

Minsterworth Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115691
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	379125
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	Paul Edwards

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Thomas
Headteacher	Angie Ritchie
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Edwards

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons taught by three teachers and listened to pupils reading. Meetings were held with the headteacher, teaching staff, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at governing body minutes, the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, pupils' work, and teachers' planning and marking. The inspector took note of the questionnaires completed by 26 parents and carers and those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Minsterworth is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils have White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above that seen nationally with 37% from Traveller families. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below that seen nationally. The percentage of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. A higher than average proportion of pupils enter or leave the school other than at the usual starting or leaving times. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a combined Nursery and Reception class with the younger children usually attending four days a week. The school has been awarded International Schools and Healthy Schools 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching is not strong enough to ensure all pupils make the consistently rapid progress of which they are capable. There are, however, some considerable strengths; parents and carers are rightly overwhelmingly positive about the care and support afforded their children and the information provided by the school to keep them well informed.
- Achievement is good and pupils make good progress overall. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good and occasionally outstanding progress because of the very careful analysis of their needs and timely, well-targeted support and interventions.
- Teaching is good overall. There are good features in most lessons, for example teachers plan work that is interesting, stimulating pupils' enthusiasm and they question pupils' understanding well. However, a few weaknesses inhibit pupils making even better progress. For example, more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, there are too few opportunities for all pupils to develop their independent learning skills and they are not encouraged to complete tasks as quickly as they should.
- Pupils feel safe and behaviour is consistently good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate well, particularly when tasks are challenging. They work well with one another and show considerable enthusiasm for their work.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and management. Weak teaching has been eradicated, the result of very effective management of school performance and continuous mentoring and coaching for staff. A wide range of interesting activities are planned for the pupils although the school rightly acknowledges the need to ensure pupils develop a greater understanding of multicultural nature of the United Kingdom today. Governance, which is strong,

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supportive and challenging, contributes effectively to the school capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of December 2012, improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - encouraging pupils, particularly the more able, to move on to more challenging activities sooner within lessons
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves so that they develop high levels of independence
 - encouraging the pupils to work more quickly in lessons so no time is wasted and they make the progress of which they are capable.
- Provide the pupils with more opportunities to learn about people from different backgrounds, religions and cultures in the United Kingdom today.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Inspection evidence confirmed the views of most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire who felt their children were making good progress. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils starting from a low baseline attain particularly well. Effective links with the families from the Traveller community and support from specialist staff have enabled their children to achieve well.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities below those expected for their age. As a result of strong leadership and continuous improvement to the provision, they achieve well so that their attainment is broadly average on entry to Year 1. The children's enthusiasm for learning is stimulated by a wide range of interesting activities such as searching for vegetables in the 'indoor gardens' as part of their food topic. They thoroughly enjoy painting and printing with the turnips, cabbages and carrots. There is a strong emphasis on teaching reading skills and the very secure grounding children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the understanding of letters and sounds (phonics) is built upon effectively. Pupils' attainment in reading is average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils demonstrate increasing confidence in decoding unfamiliar words and sounds and they clearly enjoy reading for pleasure.

Pupils' writing skills develop well with good opportunities to practise these in other subjects. For example, their topic on The Olympics promoted the report writing and speech-writing skills of pupils in Years 3 to 6 effectively as they researched and prepared a speech that Baron Pierre de Coubertin might have spoken on resurrecting the modern Olympics today. Mathematical skills progress well and pupils become

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competent in all areas. The pupils' information and communication technology skills have improved significantly since the previous inspection, the result of a strong focus on this aspect.

Quality of teaching

The inspector found teaching to be good. Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaire were in agreement with this view. Parents and carers are very pleased with the support their children receive and the enthusiasm generated by the teachers. The views of one are typical when commenting, 'My child is developing in reading and writing, far beyond her school year and I am so pleased that this was recognised and steps taken to keep her interested in learning and not getting bored.' The good teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage stimulates children's enthusiasm for reading, providing a good basis for the development of future reading skills.

In the best lessons, teachers motivate the pupils well and provide them with work that is well matched to their level of ability. For example, in a good Years 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were keen to show their skills in rounding numbers up or down and they made good progress. Pupils comment that they have a good understanding of how to improve their work because of the teachers' written comments. Teachers' questioning is good, clearly eliciting from pupils what they understand and they encourage them to explain their thinking to their peers. Consequently, pupils become confident speakers, keen to engage in discussions.

Where teaching is less effective, teachers spend too long explaining to pupils what they have to do, particularly the more able. Occasionally for these pupils, teachers provide too much information, limiting opportunities for independent learning. Occasionally, pupils are not encouraged to work as quickly as they should and consequently they do not always progress sufficiently quickly.

The planned curriculum supports teaching and learning effectively. There are many activities which help pupils to see the links between subjects and to develop and apply mathematical and writing skills. For example, work on topics such as the 2012 Olympics, conservation and recycling, and on other cultures and religions develops imagination, writing and research skills. The celebration of 'Traveller Month', Chinese and French weeks have a good impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, pupils' awareness of other cultures and religions, represented in the United Kingdom today, is less well developed. Teaching assistants are well deployed and contribute effectively to lessons. They make a particularly strong contribution to the learning made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and help to ensure all groups of pupils take a full part in lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils enjoy school, are polite to adults and respectful of each other and the school environment. Attendance is average. The

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school does all it can to encourage good attendance and most pupils attend regularly and punctually. There has been a notable increase in the attendance of the small number of persistent absentees. Most pupils behave well in lessons, around school and when at play. Most parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire agree that overall behaviour is good but a small minority expressed concerns regarding behaviour in lessons. Good behaviour was evident in lessons observed during the inspection and discussions with pupils confirmed this was typical. Pupils feel that behaviour is good and is improving for the few pupils who find good behaviour difficult. They respond well to school rules and rewards and these help to promote self-discipline and a strong sense of right and wrong.

Older pupils are keen to take on responsibility and they take great pride in their 'Spiritual Garden' which provides them with an area for reflection. Pupils' care for the local environment through projects such as when they care for elvers for a month before releasing them back into the River Severn. Older pupils look after younger pupils well through the friendship and peer mentoring activities.

Pupils have a clear understanding of bullying in its different forms, including cyber-bullying and that involving mobile-phone texting. They are aware of instances of bullying but feel that they are relatively rare and are confident that such instances are dealt with effectively. Pupils are aware of their own and others' safety and parents and carers agree with pupils' views that they feel very safe in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides very effective leadership and has managed to provide stability during a period of several, unavoidable staff changes. Areas of weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection have been addressed so that pupils are now making very effective use of information and communication technology in all subjects. Significant improvement in the quality of tracking information is providing the governing body with a much clearer picture of how well all pupils are progressing throughout the school. This has resulted in the school being able to target resources more efficiently and has led to improvement in pupils' progress; for example, boys' attainment is now very similar to that of girls' in writing.

The headteacher takes an exceptionally rigorous approach to checking the quality of teaching. Well-targeted professional development, including mentoring and coaching and the opportunity to work closely with linked schools, has successfully improved the quality of teaching in some areas, for example in the teaching of writing. Subject leaders are developing their skills well through well-targeted professional development and beginning to interrogate data more effectively. The headteacher monitors the progress of pupils with precision, and meetings between the headteacher, staff and parents ensure the information is used effectively to drive up achievement. These improvements demonstrate clearly the school's capacity for further improvement.

Effective partnerships provide opportunities in sporting and musical opportunities for

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pupils. The governing body is supportive of the school, effectively manages the resources of this small school and challenges it effectively. The school has good links with parents and carers and keeps them informed of their children's progress, including through learning journals, reading diaries and regular reports. It works hard and effectively to reach out to those parents and carers who are more difficult to engage.

There is a strong and effective focus on developing basic skills in English and mathematics and pupils' confidence in the use of information and communication technology. There are many interesting activities to develop reading and writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. There are well-planned enrichment activities, including an Olympic Art day, residential visits and visits to museums that add interest to the curriculum. Links with a school in China help to develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures in other countries. There are many popular extra-curricular clubs that promote learning and enjoyment in sporting, arts and environmental activities. The governing body fulfils its statutory obligations for safeguarding. The school promotes equal opportunities by monitoring the attainment of individuals and different pupil groups and vigorously challenging any form of discrimination.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 April 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Minsterworth Church of England Primary School, Gloucester
GL2 8JH**

Thank you for the help you gave me when I inspected your school. You made me feel very welcome. I enjoyed watching you work, talking to some of you and listening to you read. You go to a good school. You are well behaved and are kind and considerate to each other and most of you attend school regularly. You take on responsibility well and I was pleased to see how the older pupils look after younger children and how they listen to them read.

You told me how much you enjoyed coming to school and liked to go on trips and visits. You are really enthusiastic about the Olympics and particularly enjoyed the recent art day. In lessons, you try hard and your reading skills are good. You are making good progress in your writing and mathematics. Some of you could make even better progress, particularly the more able pupils.

You get a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Your teachers take good care of you and the headteacher wants to make improvements to your education.

I have asked your school to do the following:

- to make sure that you all make faster progress, particularly the more able, by making the teaching even better in some of your lessons and giving you opportunities to find things out for yourselves
- to make sure that you learn more about people from different religions and cultures who live in the United Kingdom.

You can help by working hard and telling the teachers if you think work is a little too easy for you.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards
Lead inspector

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