



# Aldermaston Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109947  
**LEA** West Berkshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 278315  
**Inspection dates** 10 July 2006 to 11 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Philip Mann AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Wasing Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Aldermaston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Reading RG7 4LX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9713362
<b>Number on roll</b>	136	<b>Fax number</b>	0118 9714880
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Alison Faulkner (Vice Chair)
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Barbara Barke

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 July 2006 - 11 July 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278315
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

The school is smaller than average and serves the village of Aldermaston and outlying areas. Pupils come from varied home backgrounds. A small number come from minority ethnic groups and from the local Traveller community. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is about average. The attainment of pupils coming into the school at the age of five varies but is average overall. Close links have been established with the local church.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be good and the inspection confirms this to be so. It is an effective school with some outstanding features. All pupils are achieving well within a very positive climate for learning firmly rooted within strong Christian principles. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior management team form an effective team with a clear focus on raising standards. This is reflected in the good standards being attained by pupils and especially so in the quality of their writing and work on computers.

Teaching is good across the school. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall with a clear emphasis on learning through play and real life experiences so that they achieve well. Many interesting learning activities are taught in lessons for older pupils. Pupils respond well to these and consequently attitudes to learning are very good in all classes. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their initiative and solve problems. This provides good levels of challenge for those who are more able. Likewise, activities are carefully matched to the needs of those with learning difficulties and disabilities to ensure success. Provision for these pupils is good. Some outstanding links have been established with local crafts people, senior citizens and other members of the community to enrich pupils' learning.

The procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory but applied inconsistently. Marking of pupils' work varies too much in quality. Although the progress of pupils is carefully monitored, computer technology is not being used well to make the process efficient, and this hampers teachers in pinpointing the next steps in learning. The setting of individual targets for pupils is also at an early stage of development. However, good practice is beginning to emerge and those who are regularly reminded of their targets confirm that they really help them to improve.

The governing body plays an effective part in whole school improvement and self-review. Resources are managed well. Much has been achieved since the previous inspection and the capacity for further improvement is good. Taking all factors into account the school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen up the targets for pupils and the marking of their work so they have a clear understanding of what to do to improve
- Make pupils' assessment more consistent and efficient so that staff are clear about how to plan for the next steps in learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Good teaching ensures that the challenging targets for eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science are likely to be met and as a result standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Provisional results

for English in the most recent national tests are good and there has been a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving above average standards. The attainment of children in the Foundation Stage varies from year to year. However, these children make good progress to reach the expected levels by the time they start in Year 1.

All pupils achieve well in their writing. This is because teachers emphasise the importance of this key skill in literacy lessons and provide many opportunities for pupils to write at length. Consequently, the oldest pupils write with confidence to produce high quality pieces of description within their stories such as, 'Suddenly in amongst all the plants and seaweed she felt a hand pulling her to one side'. All pupils relish the opportunity to use computers to support them in their learning. They all achieve well and standards are above average in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve equally as well as their classmates because tasks are carefully matched to their needs and levels of support are good. Pupils from the local Traveller community make good progress while present in the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good overall. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. Attitudes to learning are very positive and pupils complete work with a sense of pride. All pupils respond very well to the many opportunities provided for them to work in small groups and solve problems. This ensures that they develop self-confidence, enterprise and these skills prepare them well for the workplace. Pupils respond well to targets when they are used in class and state that they really help them to make progress.

Relationships are very positive and behaviour is good overall. Pupils respond well to the positive code of conduct. Discussions with pupils confirm that staff deal effectively with any inappropriate behaviour and they know who to go to if they feel unhappy or concerned about things. All pupils respond well to the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They make informed choices related to their health, safety and well-being because the school pays close attention to these welfare issues. Pupils respond outstandingly to the opportunities to be involved in the life of the school and activities within the local community.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Planning for lessons is detailed and learning intentions are made clear to pupils to aid their success. Lessons move along at a brisk pace and teachers use resources well to illustrate key teaching points. Especially good use is made of ICT to support learning and this contributes significantly

to pupils' achievement. High expectations and activities, carefully matched to pupils' ability, ensure that the needs of all are fully catered for. Good opportunities are provided for all pupils to work in small discussion groups. This gives them the opportunity to solve problems and play an active part in their own learning.

The ongoing assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory but its use to support pupils' learning and achievements is inconsistent. Marking although generally satisfactory is variable in quality. In the best, teachers' comments provide useful comments for pupils to aid further improvement but in some cases, marking is limited to ticks providing insufficient feedback. The setting and use of individual targets is inconsistent, although some teachers make regular reference to them in lessons. Discussions with pupils confirm that when targets are used they find them very helpful because they then know what to do next in order to improve. The school has quite rightly highlighted this as a priority for improvement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is broad and balanced with a good emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy. Outstanding use is made of the local community and environment to make learning relevant to pupils. The very high quality clay work completed under the guidance of a local potter is a particularly good example of this. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Well-planned activities cover all areas within a context of learning through play and first hand experiences. Good opportunities are provided for all other pupils to use their initiative and develop their personal and social skills through problem solving and group work. ICT is regularly incorporated into lessons to provide a wide range of imaginative and exciting learning experiences. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. Pupils from the local Traveller community are effectively supported when in school. The provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is good. Furthermore, a good range of extra activities outside of lessons provides further enrichment and opportunities for competitive sport.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school judges this aspect of its work as outstanding but the inspection evidence confirms it to be good. This is because monitoring of the academic performance and personal development of pupils is only satisfactory. Target setting is inconsistent in its application across the school and not all teachers record pupils' achievements to the same level of detail. However, some good practice is beginning to emerge.

In contrast, teachers know their pupils very well and all are treated with respect. Child protection procedures are robust and vetting procedures for all adults working with pupils are rigorously applied. Good levels of care are provided and all staff are vigilant in the oversight of pupils' safety and well-being. Risk assessment is very thorough and good levels of training are provided for all staff. This is particularly so in the use and supervision of the adventure play area. Pupils with learning difficulties and

disabilities are given good levels of adult support. The family support worker provides very good links between school and those families needing extra help and effectively contributes to pupil achievement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school's work. A very positive climate for learning has been established where pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well.

A clear focus on raising standards exists where challenging targets are being achieved. This is especially so in English where standards in writing are above average. Teamwork is a strong feature and an effective management team of senior staff has been established to initiate and oversee school improvement. Curriculum development is effective. The expertise of staff is used to good effect to support subject development especially in the good provision that now exists for geography and ICT.

The procedures for self-evaluation are effective overall and a culture of improvement and review has been firmly established. The active governing body plays an effective part in this process. It is fully involved in the work of the school and has a clear view of its strengths and weakness. Monitoring strategies are developing well and resources are managed efficiently for the benefit of the school community. Good systems exist for the views of all to be considered when making decisions related to school improvement. Parents have been fully consulted over the reorganisation of classes in the juniors and pupils have been actively involved in some aspects of school improvement through the school council and surveys. In contrast, although the tracking of pupil data to identify trends and patterns is satisfactory, ICT is not used effectively to make the process more efficient. However, the overall level of improvement since previous inspection has been high and the capacity for further improvement is good.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

I enjoyed visiting your school and I would like to thank you for making me feel so welcome. Aldermaston is a good school. It is very clear that you all really enjoy being there and like taking part in the many interesting activities planned for you. I was especially impressed with the quality of the work in Year 6 and their writing in particular.

While at the school I also found: \* teachers provide you with good lessons\* teachers use computers well to help you learn\* you all find learning fun and take much pride in your work. \* staff in the reception class are providing good opportunities for young children to learn\* there are very good links with the local community\* the headteacher, senior staff and governors provide good leadership and manage the school well.

I also found: \* the teachers need to make better use of targets to help you improve\* not enough use is made of computers to monitor your progress. Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you all the very best.

Philip Mann

Lead Inspector