

# Oldmixon Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109104
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	309882
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Chadwick

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	238
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	62
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Norman Donovan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martin Greenwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 May 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Monkton Avenue Weston-super-Mare BS24 9DA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 812879
<b>Fax number</b>	01934 812457

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	309882

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 two Additional Inspectors.

### Description of the school

Oldmixon Primary School is of average size and serves a mixed area that includes the local community and further afield. The socio-economic circumstances of many families are not favourable and this is reflected in the high numbers who are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is high, although the number with statements (highest forms of need) is average. Pupils' needs are wide ranging and include severe learning, language, literacy, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) begin school with attainment that is well below average. Most go on to Reception after attending the Nursery but about a quarter leave to attend other schools and about a quarter of the pupils in Reception are new to the school at this point. In the rest of the school, the proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual time is above average and is high in some year groups. For example, in the current Year 6, one third entered directly into Key Stage 2.

The headteacher has been in post for nearly two years although other senior leaders have started more recently. Substantial building refurbishment is nearing completion. On site, there are privately run clubs for before and after school and also holiday clubs for pupils from the school. The school has gained the Active Mark and Investors in People awards.

### Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Oldmixon Primary School gives its pupils a satisfactory education. It has significant strengths. High standards of care lead to pupils' good personal development and behaviour. The school has experienced some disruption to staffing in the last few years, including senior leaders, and this led to some underachievement. The school is now improving and settling under the strong leadership of the headteacher. He has raised expectations and established important systems to move the school on. The impact of these is seen in pupils' good achievement in Key Stage 2, pupils' improved attendance and the strong learning opportunities in sport. Parents are pleased with their children's progress and one expressed the views of many, saying 'This Head has taken the school forward in leaps and bounds in such a short time'.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but uneven. Many children begin school with low attainment on entry and their good progress in the Nursery begins to lift their attainment. Progress in Reception and Key Stage 1 is satisfactory but standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2. Teaching is improving in Key Stage 1 and progress in writing is now good in Year 2. Although standards are exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science for the current Year 6, pupils are making good progress. These pupils are still catching up as they underachieved when younger and a significant number of pupils joined as late entrants with gaps in their skills and knowledge.

Standards for pupils who remained from Year 2 until Year 6 are broadly average as they are for Year 5, showing their good progress. However, in writing, although pupils often write neatly and fluently for a range of purposes, weaker spelling and punctuation limit the quality of their work. Improvements to teaching and initiatives such as rigorous catch-up programmes in English and mathematics are having a positive impact on raising achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well, especially in Key Stage 2 where the school has developed robust systems for teaching English and mathematics in small ability groups.

Teaching, learning and the curriculum are satisfactory overall, with much that is good in Key Stage 2. Occasionally, however, teachers do not match work well enough to the needs of more capable and lower attaining pupils. This prevents standards rising more quickly. The curriculum is broad, with a keen focus on improving literacy and numeracy. There are new arrangements for teaching phonics in Reception and Key Stage 1, and for reading throughout the school, and these are beginning to have a beneficial impact. The school acknowledges the need to step up the frequency of listening to pupils read in some classes in order to accelerate their progress. Nursery children have many worthwhile opportunities to learn through purposeful play but in Reception, these are not always of a high enough quality and there is not enough challenge for more capable children in literacy and numeracy.

The new senior leadership team is developing well and senior leaders work closely together, adding a wealth of experience to the school. Honest, rigorous and accurate evaluation of the school's performance has resulted in the school knowing what is working and what is in need of improvement. The strong self-evaluation arrangements now involve middle managers but, given staff changes, the task of evaluating pupils' progress in lessons has fallen mostly on the headteacher. The time is now right for middle managers to take a fuller part in raising pupils' achievement. The rate of recent improvement shows the school has a good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Transition from home to school is well managed and standards of care and safety are good throughout the EYFS and help children to feel secure and happy. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below that expected, particularly in speaking, listening and personal development. Children do well in response to good quality teaching. Nursery staff give high priority to enabling children to enjoy school and to develop their communication, numeracy and personal skills through good quality practical activities. Children really enjoy working to achieve their 'Tiny Targets'. In Reception, teaching is generally satisfactory. There is a continued focus on developing children's speaking skills but the teaching of literacy and numeracy does not always pay enough attention to building on what children can already do, especially for the more capable children and, as a result, they underachieve. Overall, standards are well below average by the end of Reception, including in literacy and numeracy, with very little attainment at higher levels. The school has been working with the local authority to improve play provision for Reception and there is now a satisfactory balance between direct teaching and play. However, there are some weaknesses in the quality of play activities. For example, there is no specific writing area for children to experiment with writing, the classroom shop does not focus enough on numeracy and the reading area is dull. Electronic recording of assessment and more rigorous evaluation of progress have begun. The recently appointed EYFS leader is knowledgeable and systems for him to take a stronger lead in observing colleagues teach are about to be implemented.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring teaching fully meets the needs of more capable and lower attaining pupils and there is rigorous attention to hearing pupils read and promoting spelling and punctuation.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Reception by ensuring literacy and numeracy tasks extend more capable children and opportunities for purposeful play are always of a high enough quality.
- Develop systems for middle managers to check teaching and learning so they have a greater impact on raising achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children enter school with skills that are well below those typical for their age, and satisfactory progress overall in EYFS means that standards remain at this level on entry to Year 1. For a number of years, standards have been consistently low at the end of Year 2 but the school is beginning to address this with an increased focus on improving the teaching of basic skills. However, teaching changes and initiatives are new and have yet to impact fully on standards. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good, although standards are exceptionally low for Year 6. A third of pupils in this year group entered late in Key Stage 2, many with low standards, which impacts on the overall results.

Standards for Year 6 in 2008 national tests were below average in reading and mathematics. The school has disputed the exceptionally low writing results and papers are still being remarked. Pupils learn to write neatly and fluently for a range of purposes, but spelling and punctuation are weaker aspects of their written work and this limits writing attainment. Standards in science have been broadly average over the past few years but standards at higher levels were low in 2008 due to weaknesses in investigative skills. The school has begun to improve teachers' skills for teaching this area.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils greatly enjoy school and are very proud to attend. In fact, attendance has improved well in the last 18 months and is now average. Pupils cooperate well in class and older pupils in particular are learning to be active and independent learners. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils report feeling safe and well cared for. Pupils have good awareness of life in multi-cultural Britain and of people's different racial backgrounds and religious beliefs. Pupils learn about feelings and emotions through a carefully structured curriculum. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. They understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and the opportunity to eat fruit at break-times is greatly appreciated, as is the wide range of sporting activities that are on offer. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. The school council is active and its views are valued. Pupils are soundly prepared for the future now that progress is accelerating.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching varies from outstanding to satisfactory. Classrooms are usually attractive and lessons interesting. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, explain lesson purposes carefully and pupils are usually keen and attentive. In the good or better lessons, teachers' good knowledge of the progression in the subject enables them to make adjustments to meet the needs of all learners. There is also the right balance between the direct teaching of skills and allowing pupils to solve problems for themselves. In the relatively weaker lessons, teachers do not use assessment information on individual pupils effectively enough. As a result, the work provided is similar for all pupils and while the more able groups sail through it, those with weaker skills struggle to complete the task. The setting arrangements in Key Stage 2 are having a very beneficial impact on raising attainment for the lowest attaining pupils, including for those with learning difficulties. In the Nursery, activities are stimulating and staff provide a good balance between direct teaching by adults and allowing children to explore and work creatively and independently. However, in Reception, learning does not always build on what more capable children can already do.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The comprehensive programme for promoting pupils' personal, social and emotional development contributes greatly to their enjoyment of school and develops their will to achieve. Good quality resources and improved learning opportunities in information and communication technology have brought about the systematic development of pupils' computer skills. A good range of

enrichment activities through visits, visitors and after-school clubs enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. Specialist teaching greatly improves sporting opportunities and encourages pupils to enjoy active lifestyles. Guided reading now occurs in every class but the school acknowledges the need to step up the frequency of listening to pupils read in some classes in order to accelerate their progress. The school has now begun to develop pupils' investigative science skills systematically. Nursery activities are well planned for indoors and outside so children have good learning opportunities across all areas. Learning through play in Reception is sometimes mundane, lacks challenge and the best use is not made of the available resources.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's calm, warm environment nurtures pupils and enables them to thrive. Systems to protect pupils and secure their health and safety are robust and well organised. Vulnerable pupils are very well supported and there are strong links with outside agencies to ensure they settle and can succeed. The school is very skilful in ensuring those with emotional and behavioural difficulties adjust to school. The school's strategies to improve attendance are having a good impact. Systems for tracking pupils' progress, recently improved, are very thorough. School leaders use these meticulously for evaluating pupils' progress and the impact of provision on progress. Teachers too are becoming more skilled at analysing achievement. However, they do not always use the targets set to plan sufficiently demanding work. Pupils' individual target setting is becoming established and pupils usually know what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has successfully promoted a strong vision which places pupils at the centre of all the school does. He is well supported by the relatively new senior team and staff. The senior team are good role models for other teachers. The school sets demanding but realistic targets and senior leaders rigorously monitor the school's progress towards these. Senior leaders systematically evaluate lessons and robust assessment systems are used to pinpoint how well different groups are achieving. However, the school is fully aware of the need to create systems so that middle managers can play a fuller part in checking their colleagues' work and raising achievement. Governors are hardworking and supportive. They keep a close watch on the school but are aware that not all have a thorough grasp of how to interpret assessment data.

The school's work to encourage community cohesion is effective. The school is very active in promoting partnership with parents and their involvement in the life of the school is increasing. Governors have ensured sensible financial controls and earmarked a budget that effectively supports the implementation of the well- conceived school improvement plan. Building refurbishments and improvements to resources have been very well organised. These changes greatly enhance pupils' learning opportunities.

**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](http://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?	3
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oldmixon Primary School, Weston-super-Mare BS24 9DA

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection. Your views are important as you are the school's customers. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education, and here are some of the good things we found out about it.

- You make good progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Those of you in the Nursery get off to a good start.
- Those of you who find work difficult are helped to learn successfully.
- You behave well and are a credit to yourselves and the school – well done. This helps to make your school a happy one.
- You have some great opportunities for sport and these help you to keep fit.
- All adults take good care of you and ensure that you are safe.
- Your headteacher leads you all very well, and all staff and school governors are working hard to make the school even better. This is what we are asking the school to do to improve:
  - Help you to improve your English and mathematics, including your spelling and punctuation, and give you more chances to read to adults in school.
  - Make sure that your work is never too easy or too hard.
  - Make sure those of you in Reception have better chances to learn through your play.
  - Make sure all of your school managers become more involved in checking how well you are doing.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and try hard in all you do so your work continues to improve.

Best wishes

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector