

# Old Cleeve CofE School, Washford

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123772
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset [123772]
<b>Inspection number</b>	314712
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Darby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 July 2004
<b>School address</b>	Washford Watchet TA23 0PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01984 640232
<b>Fax number</b>	01984 641304

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<b>Age group</b>	3–9
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

The progress of children in the Foundation Stage and the impact of the school's work to raise standards of writing

The quality of pupils' personal development and well-being, especially their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The quality of academic guidance that pupils receive

The extent to which the development planning of the federation addresses the needs of the school's pupils.

Evidence was gathered by observing lessons, scrutinising documents and pupils' work, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not evaluated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This small school serves a number of villages near the north coast of Somerset. Almost all pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has the Healthy Schools Award.

In April 2007, the school became part of a federation including a middle school and another first school under the leadership of a single governing body. The acting headteacher has been in her post since January 2007. The headteacher of the middle school has been appointed executive headteacher from September 2008, when it is planned that he will be the headteacher of both Old Cleeve CE School and the middle school.

The governors manage a funded nursery for three- to four-year-old children on the school site, which is attended by most children who join the school. The school also provides care for pupils both before and after the school day.

## 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 in which pupils achieve well. Many parents echo the view of one that said, 'There is a great atmosphere, which helps the children learn and feel at home.' The most notable strengths are the outstanding personal development of the pupils, the excellent care, guidance and support they receive, and the school's excellent external links which are due in part to its membership of the federation.

Children start school with the expected skills and abilities. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, especially in their communication, mathematical and social development. Pupils also make good progress in Years 1 to 4. At the end of Year 2 in 2007, they attained above average standards in national tests in reading and mathematics, and average standards in writing. School leaders identified that standards of writing throughout the school were lower than those in other subjects. They put in place measures to improve writing, and these have been successful. The school's assessments show that pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and that current pupils will leave at the end of Year 4 having attained above average standards in all three subjects. The inspector also noted work that was above the expected standard in science and in information and communication technology.

These successes have been achieved through consistently good teaching, where teachers set interesting, demanding tasks that are matched well to pupils' abilities. Pupils say they especially enjoy mathematics and learning how to solve problems. Teachers have high expectations, both of pupils' work and their behaviour. Pupils of all ages have mature discussions about their work with other pupils and their teachers. Teaching assistants are used well, especially in supporting pupils with learning difficulties, hence these pupils make equally good progress to others. The use of targets to help pupils to improve their work is excellent. Simple targets are set from the Nursery onwards and pupils talk about them with enthusiasm. The weakest aspect of the teaching is the marking of work, where comments are sometimes almost illegible and use adult language which is of limited use in showing pupils how to improve their work. The curriculum makes good use of many visits, such as to local coastal locations, and of visitors, such as the police and local clergy. There is a good range of additional activities such as themed days for pupils across the federation.

Pupils' response to the excellent provision for their personal development and well-being is outstanding. The school's excellent links with other schools and with local churches and communities enable pupils to widen their understanding of spiritual and cultural matters, and to socialise with a wider group of other children. It enables them to make an outstanding contribution to their community, for example by giving performances or by supporting charities. They have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy and safe lives, for instance when cycling or using the Internet. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they report no bullying, only 'friends falling out', which they say staff handle well. Their attendance is above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school fully meets the requirements to keep pupils safe.

The federation, while still developing, has already given pupils additional opportunities. It has also broadened the range of staff expertise available and given staff opportunities to share effective practice more widely. The acting headteacher and subject leaders have introduced useful, easily understood methods of tracking pupils' progress, enabling teachers to identify quickly those pupils who need extra help. However, in contrast to the excellent use of targets

for individual pupils, targets are not used to set goals for the school to achieve as a whole, making it less easy to monitor progress from year to year.

Leaders and managers have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are now using this information well to construct a development plan for the federation as a whole. Governors are giving good leadership to the development of the federation. They have a good knowledge of the needs of this school and are using resources effectively to promote improvement. At a time of considerable change, most parents have great confidence in the school, although a minority believe that communication could be improved. Examples of communication with parents seen during the inspection were of good quality. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The present stage of development of the federation, and the strengths of subject and aspect leadership within the school, mean that the school is in a good position to make further improvements.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage, which comprises the Nursery and the Reception classes, is rightly popular with parents. Many make positive comments about the dedication of staff and of how their children's skills are improving. The children's needs are carefully assessed when they start, and targets are set for the development of their skills. In the Nursery, this happens mainly through structured play. In the Reception class, children are introduced to more formal activities, such as the teaching of phonics. They make good gains in their communication and mathematical skills and, by the end of the year, attain above the expected levels in these and in their social and emotional development.

There is good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, which makes the best of the limitations of the accommodation available. Work is planned well to meet children's individual needs and support staff are very effective. The lack of cover in the outdoor areas limits their use in poor weather. The school plans to rectify this in the near future.

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

- Improve the quality of marking so that it helps pupils to improve their work.
- Set targets by which the progress of the school in raising standards can be monitored.



## 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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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?	1

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

10 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Old Cleeve CE School, Watchet TA23 0PB

I very much enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work when I visited your school recently. I especially enjoyed talking to the school council as I found you confident, friendly and able to express your views very clearly.

Yours is a good school. These are some of the best things about it:

- You make good progress and get above average results in tests and assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. You also do well in science and information and ICT.
- Teaching is good. You are given challenging work that you usually find interesting. You get lots of help from the teachers and teaching assistants.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, and your behaviour is also excellent. I was especially impressed with the amount you know about keeping safe.
- The excellent links with the church and other schools mean you can meet and work with other children.
- You enjoy school, especially all the different activities on offer. There are clubs for you to take part in and you get plenty of opportunities to help people.
- Children get a good start to school in the Nursery and the Reception class.
- The care and guidance the school gives you are excellent. You know your targets and are keen to use them to improve your work.
- There are plenty of interesting visits and visitors that help you to learn more about the world.
- The headteacher and other staff are good at leading the school. Being in the federation means they have more help and that you are prepared well for middle school.

I have asked the school to make sure your work is marked in a way that helps you to improve it, and to set targets that will help the school to become even better.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler Lead Inspector

**Annex B**

10 July 2008

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- The excellent links with the church and other schools mean you can meet and work with other children.
- You enjoy school, especially all the different activities on offer. There are clubs for you to take part in and you get plenty of opportunities to help people.
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Paul Sadler  
Lead Inspector