

Olveston Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109170
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	309911
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	David Westall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Webb
Headteacher	Faye Bertham
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2004
School address	Elberton Road Olveston Bristol BS35 4DB
Telephone number	01454 613299
Fax number	01454 616388

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a relatively advantaged rural catchment area. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average, as is the percentage identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

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 where pupils achieve well and their personal development is outstanding. At the heart of the school's success are the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and the strong commitment of its talented staff. The visitor to the school is immediately struck by the enthusiasm of the pupils and by displays that show the rich and varied learning experiences they enjoy through the well-balanced curriculum. For example, during the inspection, pupils relished the opportunity to work with visiting craftsmen to create fencing using traditional methods and materials. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that pupils do well and love coming to school. Consequently, parents hold the school in high regard. A typical remark from a parent included, 'I feel privileged that my children attend this school and I'm proud of the standards they reach.'

From starting points that are generally higher than in most schools, pupils make steady progress in the Foundation Stage and Year 1. However, their progress increases considerably in Year 2 and good progress is maintained across Key Stage 2. As a result, standards are well above average in Year 2 and are exceptionally high in Year 6. Teaching and learning are generally good. Teachers' enthusiasm and professionalism shine through in lessons. They generally match tasks accurately to pupils' needs and provide the well-judged support pupils need to achieve well. Pupils say they work hard but 'lessons are interesting so we still have fun'. Indeed, smiles and laughter are everywhere in this happy and harmonious community, where pupils get on well with each other. Nevertheless, there are areas for improvement that restrict pupils' progress in their early years at the school. The curriculum and teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. In addition, teaching and learning are also satisfactory in Year 1, where the pace of some lessons is pedestrian and work is not always well enough matched to pupils' needs.

The high quality of pupils' personal development stems from the supportive relationships that exist across the school. It is clear that pupils like and respect their teachers and that these feelings are reciprocated. As a result, pupils know that staff have their best interests at heart and that they are valued as individuals. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. All of these factors contribute to pupils' highly positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour. They are polite, work together very constructively, value each other's ideas and accept differences of opinion.

Good leadership and management have helped the school to improve. The outstanding headteacher has brought increased rigour to the school's evaluation procedures since her appointment in 2007, and is the driving force for improvement. She has high expectations for pupils' academic and personal development, and communicates her ideas persuasively so there is a shared sense of direction amongst staff. Her skills in supporting and motivating staff, together with her energy and tenacity, have helped to accelerate pupils' progress. In 2007, too much responsibility for setting and achieving the school's goals rested on the headteacher's shoulders. However, this situation is improving rapidly. Responsibility has been delegated wisely and other key staff are making an increasingly valuable contribution to school improvement. Nevertheless, some are fairly new to their roles and are still developing their monitoring procedures. The school has made good progress since its last inspection, largely owing to improvements since 2007. Consequently, it is well placed to get even better.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Most children reach the expected learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, and a significant minority exceed these goals in mathematics. Overall, these standards represent children's adequate achievement, given their starting points on entry. However, while the teaching is satisfactory, there are some weaknesses that restrict children's progress. Questions are not always used well enough to probe children's understanding, and the guidance adults provide when children are engaged in practical activities is not consistently well judged. Consequently, children are sometimes overdirected and at other times they receive too little support. The quality of care is good and is reflected in children's confidence and in their positive relationships with adults. All areas of learning are covered and there are good opportunities for children to develop their mathematical skills. Children work and play together amicably, enjoy school and behave very well. However, opportunities for children to develop their decision-making skills are too limited, and there are weaknesses in provision for the development of their knowledge and understanding of the world. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, and the school has sensible plans to improve provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and ensure that all areas of learning are given sufficient emphasis.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Year 1 so that the pace of learning increases and tasks are well matched to the needs of all pupils.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation roles of members of the senior leadership team and subject leaders.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' overall achievement is good, including for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the most capable. Children's satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage leads to overall standards usually being above average at the end of the Reception period, reflecting their favourable starting points on entry. While standards in Year 2 testify to the pupils' good achievement, they mask inconsistencies in pupils' progress across Key Stage 1. Well above average standards are reached largely as a result of pupils' accelerated progress in Year 2, where the teaching is particularly effective. From 2005 to 2007, pupils only made satisfactory progress across Key Stage 2. Although overall standards were above or well above average in Year 6, weaknesses in pupils' skills in mathematical problem-solving and scientific enquiry restricted their achievement. In addition, the most capable pupils did not always progress well. In the current educational year, these areas for improvement have been tackled rigorously and effectively. Consequently, current standards are exceptionally high in Year 6 and reflect the good progress made by pupils of all abilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are very keen to learn and the attendance rate is well above average. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils develop very good relationships with

others and have a keen sense of fair play. They respond very well when given responsibility, for example as members of the active school council or as friends to those who need extra support at break time. The 'Eco-Warriors' committee makes sure that pupils conserve energy, and pupils know the importance of recycling. They have a well-developed awareness of the richness and diversity of cultures in Britain, and have clearly benefited from their links with pupils at an inner city school in Bristol.

Pupils are safety conscious and show considerable care for the welfare of others. They enjoy a good range of physical activities and know the importance of healthy eating. A popular fruit tuckshop is organised efficiently by the pupils. They have a strong social and community awareness, and are keen fund raisers for good causes. Their ability to work constructively with others and their good academic progress help them to be well prepared for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers know what they expect pupils to learn and their explanations are clear so that pupils are confident about tackling their work. Because teachers generally have good subject knowledge and a thorough awareness of the needs of individuals, they are often able to pinpoint areas for improvement in pupils' work and to target these very accurately. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well taught and benefit from effective support from teaching assistants. Teachers generally capture pupils' interest well and their management of behaviour is usually excellent. Often, teachers know just when to intervene with well-judged advice and when to stand back and let pupils work things out for themselves. However, there are areas for improvement in the satisfactory teaching in the Foundation Stage and Year 1. In Year 1, there is sometimes too much teacher talk and too little pupil activity, which slows the pace of learning, and the most capable pupils are sometimes given work which is too easy. In the Foundation Stage, adults do not always accurately judge the support children need to achieve well, and opportunities are missed to check and extend children's learning through skilful questioning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum meets requirements but a stronger emphasis is required to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world, together with their decision-making skills and independence. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils benefit from a rich and varied curriculum that helps them to achieve well. Good provision is made for literacy, numeracy and science, and pupils also have good opportunities to develop their skills in music and drama. Provision for pupils' personal development is a key strength, and is reflected in their excellent attitudes and positive relationships. The curriculum is notably enriched by many educational visits, visitors and clubs. These are greatly enjoyed by the pupils. After reflecting on a recent visit to a Roman site, one pupil commented, 'It was miles better than learning from books, we even dressed as Romans.' This experience clearly brought history alive for the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff know the pupils well and the school works very effectively with parents to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after at school. Pupils feel safe and know the staff will listen if they have any worries. Robust child protection procedures and health and safety checks are regularly carried out. The school works very well with external agencies to support pupils when this is required. Pupils benefit from excellent guidance and support for their personal development. The support and guidance for their academic development are generally good. However, in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, opportunities are missed in lessons to help children to achieve well. Most pupils know their targets, and many are able to evaluate their progress and accurately judge their next steps in learning. Pupils' understanding of their areas for improvement has increased significantly in the current educational year, and has helped to raise standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's self-evaluation is effective and ensures that it has an accurate view of its performance. Consequently, strategic planning identifies pertinent areas for improvement. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully, so that those who may have slipped behind are now quickly identified and supported. Staff receive well-focused feedback about their performance from the headteacher, and this has a beneficial impact on their teaching. The work of senior staff and subject leaders is sound, and is improving as a result of the headteacher's excellent guidance. Teamwork is strong and morale high. Governance is good. Governors are astute, visit regularly and ask challenging questions to hold the school to account.

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Annex A

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
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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	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?	2
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.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

22 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Olveston C of E Primary School, Olveston, BS35 4DB

Thank you for welcoming us into your school and for being so friendly, polite and helpful. Here are some of the good things we found out.

- You think Olveston C of E Primary is a good school and we agree with you.
- You enjoy school very much, like your teachers and have many friends.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- The teachers are good at making sure you do well in lessons, and that your work is usually much better than in most schools.
- The adults take very good care of you, and you know who to go to if you need some help.
- You are lucky to have such a very good headteacher who works with the hardworking teachers to make sure you have lots of interesting things to learn.

We found a few things that need to improve. We have asked the school to make sure that children do even better in the Reception class and Year 1. Also, we want some teachers to do a little more to help to check the school's work.

It was good to meet you. We really enjoyed our short time at your school.

Best Wishes

David Westall Lead inspector