



St James' CofE Primary School, Coldwaltham

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125978
Local Authority West Sussex
Inspection number 293422
Inspection date 16 January 2007
Reporting inspector Joan Lindsay

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Coldwaltham
Age range of pupils	4-10		Pulborough RH20 1LW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01798 872196
Number on roll (school)	77	Fax number	01798 875532
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Neil Moore
		Headteacher	Michelle Clifford
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small, rural school serving the village of Coldwaltham and surrounding area. Nearly all the pupils are White British, with a small number of mixed race heritage; no pupils have English as an additional language. There are no pupils who are currently eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is much smaller than the national average and none has a statement of special educational need. The school has gained several awards in recent years such as the Artsmark, Activemark and Basic Skills Quality Mark. As a result of a collaboration agreement with an even smaller local primary school, the headteacher shares her time equally between the two schools.

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 that has some outstanding features. These include the strength of the curriculum and the pupils' enjoyment of school, their adoption of healthy lifestyles and their excellent levels of attendance. Standards are above the national average. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and are nurtured in an environment one parent described as 'like one big happy family'.

Children enter school with generally average standards, although there are some variations from year to year and in specific areas of learning. The quality and standard of education in the Foundation Stage is good and children progress well. Small group sizes can have a disproportionate impact on overall results and there has been a slight decline in results for a couple of years in the national tests taken at the end of Year 2. However, this was from a very high level and results remain above average. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5 so there are no comparisons available of national test results, which are taken in Year 6, for this school's inspection. However, school data, revealed by optional tests, show that they continue to make good progress from Year 3 onwards. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also progress well, largely as a result of the focused support they receive from teaching assistants both in groups and in class.

Teaching is good with strengths seen in the way teachers make lessons fun, plan the curriculum well for mixed-age classes and make good use of the well trained teaching assistants. However, there is still some scope for teachers to use assessment data to even better effect, for example, to set suitably challenging tasks so that all pupils might achieve as well as they can. The outstanding curriculum encourages pupils to learn through creativity and provides a wealth of opportunities to enhance their learning and life skills through visits and visitors, art, music and school clubs.

Pupils' personal development is good overall. Pupils behave well and they love coming to school which is reflected in the excellent attendance levels. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is evident in the very strong relationships that exist in the school. The excellent links that have been forged with parents, the strong local network of schools and the benefits of the collaborative headship, all combine to enhance pupils' learning and life experiences.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, governors and staff share a commitment to aim for high standards. The school has an accurate picture of its own strengths and the areas that it could still improve such as some elements of tracking and data analysis to ensure all pupils are guided and supported to achieve as well as they can. Improvements to the accommodation and resources have had a positive impact on standards in some areas such as information and communication technology, since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on what has been done to develop better tracking and assessment of pupils' achievement, and improve marking, so that work is consistently matched to meet the needs of all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievements and standards are good. The small numbers of children that come into the Foundation Stage have a range of abilities, with strengths in reading and writing, but weaker knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning and this continues during their time in Years 1 and 2. Results at the end of Year 2 have fallen from the very high levels seen in 2004 (achieved by a particularly able group of pupils) as a result of fewer pupils attaining higher levels in 2005 and 2006. Nevertheless, results are still above national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. From Year 3 to Year 5, when pupils leave the school, progress continues to be good overall with reading and writing particular strengths. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress thanks to the well managed and effective support they receive. The school is continuing to build up a source of data that can be used more robustly to track pupils' progress, particularly as they move through Year 1. This is intended to identify where the most support is needed so that all pupils might achieve as well as they can.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good personal development and well-being arises from effective care and promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very positive about working in mixed year groups to promote 'Communication, Respect and Cooperation'. In addition, older pupils help and support younger ones and recognise that they are acting as role models. This all has a positive impact on pupils' personal and social development. Reception children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and in becoming independent because they are working alongside pupils in Year 1 each day. Pupils' behaviour is good, although occasionally there is some inattention. Pupils feel safe and secure in school and say, without prompting, that there is no bullying. They thoroughly enjoy their learning because lessons are interesting and varied. Attendance is outstanding and consistently well above the national average. Pupils' involvement in community and church events helps them to mature socially and to develop their spirituality. In a reading lesson, pupils reflected on the distinction between good and evil. Cultural provision is good, introducing pupils to various cultures worldwide, especially through religious education and art. The school recognises the need to continue to extend children's understanding of the contributions different cultures make to British life. Pupils have a very good understanding of healthy eating and keeping fit as healthy lifestyles are promoted extremely well. The emphasis on developing good key skills, working together and

taking on responsibilities such as sitting on the school council prepare pupils well to contribute to community life and for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Effective planning of the curriculum helps to ensure the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes are well met. In Reception, children learn well because of good support and working alongside older pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are consistently good, and these aid learning. Teaching assistants have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Teachers' explanations are clear and children respond well to opportunities for discussion or to answer questions. Pupils enjoy the fact that lessons are often fun, and involve good use of resources and role play. Marking is satisfactory but does not always show pupils how they can improve. The school has improved the analysis of where pupils are in their learning, especially in English and mathematics, but the information is not always used to ensure more able pupils are consistently challenged to achieve the highest standards possible.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Very good links between different subjects help to make learning relevant and exciting. Pupils have completed art and design work to illustrate aspects of Egyptian life, they have learnt about Egyptian mathematics and produced an Egyptian tomb and sarcophagus. Lessons on many topics are exciting because of practical activities and opportunities for acting. Spelling and reading are systematically taught, ensuring pupils' good progress. Improvements in the information and communication technology curriculum are evident in the mathematical displays of graphs and tables. French lessons introduce pupils to features of French language, geography and culture. Reception children receive a curriculum that meets their needs well, within the mixed-age class, and contributes to their good progress. Pupils enjoy an exceptionally wide range of visits, visitors and clubs often linked through the very strong local network of schools. In particular, they comment on the opportunities to perform in plays, musicals and operas.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support provided for children is good as a result of the commitment of all staff. Class teachers, teaching assistants and other adults provide good pastoral care for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. As a result, these children make good progress in their learning. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress continue to improve. Group and specific targets are identified for pupils. The school plans for better use of the assessment information to ensure more able pupils

are more consistently challenged and supported to ensure they reach the highest possible levels. Child protection and health and safety procedures are securely in place and the school takes the necessary steps to safeguard pupils. A comprehensive personal education programme supports the care of pupils well. When necessary, the school works effectively with other agencies to assist pupils and their families.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives a very clear direction to the school and inspires everyone to work as a team to achieve high standards of learning and care. She has established an effective collaboration with another smaller school. This has led to benefits at several different levels such as staff enhancing their own leadership skills, shared resources and improved experiences for pupils with a positive impact on their personal development, learning and enjoyment. Curriculum coordinators plan their subjects well but they have not yet had much involvement in monitoring teaching. Although much work has been done, they are still developing the analysis of tracking and assessment data to ensure a consistent approach across the school which enables teaching in all lessons to focus on helping pupils of all abilities to achieve as well as they can. Governors have strengthened their role in the school and play an important part in support and challenge. With everyone working so well together, there is good capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing what you do in your lessons and assembly. It was very helpful to hear the views of those of you we spoke to from your school council and the Communication, Respect and Cooperation groups.

Your school is a good one that does some things extremely well. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and think that the lessons are fun. You are very good at making sure you come to school regularly and this really helps with your learning. All the adults help you and so you make good progress even if you find the work a bit difficult. There is an excellent range of things you learn about in school and through all the different activities in which you get involved, such as art and music. You know a lot about keeping fit and healthy.

The headteacher, staff and governors are good at leading and managing the school and your teachers teach you and look after you well. We think that your school could be even better if the adults continued to add to the information they have on how well you are doing and used that to make sure that everyone does as well as they possibly could.

Thank you once again and we wish you all the best for the future.