- The school's success in helping pupils of different backgrounds and abilities to make consistently good progress.
- The accuracy of assessment and its effective use to assist pupils to take the next step in their learning.
- The successful promotion of partnerships with, and pupils' understanding of, other groups in the United Kingdom.

Information about the school

Kington St Michael Church of England Primary is smaller than most schools. Over 90% of the pupils are from White British families and few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have some form of moderate learning difficulty. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is well below average. The school is organised into a Reception class and three mixed-age classes that cover Years 1 to 6.

The school has been awarded Healthy Schools and Eco School status.

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

Kington St Michael Church of England Primary is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features and has made steady improvement since the previous inspection, sustaining the strengths reported then. The outcomes for pupils are outstanding, largely because of the high quality of their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is excellent and attendance levels are high. The pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in their praise of the school's outstanding care, guidance and support for their children. The headteacher leads all school leaders, staff and the governing body in demonstrating high expectations, unwavering ambition and a concerted drive for improvement. As an example, this has resulted in the good promotion of community cohesion, including Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' understanding of the different lifestyles of people in this country. Because pupils' academic achievement has also improved well, the school has good potential to maintain its continuing improvement.

There is no complacency among the adults in school. The staff form a united team focused on improving the quality of their own work and pupils' achievement. The current Year 6 results show major improvement over those in recent years. An above-average proportion of pupils has reached the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics and attainment is above average overall. Pupils in need of more support are helped particularly effectively, as observed in the daily intervention sessions where such pupils strive for their personal best and are helped to achieve it by teachers and teaching assistants alike. All pupils share the same good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are enthusiastic learners, work hard and do well.

There are two areas for improvement. The first of these concerns the success in involving the pupils in the evaluation of their own learning. In the best lessons the teachers give pupils ample opportunities to stop and think about how well they are meeting their learning target and what they have to do to improve. Similarly, the best marking of pupils' books is informative about what has been achieved and what the next steps in learning are. These strengths, however, are not consistent enough across the school. The use of assessment to support learning is, nonetheless, good because assessment itself is accurate and each pupil's progress is tracked carefully. Intervention to assist pupils at risk of falling behind is timely and thorough. School leaders know well how such additional support is influencing pupils' success in learning. The second area relates to the progress made by Reception children in their social development. This has been less than in the other areas of learning, for example in literacy and numeracy where significant progress has been made. While there are some good opportunities for children to work and play together and to choose their learning partners, their awareness of the needs, enthusiasms and lifestyles of people from different social and cultural backgrounds is not as thoroughly developed as might be expected for their age.

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The culmination of the many strengths of the school was observed in the Key Stage 2 production of 'The Selfish Giant'. All the pupils in Years 3 to 6 were involved in this. The presentation was excellent, with confident, creative singing, dance, speaking and acting. Hush fell among the audience as the lone child returned to the giant's garden. The pupils were immensely proud of their achievement and insistent that the second performance would be even better. In true entrepreneurial spirit Year 6 pupils took the collection and sold the DVD of the rehearsal as the audience left.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils have ample opportunities to evaluate their work by:
 - thinking about how well they are learning
 - sharing their thoughts with other pupils
 - talking to their teacher about it
 - developing marking so it is consistently informative about what has been achieved and the next steps in learning.
- Strengthen Reception children's social development by:
 - ensuring there are enough opportunities for children to choose their learning partners as well as their activities
 - making sure they have enough opportunities to meet and work with people from different social and cultural backgrounds.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils are making increasingly good progress through the school. Attainment levels by the end of Year 6 stand good in comparison with those pupils' starting levels. Improvement to achievement in mathematics is a current success of the school. Years 5 and 6 pupils, for example, worked with gusto to solve a range of problems that really challenged their mathematical thinking. There was creativity in the methods chosen to measure the height of some mature trees in the school grounds. Other pupils showed great resilience and focus as they endeavoured to plan a visit to a museum by taking into account factors such as the way the admission charge varied at the two museums being compared. Here the pupils had to calculate the total cost on the basis of the charge for groups respectively of eight or ten children and then add the cost for the remaining individuals and the accompanying adults. They also had to calculate the transport costs, referring to the charges for 52 and 70 seater coaches. The pupils developed a methodical approach and worked accurately. Their arithmetic improved as much as their problem-solving skills and progress was outstanding.

The good progress and above average attainment are also shown in other subjects including history and information and communication technology. Achievement in music is high. The school deserves its fine reputation for music, dance and drama. Sporting achievement is also good, which contributes well to the Healthy School status. Pupils have good awareness of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, although as they identify, not all of them elect to follow such guidance consistently when choosing packed lunches. The pupils have, however, suggested the tuck shop only sells healthy items. It is as well patronised

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as when the healthy choice was complicated by attractions such as chocolate and sugar confectionery.

Pupils' alertness to safety concerns is very pronounced. Virtually all said they felt safe in school when responding to the pupil questionnaire. Parents and carers share the same opinion. Bullying is seen as a non-event, although pupils know what to do if they feel threatened and are adamant that any bullying would be eliminated immediately. They think the 'Buddy Stop' in the playground is a highly successful way of supporting each other and ensuring that no-one is left out or worried in any way. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well in this way and also results in pupils who reflect deeply about their experiences, such as the visit to Gloucester Cathedral, when they showed their appreciation of its special qualities in the artwork and writing completed on return to school.

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
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?

Observations show that lessons are well taught. This is also apparent in studying pupils' books. The pupils work productively and in a firmly focused manner; they very much enjoy the challenges provided, and the opportunities to work together on investigations and problem-solving activities. Many lessons are fun, just as the pupils explained to inspectors. The mixed-age Years 3 and 4 class enjoyed writing their own 'silly poems', initially

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modelling them on 'Mary had a little lamb' but later going on to develop more original ideas. Some of the ideas for rhyming lines were very creative and 'silly' as required.

Occasionally, lesson quality is not as high. In such cases, the pace slackens and the adults control the learning too much. In some lessons the use of assessment to support learning through shared discussion of progress is infrequent. These are not, however, features of the first half hour each day which is focused on intervention to support pupils who find learning more difficult or to support areas where more help is required. One small group worked unstintingly to complete all the possible combinations of numbers adding to ten and then to check none had been missed. The pride in their achievement of this personal challenge was very evident. The teaching assistants who lead some of these sessions show great expertise and success in motivating their pupils to top quality learning.

The power of such intervention is shown in the data for pupils' progress, especially the reduction of inconsistent achievement across different ability, gender and age groups. It is also a significant factor in the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. All pupils are helped to settle to good working practices, so their motivation, behaviour and interest levels are personal strengths. The school draws very successfully on its first-class partnerships with parents, carers and outside agencies to draw every pupil into purposeful learning.

The curriculum is undergoing modification so it is more firmly rooted in pupils' curiosity, interests and enthusiasms. The themes selected are also reflective of staff expertise and interests. The approach has not yet been in place long enough to evaluate its full effectiveness, although first indications are positive. The curriculum is enhanced significantly by out-of-school activities and visits, and the focus on personal, social and health education is good.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders set demanding targets for both pupils' achievement and the quality of provision. These are based on detailed analysis of school performance, including the quality of teaching and learning and the rigorous tracking of academic progress. Such analysis is also the cornerstone of school improvement planning. The priorities are all focused ultimately on how they will influence pupils' achievement. The governing body is well involved in the evaluation of the school's successes and weaker areas. It does not yet base such evaluation enough on its own investigations of what is happening in school rather than on the interpretations of staff and external advisors. Despite this, the

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governing body has firm, well-documented plans to increase its own probing of school performance.

The governing body ensures the school meets its statutory duties, including the safeguarding of pupils. This is rooted in watchfulness from all adults and careful evaluation of risk and how to minimise it. As a result, pupils are safe and secure in school. Similarly, community cohesion is promoted properly. The school has effective partnerships with the local community, including pupils' active involvement in the Chippenham Children's Parliament. Links with different groups in the United Kingdom are well developed and there is successful twinning with individuals and schools overseas. The youngest children's awareness of how different people live is not yet extensive enough for their age, although their attitudes and relationships show they are able to work and play well together.

The school ensures all pupils have the same good opportunities to become successful in their learning, achieve well and benefit from outstanding personal development. In part, this is due to the efficient and highly effective deployment of resources, especially staffing. It also is the result of the very beneficial partnerships with parents and carers. They share the same high ambitions for their children's successes as the staff and governing body. They are very well involved in school activities, and give sterling support as volunteers in lessons, which enhances pupils' learning considerably. There is absolutely no tolerance of discrimination.

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	2
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	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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The children have great fun in Reception. They are intrigued by the many different activities provided, including studying snails, spiders and ants under a hand lens as part of their 'Minibeast' focus. Some of their knowledge is exceptionally good, as observed when

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one child volunteered that snails move by using their own mucus. Another informed everyone that the spider they had discovered was an arachnid. Children develop good skills in numeracy and literacy. Their ability to write and calculate is in advance of their age due to the systematic planning of each step of the work. Children have opportunities to choose themselves from the range of available activities, inside and outside. They organise their play well. One group established the rule that, in their role play, Cinderella was the one wearing the sparkly shoes. They willingly took turns to slip into the shoes without prompting from adults.

The children make good progress from their starting levels and attainment is above average by the end of the Reception Year. In some areas progress is particularly brisk, although this is not consistent across every aspect, as shown in their social development. This element is the key priority for improvement work, as already recognised by the phase leader. The effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has resulted in much more accurate assessment than before, the development of a high-quality outside area and a successful partnership between teachers and teaching assistant in promoting children's good learning. The staff are very receptive to ideas for improvement and show high levels of ambition and energy for the development of effective provision and good outcomes.

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

Just over three quarters of the parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is a high return rate. Virtually all those who responded hold very positive views of the school. There were many comments that identified the warm, caring ethos in school, the effective teaching and good progress made by their children. There was no trend in the small number of written concerns which were about individual issues.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kington St Michael Church of England 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 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 114 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	52	41	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	69	25	29	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	28	59	68	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	44	46	53	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	48	43	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	34	49	56	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	37	47	54	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	43	49	38	44	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	46	42	48	0	0	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	34	47	54	3	3	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	37	47	54	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	50	57	35	40	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	59	36	41	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Kington St Michael Church of England Primary School,
Chippenham, SN14 6JG**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed by your excellent contributions to the 'Selfish Giant' production. We have written in our full report that your school is a good one. This is because you do well in school and reach levels of work that are above those usually found. The list of good and outstanding things in school is a long one. The main ones to remember are set out below.

- You behave superbly and are mature and sensible learners who help each other to succeed.
- You are well taught, enjoy your learning and work hard.
- Children in Reception have fun in their learning.
- All the adults in school look after you very carefully.
- Your teachers and the other adults expect you to work well and check carefully that you do.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to Kington St Michael Church of England Primary School.

We think there are two main improvements that can be made now.

- Children in Reception could learn more about the lives of other people.
- You could have more time in lessons to think and talk together about your work and how to improve it.

We know you will help your teachers make these improvements. You could start by adding to our list of what is good or outstanding in school. Include your ideas about how you learn best and what helps you to do this. Share your list with your parents, carers and teachers.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

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