

Wootton-by-Woodstock Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123196
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	292607
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Jonathan Reynolds
Headteacher	Miss Valerie Lucas
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2002
School address	Wootton Woodstock OX20 1DH
Telephone number	01993 811520
Fax number	01993 811520

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Inspection number	292607

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small school serves the rural parish of Wootton, Glympton and Kiddington near Woodstock. It is very popular and over subscribed. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. They come from a variety of social backgrounds and are almost all of White British heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There is frequently higher than average mobility due to traveller families or children joining from other schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties varies significantly from year to year but is currently below that found nationally.

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, with some outstanding features. Some of the oldest pupils commented, 'We really enjoy school because the teachers make learning fun and have time for us'. Parents agree and are overwhelmingly positive in their views of the school. Several wrote to express their admiration at the commitment shown by staff and believe, as one commented, that they 'go above and beyond to help the children thrive, giving selflessly of their personal time and creating a nurturing and challenging environment'.

There is considerable year-on-year fluctuation in the attainment of year groups. This is a common feature of very small schools and occurs because variations in the performance of each individual can have a disproportionate effect on the standards overall. Therefore, the results of the National Curriculum tests for a single year need to be treated with some caution. A more reliable measure of the school's performance is gained by looking at results over a period of time. Given their starting point, this profile of performance shows that pupils achieve well and make good progress between Reception and Year 6. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average overall. Pupils also make good progress in developing their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. For example, podcasts of pupils' poetry will shortly be available for downloading from the school website.

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school because important areas of the school's provision, such as the quality of teaching and the curriculum, are good. Pupils make consistently good progress during lessons because teachers have high expectations of how much they can achieve, and individuals have work that is well matched to their needs and abilities. However, there is no complacency. Teachers have made a good start at raising further the levels of challenge for all pupils, particularly those of higher ability, by increasing the opportunities for them to work independently on tasks that extend their reasoning and thinking skills. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes.

Pupils' personal development and provision for their care, support and guidance are outstanding. Pupils say there is always a trusted and respected adult they can go to with worries and problems who really understands them. This is because teachers know each child individually and understand their learning needs very well. As one pupil commented, 'You don't have to keep all of your worries inside you because the teachers listen to you, help you and really make a difference'. Teachers are particularly effective at tracking and supporting each child's academic and personal progress so they can all achieve well.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has very high expectations of what is achievable, and shows a strong determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. Governors and her colleagues support her well. They share her clear vision for improvement based upon extremely detailed and accurate self-evaluation. The resulting well-focussed actions are bringing about sustained school improvement. This confirms the school's good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are given a good start in the Foundation Stage and achieve well because of good teaching. They make good progress in developing their skills in the early stages of reading, writing and mathematics, and in learning to work cooperatively and to share with one another.

By the time that they start work in Year 1, most children achieve the goals expected for their age and some exceed them. However, the governors are aware that space is restricted which means it is difficult, for example, to provide a permanent role-play area within the classroom. The lack of a covered outdoor area also restricts the range of activities offered for outdoor learning during the winter months. However, the school has planning permission for a mezzanine floor and is exploring ways of providing an outdoor canopy.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils to explore their own ideas in order to accelerate their progress and reach high standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The large majority of children entering the Reception year start with knowledge and skills that are in line with those expected for their age. The good quality care and stimulating teaching enables them to make good progress. All pupils continue to progress at the same good rate, regardless of gender or ability. Standards are well above average overall by the age of 11 years and pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points, including those who join the school at different times. In all cases, their achievement is good because the school's systems for setting targets for them to reach are accurate and well established. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, particularly those who struggle with reading and writing, benefit from the good quality individual help given to them in class and make good progress towards the targets set out in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Parents appreciate the strong emphasis on nurturing pupils' personal development. For example, one wrote that, 'the way children are encouraged to interact with different age groups and with adults.....this produces confident, independent and able children who grow to understand the value of caring for others and the communities in which they live'. Pupils form extremely good relationships with adults, and with each other, and have exceedingly positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, they behave very well. They greatly enjoy their education because the school provides many exciting activities that enrich their lives in school and beyond. Pupils are very well aware of the importance of healthy eating and staying safe and do their very best to follow this guidance. The school council and Eco group take their responsibilities very seriously and understand the social and environmental implications of their actions, which they publicise widely. Attendance is well above the national average and is further evidence that pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils rapidly acquire literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that will equip them very well for later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and successfully encourage confident learners. Throughout the school the deployment of the

teaching staff works well across the school. For example, the headteacher takes the Year 5 and 6 pupils separately for mathematics so they are able to work in small groups on specific topics or units of work. Adults are similarly deployed in the reception and Key Stage 1 class. Pupils learning in these groups benefit from the increased amount of individual support, and the opportunity to share their views and consolidate their understanding. Teachers are good at pitching the work at the right level for all pupils within these mixed-age classes. This occurs because teachers make good use of the information they have about what pupils already know. An area for development, in otherwise good teaching is to capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils to explore their own ideas further and to extend their thinking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Success in national tests has not been achieved at the expense of the wider curriculum and children talk enthusiastically about the many different experiences that motivate them and promote their enjoyment of learning. A good feature is the way literacy, numeracy, science and ICT has been adapted to meet the needs of the mixed age classes so that progression and continuity can be maintained. Pupils also develop a strong sense of social responsibility through their work in personal, social and health education and circle time. Pupils particularly appreciate and enjoy these activities. The school is particularly proud of the very wide range of enrichment activities it is able to offer during and outside school hours given its very small size. However, the school recognises that curriculum plans do not include enough opportunities for independent work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of the school's pastoral care is outstanding. The school is vigilant about health and safety, risk assessments and child-protection matters. Academic guidance is outstanding because teachers make excellent use of the school's systems for tracking the progress made by pupils, and setting challenging targets for each individual to achieve. Teachers' marking is consistent and their helpful comments help pupils to improve their work. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils who need help with their reading and writing so they make good progress against their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has very high expectations of what is achievable, and shows a strong determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. Her very good leadership inspires the teachers to strive to make the school outstanding. Staff work effectively as a team to keep aspects of school life under constant review and class teachers are receiving good quality support to increase their confidence at monitoring new initiatives in order to sustain rapid progress. The governing body participates fully in strategic planning and gives effective support because governors know the school well. The money carried forward in the school budget is above national recommended figures. However, this will be used to fund the building projects to increase the teaching space for the youngest pupils and the replacement of the school boiler.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wootton-by-Woodstock Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Woodstock, OX20 1DH

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I came to inspect your school recently. I really enjoyed talking to you about your school and looking at your work. I am writing to tell you what I think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

I was very much impressed with your friendliness and your extremely sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other. You listen very carefully to what your teachers have to say and learn a lot in lessons. I was especially pleased to hear that you are now able to record your own podcasts for the school website. Well done!

I think that you go to a good school that prepares you well for the next stage of your learning. To make it even better, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities during lessons to use your own initiative and to work independently.

You can all help by continuing to work hard to meet the targets set for you. I hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector