

Oundle Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121984
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314177
Inspection date	27 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Timothy Bristow HMI

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4-9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Folgate
Headteacher	Janet McMurdo
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2004
School address	Milton Road Oundle Peterborough PE8 4AB
Telephone number	01832 272392
Fax number	01832 274156

Age group	4-9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the standard of teaching, the progress made by pupils, the quality of the curriculum, pupils' personal development and well-being. Evidence was collected from discussions with the headteacher, senior staff, governors pupils, and from the parental questionnaires. Lessons were observed, the school's self-evaluation documents were scrutinised and samples of pupils' current and previous work were examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Oundle Primary School is of average size. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is below average. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. At the time of the inspection, no pupils have free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Oundle Church of England Primary is a good school that pupils thoroughly enjoy attending. Children enter the Reception class with standards that are in line with national expectations. They are given a great start in the Reception classes and continue to make good progress throughout their time in school. Consequently, they achieve standards that are above national expectations by the time they leave Year 4. The personal development and well-being of pupils is outstanding. The school is successful because of the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. She is supported by an enthusiastic and energetic team that provides pupils with many enriching activities as well as the good care, support and guidance that enable them to flourish.

Pupils' achievement is good. By Year 2, results for 2007 show they reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the trend for some time and, in some years, they have been exceptionally high. In 2006, standards were exceptionally high because of the rapid progress made from entry into the Reception classes to the end of Year 2.

Progress is maintained through Key Stage 2 so that standards are above expected levels by the end of Year 4 in English, mathematics and science. There is good provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the teachers and the team of teaching assistants enable these pupils to make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make progress in line with others in the school.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is underpinned by their very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They demonstrate great respect, consideration and care for others, and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils recognise that it is very important to be kind to new pupils from other countries and they think it is a good school because they all care for each other. Attendance rates are above average. Pupils feel very safe in school. They report that incidents of bullying hardly ever happen and they know how to get help if they need it. Pupils take part in regular exercise and choose to have a balanced diet in school. A large proportion of pupils take some responsibility for the running of the school. Pupils on the school council report that nearly everyone has a job. They enjoy being trusted by the adults in school. Pupils are making an outstanding contribution to the lives of the school and of the wider community through events such as the school's 'eco' activities and a recent 'Green Day', as well as by arranging many charity activities and performing for the local community. Pupils' good basic skills and their outstanding social skills mean they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future lives.

Many staff changes in the last two years have meant that the school has had to work hard to maintain the progress pupils make and to ensure that the quality of teaching has remained good. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching but, by the strategic use of a variety of activities to support pupils' learning and the careful deployment of teaching assistants, progress has been maintained and consequently teaching is still good. The curriculum offers an outstanding range of activities outside the classroom that enriches the learning of pupils. A comprehensive range of school visits and visitors is carefully planned for each class and pupils report that it makes their lessons more interesting. Nearly all pupils in Years 3 and 4 are involved in a school club and these activities give outstanding support to the work of the school in many subjects. Links between different subjects are not yet fully established. The school has recognised

this and implemented a revised plan for the curriculum this year. At the time of the inspection, this plan had not been operating long enough to judge its effects on pupils' learning.

Pastoral care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Thoughtful planning and support ensure that pupils are given every opportunity to develop independence and outstanding social skills. Academic care and support for pupils are good. Regular assessment and measures to check the progress of pupils are used to plan lessons and target resources where they are most needed. The school provides effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for the gifted and talented. Procedures for health and safety and child protection are rigorously applied. The guidance given to pupils on how to improve their work is satisfactory. Pupils are not clear about the next steps they need to take to improve their work because they do not know their individual targets. Marking, although always completed, does not consistently advise them on how to improve.

The headteacher's very strong leadership has maintained high standards of achievement and personal development through many staff changes and the formation of a senior management team. The school self-evaluation is accurate and measures taken to maintain standards, for example, the interventions to support pupils during staffing changes, demonstrate that the school has correctly identified priorities and has good capacity to improve. School leaders monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, they do not consistently check what pupils have learnt in lessons. This means that opportunities to accelerate the progress of some pupils are missed. The good measures used by the school to monitor the progress of pupils mean that they are set realistic and challenging targets. Governors are very knowledgeable and supportive of the work of the school. They are able to hold the school to account and do so regularly. The overwhelming majority of parents support the work of the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception classes are well led and provide a stimulating environment for learning in which children thrive. In consequence, they make good progress over the year. Children start school with the skills that are in line with national expectations. By the time they enter Year 1, their skills have developed so that they are above what would be expected nationally. Transition arrangements into Year 1 have improved in recent years. The school recognises the need to continue this improvement to ensure that there will not be a dip in the rate of progress at the beginning of Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor what pupils are learning in lessons more closely to improve their progress.
- Involve pupils in their learning by giving them more guidance on how to improve their work.

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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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

Dear Children

Inspection of Oundle C of E Primary School, Oundle, Northamptonshire PE8 4AB

Thank you for the help you gave me when I visited your school. You made me feel very welcome. If you remember, I came to look at the work that you were doing and to talk to you and your teachers. I enjoyed meeting you and thought you were extremely friendly, well behaved and polite. You are very kind and caring towards others. I know that you work hard and do well in your lessons. You feel safe in school and I agree that an adult will always step in to help you if needed. I was pleased to find out that you all enjoy school so much.

Your headteacher and the school governors have worked very hard to give you a good start to your education. Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you and provide very exciting activities for you to take part in.

I also think there are some things that the school could do better.

- Give you more advice about what you need to do to improve your work.
- Check carefully what you learn in your lessons.

Please remember to listen to the advice teachers give you so that you do even better in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow HMI



28 September 2007

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**Inspection of Oundle C of E Primary School, Oundle,
Northamptonshire PE8 4AB**

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