

Great Kimble Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110430
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	363765
Inspection dates	13–14 July 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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Hick
Headteacher	Gillian Harrington
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Ten lessons taught by four teachers were observed. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, teachers' planning, all documentation relating to safeguarding, the behaviour policy and a wide range of other information. Meetings were held with parents, governors, staff and pupils, and 41 parental questionnaires and 10 questionnaires completed by staff were analysed.

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

- The progress of boys and higher attaining pupils in writing and mathematics.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils' understanding of different cultures and ways of life.

Information about the school

This very small school serves the community of Kimble, Butlers Cross and several rural farming hamlets. Pupils are mostly of White British backgrounds. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one class while Years 1 and 2 pupils are taught in a mixed-age class. They are taught as single classes for literacy and numeracy. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. A broadly average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and 5% have a statement of special educational needs, mainly relating to autism, communication and speech difficulties. The school has an Activemark for sport, Healthy Schools status and Investors in People accreditation.

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

The school provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. Standards are high in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and all groups of pupils, including boys, pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities and more capable pupils, make outstanding progress. The school's success is attributable to the visionary leadership of the headteacher and the governing body, the high quality of teaching and an outstanding curriculum which is expertly taught by a team of very hardworking teachers and support staff. The school's capacity to improve is outstanding because self-evaluation is accurate and actions taken to improve standards in boys' writing have been very effective. Parents are very supportive of children's learning.

No child is left behind in this school because of the very high emphasis on providing equality of opportunity and personalised learning. This ensures that pupils make consistently outstanding progress. Standards have remained high since the last inspection and the school has improved the proportion of pupils, especially boys, attaining higher levels in writing. Rigorous and accurate evaluation by staff on identifying what interests and engages pupils has paid dividends. Excellent use of outdoors and opportunities to study topics such as 'super heroes' have contributed to the pupils' excellent achievement. Nevertheless, pupils' spelling and written presentation of their work do not match the high expectations teachers have of pupils. There are some missed opportunities in lessons to ensure pupils use dictionaries and word banks to check their spellings and too often work is not presented neatly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, boys and more capable pupils are consistently challenged in lessons and therefore make exceptionally quick gains in learning, especially in writing for a range of purposes.

Children's excellent rates of progress start in the Reception class where, because of excellent teaching, children make outstanding progress in acquiring very secure learning habits and the basic skills of reading, writing and number.

Throughout the school, pupils feel very safe in learning because of highly effective good safeguarding arrangements and excellent relationships with staff. They have expert knowledge of healthy eating and, when making menus for the caf, they ensure that healthy ingredients figure prominently. Pupils' contribution to the local community is good but it is stronger in relation to its own community rather than the global community. Pupils' knowledge of different communities making up multi-cultural Britain is only satisfactory. Pupils help organise the school fete and participate regularly in church services. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils work exceptionally well as a team and have very good skills of independence. These, coupled with high standards, mean they are very well equipped for their next stages of education. Pupils' personal development is outstanding; they are confident, happy and keen to learn. Behaviour is exemplary and attendance is high.

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Teaching is excellent and is characterised by expert subject knowledge and rigorous use of assessment. Pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support because teachers know every child's unique approach to learning. 'My child has had the best start in life,' said one parent, speaking for many. 'The headteacher is our rock, she knows exactly what each one of our children needs,' said another. The school has excellent relationships with parents who are seen as true partners in learning. The school promotes community cohesion well but there are some missed opportunities to teach pupils about children's lives in other countries.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that every opportunity is taken to help pupils improve their spelling and presentation skills by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work on their corrections
 - modelling the spelling of subject-specific words as the need arises
 - insisting that pupils present their work neatly.
- Provide more opportunities to learn about people's ways of life in multicultural Britain and in global communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Excellent achievement of all groups of pupils is consistently seen in lessons because of the expert use of assessment. From broadly average attainment on entry, children enter Year 1 exceeding the expectations for this age in all areas of learning. Progress is most pronounced in their personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening skills. All groups of pupils make excellent progress because of the exemplary teaching which consistently focuses on pupils' next steps of learning and encouragement from teachers to 'reach for the stars'. Pupils are developing very good skills of independence in learning because they know what to do when they get stuck. In an excellent Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils solving mathematical problems were consistently challenged by the teacher to explain their thinking so that she could gauge any misconceptions. Working exceptionally well in groups, pupils quickly found solutions because they listened to one another's suggestions. However, eagerness to record their work often results in careless spelling and untidy presentation. Boys make excellent gains in writing because of the wide-ranging opportunities offered to write for a purpose. Having visited the Oxford Transport Museum, they did not need cajoling into writing about different features of transport. Learning in this school is exciting and stems from a natural curiosity to want to find out more, whether it is about wedding ceremonies or how the Romans lived. Every child is seen as a successful learner.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties are exceptionally well supported by teaching assistants who are not only familiar with pupils' targets but who really understand the uniqueness of each child's learning style. Perseverance, hard work and an 'I can do' culture underpins learning. More capable pupils have plenty of opportunities to extend their learning by using the library and ICT for research.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils treat each other respectfully and listen attentively to the teacher. The school's aim of 'encouraging children to achieve their full potential while

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celebrating the joy of learning' is embedded in all lessons. Learning is characterised by pupils persevering to get things right, explaining reasons for choosing particular strategies and asking for help when they need it. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning because they enjoy it.

Pupils are very knowledgeable about healthy eating, and parents say that their children often bring 'treats' back home from their lunch boxes, saying that they are not particularly healthy. Pupils love sports and demonstrate exceptional team-building skills, cheering one another on at sports day. 'We are all winners in this school, some of us are just faster than others,' explained a Year 2 pupil when asked about sports day. Pupils care about their environment. They take responsibility, such as recycling, very seriously. When playing outdoors, they remind one another about playing safely on the climbing equipment and they say that they know whom to go to if they are upset. Relationships are excellent throughout the school.

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	2
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	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?

Teaching is excellent and is characterised by rigorous and detailed planning and evaluation of each pupil's learning. It challenges and involves pupils because of the excellent use of assessment and consistent checking of pupils' understanding through very good questioning. Work is marked regularly but sometimes pupils do not have sufficient

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opportunities to do their corrections. Teaching assistants are very well deployed in lessons and keep a watchful eye on any pupils who might experience difficulties.

The curriculum is outstanding because it is expertly planned to ensure that all learning is relevant to pupils' interest levels. The recent introduction of karate has done wonders to improve pupils' levels of concentration. An excellent range of enrichment activities, such as maypole dancing, ICT club, sports club, art, drama and dance club, contribute to pupils' love of learning. Pupils love gardening and the latest crop of potatoes harvested was an encouraging sign of their success.

The school has very strong links with a junior school in the area, contributing to excellent transition arrangements. Teachers make it their business to visit other schools to see best practice. Safeguarding procedures are very robust and contribute to pupils' safety within the school. Pupils say that staff are very kind and look after them exceptionally well. Parents are very appreciative of the excellent care, guidance and support that pupils receive. 'We can go to work happy, knowing that our children are very well cared for,' said one parent, reflecting the views of many.

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?

The headteacher is the driving force behind this very successful school. She has won the hearts and minds of staff and parents because of her firm belief that every child is unique and good at something. She is a highly effective role model for both staff and pupils, and the older pupils say, 'She is very fair and wants to do the best for us.' Very ably supported by a highly effective team of teachers and an exceptionally hardworking governing body, she is moving the school from strength to strength. Self-evaluation is accurate and every opportunity is taken to improve on previous best performance, as demonstrated by an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in writing in 2011. The excellent governing body holds the school to account and ensures that all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met. All staff are clear about procedures to be followed and pupils' safety is regularly reviewed during staff and governors' meetings. Communication with parents is regular and informative.

The school works extremely well to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity to access the curriculum and other aspects of the school's provision. Christian values of respect, honesty and integrity underpin all aspects of school life and the school is held in high regard by the community, promoting community cohesion well. Nevertheless, there are missed opportunities for pupils to learn about life of peers in different countries.

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The school achieves excellent value for money because of very careful financial planning and the governing body's evaluation of cost effectiveness of its spending decisions.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent induction arrangements prepare children very well for their first year of school. Children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning because of 'magical teaching'. Learning is characterised by children sitting on the edge of their seats to see what happens next, for example as they solve problems for ladybirds who are 'fussy eaters'. The headteacher's expert storytelling keeps all children mesmerised, and they just cannot wait to find alternative endings to stories that she makes up for them. This contributes to excellent progress in speaking and listening. Personal, social and emotional development is attributable to children's welfare being at the heart of everyday life in the Reception class. Children's emotional well-being is regularly checked by staff, who quickly pick up if any child is upset.

Achievement is outstanding because children learn very quickly through tightly structured play activities. All staff know exactly when to intervene in the learning of children who might get stuck. Through excellent leadership and management, every opportunity is taken to build up children's self-esteem, both indoors and outdoors. Children learn to love nature and they have excellent skills of observation when looking at pond life. The emphasis on the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and number and correct learning behaviours enables all children to be fully equipped to learn at an extraordinary rate throughout the school.

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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:	
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

Parental responses to the questionnaire have been high. Parents are very positive about all aspects of school life. They say that the school gives their children the best start in life and that all children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are very well supported by staff who are prepared to go that extra mile. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Kimble Church of England 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 51 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	95	2	5	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	95	2	5	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	88	5	12	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	93	3	7	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	98	1	2	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	95	2	5	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	90	4	10	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)	36	88	4	10	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	93	3	7	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	88	5	12	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	88	5	12	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	98	1	2	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	98	1	2	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.



15 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Kimble Church of England School, Aylesbury, HP17 9TH

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school. Here are our findings.

- You attend a fantastic school where you make excellent gains in learning, reaching high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are exceptionally well behaved, and a total credit to your parents and your school.
- You love learning and you work very hard in lessons, especially when solving mathematical problems.
- You learn lots of interesting things because of the outstanding learning opportunities you receive.
- You attend an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and we particularly noted your skills of self-control in karate, which are very useful skills to have in life.
- Your teachers have excellent teaching skills and they help you to make outstanding progress.
- Your school is exceptionally well led and managed by your headteacher and governors.
- You contribute very well to all aspects of village life.
- Your teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors care for you very well.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to do two things to help you do even better.

- Help you to improve your spelling.
- Make sure that you always present your work neatly.

You can help by paying more attention to spelling and using dictionaries to check what you have written. You can also take more care in how you present your written work.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

Lead inspector

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