



# Oakley Church of England Combined School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110448  
**Local Authority** Buckinghamshire  
**Inspection number** 294545  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Derek Watts

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Worminghall Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Oakley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Aylesbury HP18 9QY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01844 238364
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	95	<b>Fax number</b>	01844 238364
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ms Susan Anderson-Lewis
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Joanne Garlick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 2005		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7–8 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 294545
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Oakley CE Combined is a smaller than an average school. The majority of pupils come from a White British background. About 10 per cent of the pupils are from Traveller families. There are a few pupils with English as an additional language but they are not at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The school serves an area of economic and social advantage but there is some rural deprivation. Most children have had pre-school experience. In the past, children have entered the Reception class with above expected levels of knowledge and skills. During the past two years, attainment on entry has been average. The school was inspected in September 2005 and given a Notice to Improve. This was because pupils were not making sufficient progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Leadership and management were inadequate and there were weaknesses in assessment and teaching and learning. At the time of this inspection, the school was being led by an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The headteacher has provided strong leadership and direction for the school and improvements to assessment, teaching and leadership and management are having a positive impact. As a result, pupils are now progressing satisfactorily and the school is in a good position to raise achievement further. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and continue to be a strength of the school. The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and improving. As one parent wrote. 'We have seen noticeable improvements in all aspects of the school since the last inspection'. Team work among the staff is good and there is a clear commitment to continuous improvement. The role of subject leaders has been extended so they are more involved in the monitoring and developing their subjects. The acting headteacher and acting deputy have continued the drive for improvement. New teachers have settled into the positive school culture well.

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Good care, guidance and support, and a very positive school atmosphere contribute to pupils' good personal development. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. They readily take on responsibilities which contribute well to the school and to the wider community. Pupils are reasonably well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Satisfactory provision in Reception means that children make sound gains in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 although not enough pupils attain the higher levels in writing. The school is tackling this. The past underachievement in Years 3 to 6 has been checked and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Standards by Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science, although the school recognises that there is scope for further improvement. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Effective monitoring and mentoring by senior staff are contributing to these improvements. However, in a few lessons, challenge and pace are not always high enough. Improved assessment and target setting means that teachers have a better understanding of how well pupils are doing and pupils have a clearer view of what they need to do to improve. Pupils' academic guidance is now good. A satisfactory curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities.

In order to raise achievement in writing across the school, opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills are being increased. More emphasis is being placed on pupils applying problem solving and investigation skills in order to raise achievement further in mathematics and science particularly in Years 3 to 6. There are appropriate improvement plans to raise achievement further but indicators to check their success are not sufficiently precise or measurable.

Parents hold the school in high regard and praise its positive atmosphere and the approachability of the headteacher, acting headteacher and staff.

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

- Raise achievement in writing across the school by building on the work to improve and extend the range of writing offered.
- Turn satisfactory lessons into good ones by ensuring that all lessons have suitable levels of challenge and that learning maintains a brisk pace.
- Raise achievement in mathematics and science, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Devise clear criteria to measure the success of improvement plans.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Throughout the school, pupils' progress is satisfactory. All groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily, even those who are only at the school for a short time, but these pupils do not always reach expected standards. Standards by Year 2 are broadly average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. More pupils are now attaining the level 5 in mathematics and over half of the Year 6 pupils attained a level 5 in science in the 2006 national tests. Appropriate action is being taken to raise achievement further in writing across the school and in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are very caring and reflective. They are aware of the importance of celebrating and respecting different cultures and beliefs. Across the school, pupils are friendly, polite and helpful. Staff are good role models for pupils. Clear expectations of conduct and an effective system of rewards leads to outstanding behaviour in lessons and around the school. Through assemblies and different subjects, pupils have gained a very good understanding of healthy diets and the need for taking regular exercise. Those on the school council and the eco committee take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils make sound progress in acquiring and applying basic literacy, numeracy and information, communication and technology (ICT) skills. These skills and their good collaborative skills prepare them adequately for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Pupils' work and the lessons seen indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. A pupil in the Year 3 and 4 class stated, 'We are learning more now'. Lessons are well planned and focused. Teachers effectively share learning intentions with the class so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and informative. Pupils participate well in lessons and respond enthusiastically to teachers' effective questioning. In the main, teachers are using assessment data well to match tasks to pupils' needs. As a result, pupils are suitably challenged and make good gains in their learning. Occasionally, the level of challenge is not appropriate and the rate of learning slow. Not all lessons, proceed at a brisk pace. For example, overlong introductions can slow the pace and flow of learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. The links between subjects which give pupils a better understanding of their learning are developing well. In the quest to raise achievement in writing, the school is extending the range of writing opportunities provided. An enthusiastic and knowledgeable local author contributes well in this area. More emphasis is being placed on developing problem solving and investigative skills in mathematics and science. A good personal, social and health education programme promotes healthy lifestyles very well and contributes to pupils' good personal development. Clubs, visits, visitors and musical tuition enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support have a major influence on pupils' good personal development. Adults know the pupils well and have established very good relationships with them. As a result, pupils feel valued. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective so pupils are happy, safe and secure at school. Traveller pupils and those with specific needs receive effective support. Good assessment systems have been established, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers generally use assessment data well to plan the next stages of pupils' learning and to set individual learning targets. Pupils therefore know what they are aiming for in order to improve. One pupil commented, 'Our targets and tasks are challenging and fun'. Assessment in ICT is less well developed but there are plans to improve this. The marking of pupils' work has improved. There is encouragement and praise for good work and guidance on how to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management have been successful in creating a very positive school climate for pupils to learn and for staff to work. Pupils' personal development is promoted well. The headteacher, other leaders and staff are focused on raising achievement and improving educational provision. The underachievement of the past particularly in Years 3 to 6 has been checked through improvements to assessment, teaching and learning. Achievement is now satisfactory. Through the Primary Leadership Programme, the leaders of English, mathematics and science are more effective in their role. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have maintained and continued the drive for improvement while the headteacher is on maternity leave.

Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and developed by senior leaders and the local authority. New teachers are well supported and have settled quickly. School self evaluation is accurate and the school has a clear overview of its strengths and areas for development. The findings from inspection, self evaluation and a local authority review are used well to guide improvement planning. However, this planning does not always have clear criteria to measure its success. For example, the school rightly has raising achievement and standards in writing as a priority and actions to bring about improvements are identified. The plan does not specify how much progress pupils are expected to make or what proportion of pupils might attain the higher levels by Year 2 and Year 6. Governance is satisfactory and the role of governors is continuing to grow. Governors have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing. They are supportive and are now in a better position to hold the school to account. Improvements to pupils' achievement, leadership and management, assessment and to teaching and learning demonstrate the school's capacity to improve is at least satisfactory.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed the visit and would like to tell you what I found out. I think that Oakley CE is a satisfactory school which has made clear improvements since the last inspection.

These things were pleasing:

- the school is a very pleasant and positive place to be
- you thoroughly enjoy school and attend regularly
- more pupils are reaching higher levels in mathematics and science
- you are polite, friendly, and your attitudes and behaviour are excellent
- the headteacher and other leaders know how to make the school even better
- you get on very well with other pupils and adults
- staff know you well; you receive good care and support from them
- your parents are very pleased with the school.

These are a few things that could be improved:

- you could make more progress in writing and your teachers are working on this
- pupils in Years 3 to 6 could make more progress in mathematics and science
- sometimes your teachers could challenge you more and ensure that the lesson moves on more quickly
- your headteacher, staff and governors should check more closely the success of all the improvements they make.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards,

Derek Watts

Lead Inspector