

Kilmersdon Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123834
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	314733
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Howard Dodd

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	151
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	18
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Lamb
Headteacher	Julia Wells
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Kilmersdon Radstock BA3 5TE
Telephone number	01761 432283

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kilmersdon Church of England Primary School is a medium sized primary school, located on two sites, with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. The number of pupils attending the school has fluctuated over the last few years. This movement has contributed to changes in staffing levels and the make up of classes. Most pupils are from a White British background, with very small numbers from other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It has some good features, including the clear vision of the headteacher, a good curriculum and the good personal development of the pupils. Parents are very supportive of the school and praise the friendly and approachable staff and the good quality of pastoral care.

Children settle quickly in the Reception class and make satisfactory progress, although there are few opportunities for them to experience independent learning. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. However, too few pupils achieve the higher levels in mathematics, English or science. There was a similar picture at the end of Year 2 where the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing and mathematics was also below national expectations. Although overall teaching and learning are satisfactory, there is a general lack of pace and insufficient challenge for the more able pupils in lessons. Teaching is most effective when teachers provide a range of lively and enjoyable tasks in lessons that fully engage all the pupils. Pupils like their teachers; as one girl said, 'They make lessons fun and we enjoy the games on the interactive whiteboards.'

Pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes and their eagerness for school life are clear indicators of their good personal development. They understand what healthy living means and show good awareness of how the school ensures their safety. Attendance is broadly average and the school is working hard to ensure that all pupils arrive punctually at the start of the day. Pupils make a strong and positive contribution to the community within and beyond the school.

One of the reasons that pupils enjoy school and have good personal development is because the flexibility of the curriculum allows pupils to develop their independent learning skills and this boosts their confidence. Their personal development is also enhanced well by the good enrichment activities available, such as the oversubscribed 'gardening club'. Other notable strengths are the provision for history, and teachers' and pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning in all subjects. Care support and guidance is satisfactory overall. There are good links with outside agencies to promote the good welfare of the pupils. Pastoral care is good. Currently, the use of assessment and tracking does not always give pupils a clear picture of their progress on an individual basis. There is not always sufficient use of marking to show pupils how they can improve their work and move towards their individual targets.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has started to monitor pupils' performance more rigorously and knows what improvements are needed. As a result, the school is moving in the right direction and standards are beginning to improve. However, the positive practice identified from the monitoring of teaching has not yet been embedded widely enough to improve teaching. The school shows a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The leadership, management and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are satisfactory. Teachers' planning and assessments are beginning to take account of children's individual needs in all the areas of learning. There is good teamwork between the two Reception class teachers and the teaching assistants. In a significant number of lessons, however, the range of activities is restricted and this limits opportunities for children to choose their own

activities and develop independent learning skills. As a result, children make satisfactory progress during their first year at school.

Children make good friends, treat each other and adults with respect and become confident learners. Good procedures are in place to ensure that care and welfare have a high priority. There is very good communication with parents and this helps the children to settle quickly into school routines. Induction procedures, including home visits, allow for flexibility depending on the individual needs of the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers use assessment information in their planning so that all lessons have sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities and learning takes place at a good pace.
- Use marking and tracking more effectively to ensure that pupils have a better understanding of their own learning and what they have to do to achieve their targets.
- Ensure children in the EYFS have more opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in Year 6 have fluctuated slightly in the last few years. Most recently, fewer pupils have gained the higher Level 5 in mathematics, science and English. Given their attainment on entry, this is satisfactory achievement. Pupils in Year 2 also made satisfactory progress, although fewer pupils than expected reached the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics in 2008. Work seen during the inspection showed improved standards in Year 6 with higher attaining pupils showing good confidence in writing expressively and creatively. Reading standards across the school are also improving due to more emphasis on this aspect of learning. Current tracking data indicate that standards are at least in line with national expectations and pupils are making satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The large majority of pupils enjoy school as reflected by their involvement in many aspects of school life. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, for example through the school council, house captains, Young Leaders and class helpers. Strong relationships with peers and adults make a valuable contribution to pupils' well-being. Behaviour is good and learners support and help each other in lessons. Throughout the school day, pupils are self-disciplined, polite and happy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Many pupils are keen to stay healthy and enjoy the extra sporting and creative activities. Pupils have responded positively to the school's travel plan and are enthusiastic about walking all, or part, of the way to school. Pupils have a good understanding of citizenship and their role in society; however, because their basic skills are average, their preparation for future life is satisfactory. They and their families are regularly involved in fund raising and charity events, such as the McMillan fund appeal.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

It is clear from pupils' enjoyment and attention that the teaching activities interest them. Nevertheless, teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' learning to adapt their teaching fully and opportunities to challenge pupils of all abilities are not always used effectively. Questioning is not always varied for different ability groups and higher attainers could often have more demanding tasks to do from the start. There are times when the pace of teaching slows, for example when lesson introductions are too long, and a few pupils become restless as they sit on the carpet.

In most cases, pupils can explain their task, what they are learning and how they are going about it. However, teachers do not consistently use learning targets to give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve their knowledge and skills. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and there is good support for small groups of pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils are provided with an imaginative curriculum that is relevant and enriching, and this plays a significant part in developing their good personal and social skills. Pupils think the many clubs are 'great' and name football and gardening amongst those they particularly enjoy. The school has successfully adapted its curriculum so that it is flexible to meet pupils' needs. This has resulted in a significant improvement in pupils' ICT skills since the last inspection. The decision to reorganise the school day so that each class spends 30 minutes each day on reading activities has significantly improved the standard of pupils' reading across the school. French is taught from Year 3 onwards and the school provides a good range of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. These and other initiatives all enrich pupils' experiences beyond the classroom. The school makes full use of the rural environment on its doorstep to enhance learning and enjoyment in many subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe because they are cared for in a secure, supportive environment. Policies and procedures, including risk assessments, to protect pupils and ensure their health and safety are made clear to all staff and are conscientiously implemented. Pupils' views and concerns are listened to via the annual pupil questionnaire and through the school council meetings and are acted upon whenever possible. The school makes considerable efforts to access appropriate external support, particularly for vulnerable pupils. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. The views of parents/carers are sought formally in the annual questionnaire and the results of this are carefully analysed and used to support school development planning.

Although pupils' work is monitored on a regular basis this information is not used effectively to inform their targets. Individual pupils are not always aware of their own targets in each subject and many do not know precisely what they need to do to improve the standard of their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

After a period of staffing instability, the headteacher is realising her vision in creating an enthusiastic team that is working together to begin to raise standards and improve achievement. Some members of staff are new to their leadership roles and the headteacher is providing them with good support. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory and reliably identifies the most important areas for improvement. The headteacher has introduced a system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in lessons but this does not involve enough staff. As a result, best practice is not yet being shared fully. In addition, although there is a useful tracking system established this is not yet being used carefully by teachers to identify pupils' next learning steps. The school has created productive links with the local community, other schools in Britain and in other countries. This effectively expands pupils' awareness of other cultures and enhances their learning. Governors are well informed, reflective and supportive. They play an active role in holding the school to account and have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This enables them to make a valuable contribution to school development. Spending is carefully monitored and the effect on pupils' learning is always evaluated.

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.

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?	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	3

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?	2
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 ¹ 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	3

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

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

9 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kilmersdon Church of England Primary School, Radstock BA3 5TE

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us so confidently. We realise that you are proud of your school and of the work you do. You are polite and look after each other well. We feel that your school is a satisfactory school. The main things that we found about your school are these.

- You are given a good curriculum with plenty of extra activities and clubs that many of you really enjoy.
- The school makes sure that you are cared for well, and you understand how important it is to eat healthily and take regular exercise.
- The headteacher makes sure the school runs smoothly and knows what to do to improve your education further.

We are asking the school to make these changes so that you make even better progress.

- Ensure that teachers set all of your activities that are sufficiently challenging and your learning takes place at a good pace.
- Make sure that your teachers tell you how to improve your work so you can meet your targets.
- Make sure that the youngest children have more opportunities to choose their own activities and are helped to learn even more.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. I hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Howard Dodd Lead inspector