

# The Coombes Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135617
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	364051
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michelle Winter HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	539
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christopher Barrows
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patrick Pritchett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2010
<b>School address</b>	School Road Arborfield Reading RG2 9NX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 976 0751
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 976 1916
<b>Email address</b>	head@coombes.wokingham.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	28–29 September 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	364051

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011



## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Teaching and learning were observed in 24 lessons and 22 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and examined documents including safeguarding records, the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, assessment data used to monitor pupils' performance and attendance information. They also analysed the content of 249 questionnaire returns from parents and carers.

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

- The quality of the school's safeguarding arrangements and its care, guidance and support for pupils.
- The progress of pupils, particularly in mathematics and English.
- The effectiveness of leaders in rigorously monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in keeping pupils safe and securing good progress towards the early learning goals.

## Information about the school

This school is a large primary school. It opened in September 2008 following the amalgamation of an infant and junior school. The school was inspected in July 2010 when it was judged to require significant improvement and given a notice to improve. The subsequent monitoring inspection in December 2010 found the school was making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues from the previous inspection. The current headteacher was appointed in February 2011 following a period of acting in this role. Around 15% of pupils come from various army quarters in the district. Pupils are predominately White British with a small number from other cultural heritages including from the families of Ghurkhas. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of speaking English and a small proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are also a small number of pupils who belong to the Traveller community. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school has part-time nursery provision. Children transfer to the Reception classes from the Nursery and a range of other pre-school settings.

**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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

This is a good school. It is a vibrant and harmonious community. Pupils feel safe and appreciate the good care, guidance and support the school provides. There is a strong ethos of mutual respect which underpins all relationships. Pupils are known as individuals. Their needs are the concern of all school staff. Partnerships are effective, particularly those with the Garrison welfare team and Traveller support service. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep healthy and the vast majority participate in the many sporting opportunities available through extra-curricular activities. Despite their good knowledge of a healthy diet, pupils are less successful in adopting healthy lifestyles through their lunch choices.

Spiritual and moral development are enhanced through the curriculum and plentiful opportunities for pupils to reflect on their personal choices. For example, in one outstanding assembly, pupils were prompted to compare themselves to a robot when considering moral dilemmas.

The whole school community is clear that strong leadership has been the key to recent rapid improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels are focused on improving outcomes for pupils and this is communicated well to all. The school evaluates itself well and plans systematically for improvement. Leaders regularly monitor the work of the school and this has been effective in improving the quality of teaching; however, feedback to teachers is not always sharply focused on improving progress in lessons. The school has effectively addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection, including keeping pupils safe. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

While attainment overall in English and mathematics is broadly average, progress has improved so that the vast majority of pupils are making good progress in lessons and across year groups. In mathematics lessons for older pupils, tasks build on their prior learning and they are applying their improving knowledge of number to solving complex mathematical problems. Well-structured lessons in the use of language for a range of purposes are ensuring that pupils' written work is improving. Achievement is even across the various groups of pupils represented in the school. There are some weaknesses in the school's understanding of the deeper needs of pupils who are new to English and their families. Despite this, the practical, engaging curriculum and

**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

good teaching ensure that this group of pupils makes good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and make good progress in lessons. They benefit from detailed personal learning plans with specific, carefully monitored targets. Some parents too commented to inspectors that they felt well supported and their children were making good progress.

Although the quality of teaching and learning varies, overall it is good. The best lessons feature engaging and often practical activities which motivate pupils to do their best. Teachers' good questioning, good relationships and very effective communication of expectations are also features of the strongest lessons. Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils; however, in a minority of lessons learning slows when some tasks do not precisely meet learners' needs. Teachers' marking and the use of pupil targets have developed since the previous inspection. Most pupils now know how to improve their work and what their next steps are.

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because activities are well matched to their needs. The flexible curriculum reflects children's interests well. The good care now provided is enhanced through daily assessment of potential risks, including in the outdoor environment.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve teaching further so that all of it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - developmental feedback to teachers is focused on improving the progress of pupils in lessons
  - all lessons feature effective use of assessment information to plan activities that extend learning.
- Develop staff awareness of the particular needs of those who are new to English in order to support pupils and their families more fully.

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

**2**

Achievement is good. Most pupils enter the school with skill levels below those expected for their age, particularly in language. The vast majority of pupils are now making at least good progress in lessons that are stimulating and often practical. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning in lessons they say are fun. Although attainment remains broadly average much has been done to raise standards, particularly in mathematics and for higher achievers. In one lesson pupils were fully engaged with tasks that captured their interests. Learning was enhanced through a practical hands-on approach with pupils using a variety of resources to develop their knowledge of number. In one lesson younger pupils were improving their

**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

understanding of the value of two-digit numbers through a variety of practical activities. Pupils in this lesson were attaining above national expectations. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their writing skills in a variety contexts because logical links are made between subjects. These enhanced opportunities are securing improving writing outcomes. Pupils take good advantage of daily reading activities and teachers give individual support and guidance to ensure good progress is maintained.

Robust systems are in place to identify, track and evaluate the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make good progress in lessons and are well supported by teachers and well-trained support assistants. Good partnerships with external agencies are fully utilized to ensure that pupils' individual learning plans address their needs successfully.

Behaviour is good. Pupils play and work well in small and large groups because of good relationships and the consistent expectations of all adults. They understand the difference between right and wrong and apply this to their time in school. Pupils feel the school deals with any rare incidents of poor behaviour effectively. The vast majority of pupils say they feel safe in school and most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed. Pupils say they enjoy school, and attendance is broadly average.

Older pupils have opportunities to contribute to school life through their roles as school councillors and in the playground squad. Pupils are clear that the headteacher will respond to their concerns and suggestions; however, the role of the newly formed school council is not fully developed and pupil responsibilities are not widespread across all year groups.

Pupils understand and respect the diversity of the school population and have a good understanding of religious differences in the school and beyond.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**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

<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons carefully and ensure full understanding by modelling activities to learners. This is done most effectively through open dialogue between teachers and learning assistants. Here too, positive and respectful relationships are demonstrated to pupils. Teachers use detailed assessment information to plan work that meets pupils' needs well and provides appropriate challenge. In some lessons, however, this is not as effectively done so that learning slows in parts of lessons when, for example, pupils waste learning time by copying answers. Progress is tracked systematically and individual targets are understood by pupils and reviewed regularly. Marking and feedback to pupils have improved considerably. Pupils understand and value the 'tickled pink' and 'yucky yellow' comments in books which highlight specific areas to improve and provide appropriate next steps in learning.

The curriculum is creative, imaginative, broad and well organised. Continuous monitoring ensures that all aspects are covered and there is no repetition across year groups. The good curriculum is enhanced through use of the extensive outdoor environment and much learning is done in the school's diverse and stimulating grounds. Pupils have many opportunities for practical learning, for example, when younger pupils were making bread during the inspection.

The school gives high priority to its care, guidance and support of pupils, and particularly through its emphasis on safeguarding. The school environment is welcoming and stimulating. Transition arrangements are smooth and effective particularly for newly arrived pupils who settle quickly into school. The pastoral support worker makes a good contribution to pupils' well-being. Pupils appreciate 'Rebekah's room' where they can go if they are upset or worried. Pupils enjoy the school breakfast club and the safe environment there. The after-school club responded well to the unscheduled fire alarm during the inspection which provided further evidence of the good care it provides.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The thoughtful and sensitive leadership provided by the headteacher is supported effectively by a well-informed and ambitious team. Leaders are very approachable and have close relationships with pupils and their families. They contribute effectively to improvements through detailed development plans which are robustly tracked and evaluated for impact. Improvements to the quality of teaching are a result of regular monitoring of planning, teaching and pupils' outcomes by a range of staff. Important feedback to teachers following observations is useful but is not always clearly focused on the impact of teaching on learning for pupils.

The governing body is very active and visible in the school. It sits firmly at the heart of the school community. Members of the governing body understand the broad strengths and weaknesses of the school and have a detailed knowledge of some aspects of school life. They understand the need to develop their own skills and are focused on improving the quality of their monitoring and challenge of the school. Safeguarding issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and the school now has systems in place to ensure that all children are safe in school. This has been an area of much development. This continues with the recent appointment of a new safeguarding governor who is clear about her role in holding the school to account and becoming more effective in it. Safer recruitment procedures are robust and accurate records are kept to ensure that all adults are safe to work with children. The school is responding well to the health and safety challenges of a major building project with appropriate and regular assessment of risk. The extensive school grounds present particular challenges in ensuring pupils' safety. The school is aware of this and developing detailed procedures for ensuring that all staff fully understand the risks and the control measures in place.

The school is a cohesive community. Parents and carers as well as community partners contribute well to the school including when working parties maintain the school grounds at weekends. Community cohesion is further enhanced through purposeful links to schools in contrasting local and international locations.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>



**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

<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well when they join the school because of the good care provided. They work happily in a safe, calm and stimulating environment. Good liaison with their pre-school settings also supports children's induction well. Children themselves say they feel safe and know what to do if they are hurt or feeling sad. They enjoy school because activities are planned around their interests. They work independently and are able to access high quality resources themselves so they can make choices about what and how they learn. There is a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. They are taught specific skills well, including how to use scissors safely. The outdoor environment extends learning well and children have free access to it. Their physical development is well supported through their use of the outdoor area, and during the inspection some children were confidently riding bicycles without stabilisers. Assessment procedures are robust and feed effectively into planning. Children make good progress towards their early learning goals in all areas of learning. They enter the school with skill levels below those expected for their age particularly in language development. The curriculum emphasises provision in language and personal development and this is securing good progress in these areas.

Appropriate priorities for development have been identified and suitable plans are in place to secure further improvement. Leaders recognise the need to review transition arrangements from the Nursery to Reception classes in order to avoid the need to repeat assessments for children they know well.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 questionnaires indicate a high level of support and confidence in the school. Some parents made additional comments praising the good teaching, leadership and communication as well as the special needs provision. Some parents said they would like further information about their child's progress and better homework arrangements.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Coombes 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 249 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 539 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	180	72	63	25	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	166	67	79	32	3	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	101	41	126	51	17	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	118	47	103	41	15	6	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	145	58	93	37	5	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	133	53	102	41	10	4	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	157	63	86	35	1	0	1	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)	140	56	90	36	8	3	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	143	57	92	37	11	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	108	43	105	42	22	9	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	125	50	102	41	10	4	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	153	61	84	34	3	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	168	67	69	28	9	4	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Coombes Church of England Primary School, Reading  
RG2 9NX**

Thank you for making us so welcome when I visited your school recently with my colleagues. We certainly enjoyed talking with you and were impressed by your good behaviour in lessons, around the school and in the playground. We know from talking to you and reading your questionnaires that you enjoy being at school and feel safe there. You also told us that lessons are usually fun and you find teachers' comments in your books useful in helping you to improve your work.

We found that most of you are making good progress and the adults in school take good care of you.

We have asked Mr Pritchett and his staff to improve your school further by:

- making sure that all of your lessons provide work that helps you to improve
- ensuring leaders at the school give all of your teachers feedback that help them improve their teaching
- making sure that the adults in school understand more about the pupils and families who speak another language and are new to learning English.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).