



# Aldbury Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 117382  
**LEA** HERTFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280060  
**Inspection dates** 26 April 2006 to 27 April 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Susan Hall LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Stocks Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		HP23 5RT
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 851240
<b>Number on roll</b>	82	<b>Fax number</b>	01442 851181
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr.Tim Alps
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Doreen Meek

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 26 April 2006 - 27 April 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280060
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a small primary school based in an attractive village in Hertfordshire that is above average in terms of social and economic features. Almost all children are of White British heritage. The number of children eligible for free school meals is low. A slightly larger proportion of children than is average join the school other than at the usual time. An average proportion of children have learning difficulties or disabilities.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school which is at the heart of its local community. The school's view of how well it is performing matches that of the inspection. The school provides good value for money and has the capacity to continue to improve. Children enter the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are above average. Throughout the school children have positive attitudes and are often eager to learn. Overall, standards are above average and children usually do well in national tests although standards in mathematics are not as high as they are in English and science. Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. The curriculum is good and is enriched well through a range of extra-curricular activities. However, the reliance on a mathematics scheme of work limits the organisation of open-ended problem solving activities and does not motivate some children. Pupils are safe and well cared for in school. They receive good guidance and support to ensure they make good progress. Support for pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties and disabilities is also good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and enables most children to make good progress. Parents and children think well of the school and headteacher, who provides good leadership. Governance is satisfactory as governors have not yet fully developed their monitoring role. The school's procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the school is not sufficiently robust to clearly identify what needs to be done next to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to raise standards in mathematics by extending the opportunities for children to plan and carry out a wider range of problem solving activities. - Extend the opportunities for staff to monitor and evaluate children's achievements in order to identify steps for further improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the school with skills that are above average for their age. Most children are confident and articulate although a few do not listen as well as they could. Many children in the Foundation Stage have a good understanding of the world around them and a natural sense of enquiry. They get on well together and settle happily to school routines. National tests taken in Year 2 confirm that children attain above average standards, especially in their reading and writing. Standards in Year 6 are also above average, showing a marked improvement on last year when there was a high proportion of children with particular difficulties that affected their learning. Children achieve well, especially in English, and many note they really enjoy reading. While many achieve at least satisfactorily in mathematics they do not always reach the high standards seen in other subjects because they lack the skills or confidence to solve a range of problems by using different strategies. They generally do well in other subjects and there are strengths in music. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good overall

progress. Although children did not reach all the targets set for them last year they are on line to achieve the challenging targets set this year.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well being are good. Children behave well, most work hard and enjoy their time in school. Attendance is mostly good but affected by holidays in term time. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A current focus on 'The 3 E's' of energy, effort and esteem provides good opportunities for children to reflect on their talents. Each class draws up expectations of themselves and are confident staff will deal with issues identified in the 'Listening box'. There are good opportunities for children to make a positive contribution to the school and local community. They are keen to be elected to the School Council and Eco Council and enjoy the chance to take on responsibilities including helping organise activities for the imminent village May Day. Older children enjoy the opportunities to develop small areas of the school garden and take some responsibilities for caring for the school rabbits and poultry, although they would like more chance to do so. The school is committed to Eco awareness and has Healthy Schools status, with children having a good understanding of why they eat fruit and vegetables as morning snacks.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have recently extended the systems to track the progress that children make as they move through the school. This enables staff to identify whether progress is consistent or where additional support may be necessary. There are well developed procedures to support different groups of children, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and to enable older children to confidently approach national tests. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and of what children can achieve. Teachers use questions well to check children's understanding. While most staff explain things well, this is not always fully effective in mathematics. At times, children are unsure how to explain their workings or plan and carry out problem solving activities. The use of commercial materials does not always motivate all pupils, including those of higher attainment. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although with temporary staffing arrangements, activities are rather too formal with too much teacher direction at the expense of children 'learning by doing'.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good range of activities to help children learn and develop their personal skills. This helps prepare them well for later life and their future economic

well-being. There are strengths in the provision for music and activities that enrich learning including a good range of extra-curricular clubs and French lessons. There are opportunities for older children to develop part of the school gardens which they tend in groups, at times working with their families. Older children also help care for the school rabbits and poultry. Due to the state of parts of the grounds and animal accommodation, the school is currently unable to fully utilise all parts of the school successfully. Plans are well advanced to develop the adjoining school house to provide additional teaching space. The school has extended sports activities well including the employment of professional coaches. This not only effectively promotes pupils' physical development but also increases their enjoyment of physical activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

This is a caring school, where children declare they are happy. Provision is satisfactory overall, with some strong elements of pastoral care. Staff know the children, their families and their individual needs very well. All children and especially those with learning difficulties are well supported. The effective use of the good number of support staff ensures that all children are fully included in the range of activities. The procedures for child protection are appropriate. However, there are identified health and safety concerns. The school is taking immediate action upon these, accepting that such issues do not make a positive contribution to ensuring that the children stay safe. Teachers have recently improved the way in which they check and track the progress children make and use this information to ensure a usually good level of challenge is provided. Staff set individual targets in mathematics and English. However, insufficient use is made of these and more detailed marking of children's work is necessary to ensure that children know exactly what to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and successfully combines the demands of teaching a class part-time with running the school. She provides a good lead in many areas with a quiet determination to ensure that the experienced staff team keeps moving forward. The special educational needs coordinator provides very effective leadership of this area, which is acknowledged by the school as a strength. The school's self-evaluation is good and identifies most of the areas requiring further development. Parents and children are consulted about the work of the school and feedback is used to inform school improvement planning. Management of the school is good and the larger budgetary under-spend is clearly earmarked for the development of the adjoining school-house. The staff work closely together as a supportive team. They continually discuss standards and planning issues in all subjects, although at times use materials and retain approaches that are not fully effective including those for mathematics. While subject coordinators have opportunities to monitor children's work and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in areas for which they hold responsibility this

work lacks rigour and is not fully effective in identifying what needs to be done next. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are keen to develop their first hand involvement in monitoring the work of the school but have not ensured that all health and safety matters, including risk assessments have been rigorously addressed.

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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	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	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>	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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	3	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**

Following my visit to your school I would like to let you know what I found out when I visited your beautiful village. But first can I say a big 'thank you' for making me feel welcome and for talking to me about all the different things that you enjoy doing. It was good to hear how you feel happy at school. You probably saw me when I came into classrooms, the dining hall and around school. Your teachers are proud of you when you try hard and behave well. I know how many of you, and your families, like your school, so I have talked with your headteacher about how the school can become even better. I have asked your teachers to look at how they can help you all to do really well, particularly in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to solve problems. The staff, and sometimes the governors, will look at how you learn in different classes, at your books and will talk to you to see if you are doing the best you can. The staff at school want you to do really well and have some good ideas to make the school an even better place. All of you can play an important part in this by making sure you come to school regularly, working as hard as you can and always being kind and helpful to everyone. We are sure you will do your best. It was a pleasure to meet you all.