

St Oswald's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135058
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	381793
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Mary Davis

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Stokes
Headteacher	Barry Jenkins
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and all eight teachers. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff, and groups of parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at: policies; development planning; data related to the tracking of pupils' progress; senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning; safeguarding documents; minutes of the governing body meetings and pupils' work. They took account of the responses to the inspection questionnaires returned by 64 parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff.

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

- The reasons for the decline in the levels of attainment and rates of progress in English and how effectively this is being addressed.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- The consistency with which teachers use assessment information to plan activities that meet pupils' individual needs.
- How well the school promotes regular attendance and the impact of strategies aimed at raising levels of attendance.
- The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation; the extent to which this is leading to the correct identification of priorities and areas of under-performance, and whether swift action is being taken as a result.

Information about the school

St Oswald's is an average-sized primary school serving a diverse community. Almost all pupils are from a White British background and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally. The school provides before and after-school clubs and there is a Children's Centre on the same site.

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

4

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 be reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' outcomes and aspects of leadership and management.

Although the school is providing an acceptable standard of education for pupils, its overall effectiveness is inadequate. This is because levels of attainment in Key Stage 2, particularly in English, have fallen since the previous inspection and leaders have not addressed this effectively. Areas for development identified by the previous inspection have also not been addressed and there has been no significant improvement.

The quality of teaching and the school's curriculum are satisfactory in spite of the school's leadership. Some elements of the school's care, guidance and support are good. As a result, pupils feel safe and behave well. The care provided for the high proportion of the school's population who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those pupils who face challenging circumstances, is particularly thorough and effective. However, attendance levels have been consistently low over an extended period. Leaders have not taken sufficient action to communicate with parents and carers about the importance of good attendance or followed up absence robustly.

Pupils are keen to learn and, when provided with exciting tasks that are well matched to their ability, make good progress. However, in a few of the lessons observed, tasks lacked sufficient excitement or relevance to pupils' experience and understanding to inspire their learning and raise levels of attainment. Although some teachers plan well to meet the wide range of ability within their classes, in some lessons higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and those of lower ability are unable to access tasks that are too difficult. Although teachers generally use questioning well to probe understanding and to evaluate how well pupils are learning, assessment overall is currently satisfactory. This is because the marking of pupils' work does not provide them with sufficient information to understand how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

Most parents and carers are very positive about the school. One parent commented

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that teachers are always approachable and that, 'The headteacher cares about each and every child.' Despite this level of care, there has been a lack of clear leadership. Although individual pupil's progress is tracked and underachievement identified, there has been insufficient analysis of the progress made by different groups. This does not enable leaders to effectively ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination. The monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour and accuracy, and does not lead to improvement. Middle leaders show a good understanding of the areas for development in their subjects, but they have not been empowered to contribute to the school's self-evaluation or strategic planning to drive the improvements which they have identified.

The school is a cohesive community and there are positive links with the local community, but there has been little or no evaluation of community cohesion and limited action to reach out to other communities nationally or internationally. Pupils' awareness of other areas in Britain's multi-cultural society is, therefore, underdeveloped. Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have not been provided with accurate information or the tools they need to bring about change. Consequently, there has been little evidence of improvement since the previous inspection and, as a result, the school is judged to have an inadequate capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate rates of progress, particularly in English in Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better
 - engaging pupils' interest by providing activities that engage pupils, are relevant to pupils' experience and are well matched to individual needs within the class
 - ensuring that pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve their work.

- Increasing the impact of leaders on raising attainment by:
 - using accurate self-evaluation to inform strategic planning, enabling the identification of priorities for improvement
 - empowering leaders at all levels, including the governing body, so that all know their roles and responsibilities and are provided with the information and tools they need to drive improvement
 - rigorously monitoring teaching and learning in order to identify and address areas for development, and to share good practice
 - analyse the performance of different groups of pupils to ensure equal opportunity and eliminate discrimination.

- Raise attendance rates and improve punctuality by:
 - communicating with parents and carers the importance of ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance, including the negative impact

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- that taking holidays during term-time has on their children's learning
 - rigorously following-up absences.
- Develop pupils' understanding of their place in the national and international communities by:
- providing opportunities for pupils to obtain first-hand experience of schools in other contexts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with skills and understanding that are below average in most areas of learning. Over the past two years, levels of attainment have risen during this key stage to broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in the Year 6 national tests over the past three years have fallen from average in 2009 to significantly below average over the past two years in both English and mathematics. The progress pupils make from their starting points, although broadly satisfactory, is uneven. In 2011, Year 6 pupils made good progress in mathematics as a result of well focused support from the subject leader while progress in English declined. Pupils show good attitudes to learning, being keen to answer questions and share their ideas. They work well together in groups and support each other. They particularly enjoy active tasks and taking responsibility for their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make equal progress to their peers. This occurs when they are well supported in lessons by teaching assistants and when teachers provide them with appropriate tasks.

Pupils say that the school keeps them safe. They say that they have a good understanding of e-safety and value the support that adults provide when they have a problem. They have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the physical activities provided for them. Parents, carers and pupils voiced concern about the negative behaviour of a few pupils. Behaviour is good and pupils respond quickly to adults' instructions. Adults manage the very small number of pupils with behaviour problems effectively, consistently and sensitively, so that learning is not disrupted. Pupils enjoy taking responsible roles and members of the school council have been effective in providing improvements to playground equipment, such as providing games equipment and benches to sit on. They have contributed to improving a local park through litter picking and planting bulbs. However, pupils do not have the opportunity to voice their opinions on how to improve teaching or the curriculum to better meet their needs. As a result of low attendance and pupils' low levels of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, the development of skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being is inadequate. Pupils are welcoming and polite to visitors and get on well with each other. They have a satisfactory understanding and respect for those with different faiths or backgrounds, but currently have no first-hand experience of children in other national and international contexts.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	4
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	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
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

How effective is the provision?

Warm relationships between adults and pupils are evident throughout the school, contributing to pupils’ positive attitudes. Although the majority of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, some good practice was seen. Here teachers planned lessons that built on prior learning and ensured that all pupils understood key vocabulary and had a grasp of the skills required for the main task of the lesson. For example, one class practised spelling comparative vocabulary before using it to compare two pictures depicting a scene from the Second World War. In another lesson, pupils used their imagination to describe what might happen next in a story. This enabled them to develop their vocabulary and to identify the elements that make a good story in preparation for their writing. In less successful lessons, opportunities were missed to provide activities to stimulate the imagination or inspire creativity. Use of assessment to support learning is likewise inconsistent. In the best lessons, pupils show a good understanding of the success criteria to which they are working, and are able to assess their own work and that of others. In other classes, pupils have a limited understanding of how to reach their targets.

The curriculum is adequately matched to the needs and interests of pupils. A suitable range of visits and visitors enrich learning, although pupils told inspectors they would like more. A range of extra-curricular activities is offered, mainly in sport, French and art. Some cross-curricular themes are explored but there are currently insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects. Information and communication technology is not well used to enhance learning across the curriculum. A lack of clear leadership of the curriculum has resulted in a provision that, while it meets the needs of pupils satisfactorily, lacks

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

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coherence.

The individually-tailored provision for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well monitored; support strategies are rigorously evaluated and progress tracked. This enables pastoral leaders to identify when pupils are not responding and to try something different. Parents and carers are closely involved in this support. A recently introduced behaviour management plan is provided for those whose behaviour is unacceptable. Staff are consistent in their approach and pupils understand the range of sanctions if they do not respond to these strategies. A wide range of external agencies are used to support pupils for whom circumstances may make them vulnerable and the school can point to striking examples of pupils who have been supported and enabled to achieve. Transition between key stages is well managed and particularly so for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Close partnership with the secondary school ensures that a good level of information is shared when they move school. Breakfast and after-school clubs provide caring, safe and well supervised activities.

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?

Leaders are not sufficiently effective in driving and embedding improvement. They are not using target setting effectively to track the progress made by different groups, to raise expectations or improve outcomes. Self-evaluation is overly generous and not rooted firmly in secure or accurate evidence. Consequently, leaders and managers are not promoting equality of opportunity effectively, and there are insufficient systems in place to identify or tackle discrimination. Middle leaders have a clear understanding of the actions needed to bring about change and are keen to do so. Currently however, they have not received adequate training or the opportunity to carry out lesson observations to enable a full evaluation of their subject provision. Staff are likewise committed to raising achievement, showing good teamwork and support for each other. The governing body is also anxious to enable the school to develop, but has had too little impact on the direction and work of the school. Its ability to challenge has been hampered by unclear and limited information. Safeguarding procedures and practice are satisfactory and all staff are suitably trained. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out and policies are in place. There is a regular exchange of information with parents and carers, including guidance on how to help their children and how well they are achieving. Although partnerships with external agencies to support pupils' well-being are effective,

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partnerships to promote learning are inadequate because they are not resulting in worthwhile improvements in the achievement of pupils or in their attendance.

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	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
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	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age, particularly in their development of speech and language. They make satisfactory progress and leave the Reception class with attainment that is still below expected levels in most areas of learning. They play well with each other and understand how to take turns and to share. Most children are content and willingly take part in activities. They make choices about the tasks they undertake. Relationships with adults are good and children understand that good behaviour helps to keep them and others safe. A reasonable range of resources and teaching methods are used to provide a suitable range of activities and some good practice is evident, particularly in the Nursery. However, activities do not always ensure that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided. Good partnership with parents and carers is evident and welfare arrangements are secure. There is good teamwork and generally staff work effectively with external agencies to ensure children’s well-being. There is, however, no clear leadership to drive improvement or establish a vision for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Views of parents and carers

The small minority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. Although responses suggest that some parents and carers disagree that the school manages unacceptable behaviour effectively. Inspection findings showed the reverse to be true and behaviour to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Oswald's CofE 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	58	25	39	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	53	29	45	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	26	41	34	53	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	42	29	45	6	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	53	27	42	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	25	39	33	52	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	48	28	44	3	5	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)	23	36	31	48	6	9	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	24	38	33	52	5	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	31	27	42	12	19	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	33	31	48	7	11	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	23	36	35	55	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	29	45	26	44	3	5	1	2

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).

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.



17 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Oswald's CofE Primary School, Kidderminster, DY10 2YL

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited the school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. You behave well and have a satisfactory understanding of how to stay healthy. You try to do well in lessons and enjoy your learning when your teachers make lessons interesting. You get on well with each other and are respectful of those with different beliefs and backgrounds to your own.

Although the school cares for you so that you feel safe and secure, our inspection has judged that your school needs a notice to improve. This is because although your lessons are satisfactory, not enough pupils are reaching the levels expected for their age by the end of Year 6, particularly in English. We have judged that the leadership and management of the school are inadequate because leaders have not done enough to help the school to get better quickly.

We have asked leaders to ensure that the teaching you receive is more interesting and exciting, and better matched to your individual needs. We have asked teachers to make sure that you know how well you are doing and how to improve your work. We have also asked the school to improve aspects of leadership and management by checking on how well the school is doing and how well you are progressing, so that they can ensure you all do well.

We are concerned that some pupils have low attendance and have asked the school to ensure that they follow up any absence more effectively.

You can help your school by continuing to behave well, by working hard and by coming to school regularly. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis
Lead inspector

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