

Singleton CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125993
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315387
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Scott
Headteacher	Marion Barker
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2005
School address	Singleton Chichester PO18 0HP
Telephone number	01243 811679
Fax number	01243 811679

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well the school has improved the quality of education since the last inspection and pupils' progress in the younger class. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, analysis of school tracking and assessment data, including the 2008 national test results, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with the headteacher, senior leadership team, members of the governing body and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from the returns of the Ofsted and the school's own questionnaires. 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

Singleton is a small village primary school with two mixed-age classes. It is growing in popularity, with the number on roll increasing rapidly over the past year. This means that a considerable proportion of pupils has joined after the Reception year. All pupils are from a White British background. Attainment on entry is generally around that expected although lower in some key literacy skills, particularly in writing. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The school holds the Activemark and the Healthy Schools and International Schools awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Singleton is an excellent school where all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make very good progress. By the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high. This is because the whole school community is firmly focused on providing the very best level of education for pupils and is continually looking for ways to improve even further.

Since the last inspection, the school has been particularly successful in improving its performance due to the excellent information it gains from monitoring and the very judicious appointment of new staff. Standards in Reception and Years 1 and 2 have risen exceptionally well and by Year 2 are well above average overall. Throughout the school, pupils make excellent progress in both reading and writing. However, standards are lower in writing, largely because of pupils' weaker writing skills when they started in Reception. The school is determined to raise standards in writing to the same level as in reading and is working hard to address this. These strengths give confidence that it is especially well placed to maintain its high quality education and improve even further.

The quality of education is outstanding, including in the Foundation Stage. Pupils throughout the school benefit greatly from the diverse skills of two part-time teachers sharing each class and additional specialist teaching in music and physical education. Exceptionally well planned lesson activities help pupils of different ages and stages of learning to do their very best. The practical approach and enthusiasm of teachers motivate pupils especially well. In particular, pupils love the investigative work in mathematics and science. Very good discussions encourage pupils to explore the reasons for their answers, ensuring they develop very good understanding. The skilled teaching assistants support learning especially well, particularly in group work.

Curriculum planning links subjects together especially well, making learning exciting and relevant. This was evident in the excellent science investigation pupils undertook on the forces used in different Olympic sports. The breadth and richness of activities are especially good, with all pupils in Years 3 to 6 learning French. Excellent partnerships forged with other schools and agencies benefit pupils' education and welfare especially well. Pupils very much enjoy the many visits and special focus days or weeks when the whole school works together on a particular theme, such as scarecrow building. Pupils' progress is very carefully assessed and monitored so that staff can intervene swiftly to address any weaknesses. For example, special work to boost progress in science has resulted in all Year 6 pupils reaching Level 5 in this year's national science tests. Pupils receive excellent advice on how well they are doing and what to improve, becoming increasingly involved in checking their own progress. From the Reception Year onwards, pupils regularly discuss their progress with staff so that they become extremely competent in judging how well they have done and setting their own improvement targets. This is especially evident in the excellent end of year reports older pupils have completed on themselves.

In this small school, all staff know individual pupils very well and pay outstanding attention to their safety and welfare. Pastoral support is exceptionally good, resulting in pupils' excellent personal development. Moral and social development are particular strengths so that behaviour is exceptionally good at all times. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school, commenting that, 'staff look out for pupils', and that any unkind behaviour is swiftly dealt with. Pupils are very mature and reflective. Their outstanding spiritual development was evident in the assembly

that they led during the inspection. Pupils develop an excellent awareness of other cultures and world citizenship, partly fostered through links with overseas schools, resulting in the International Schools Award. Pupils' contribution to the school and village community is outstanding. For example, the school council was instrumental in providing and organising a range of games for break times. The gardening club played a leading part in helping refurbish the younger pupils' outdoor classroom. Pupils love coming to school and work and play very happily together. Attendance is above average and, since the last inspection, the number of pupils arriving late for school has decreased. Pupils' high quality academic and social skills provide especially well for their future economic well-being.

Leadership and management are of an exceptionally high quality. Staff make an outstanding contribution to monitoring and development work. There is a shared vision amongst staff and governors to secure the best quality of education in a small village school. Excellent attention is given to individual pupils' specific needs. This is partly due to the outstanding partnership the school has with parents and their very good involvement in its work. Parents are very appreciative of the school and typically one commented, 'It is an exceptional school. I am very fortunate that my children attend.' Resources are especially well deployed to support pupils, for example in ensuring the school is well staffed by high quality teachers and teaching assistants. The chair of governors is an especially good 'critical friend' to the school and liaises exceptionally well with parents and the village community. Established governors play an effective role in monitoring and development work, but some are new and still increasing their expertise in this aspect.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for Reception children is exceptionally well managed by the excellent teaching staff, and is of the same high quality seen throughout the school. Excellent attention is given to individual children's particular needs and interests so that they are provided with an especially good range of activities which motivate them well. Progress is very good and standards are well above those expected. Virtually all children reach the levels expected for their age and a good proportion exceed these. Children's personal and social development is outstanding. Teaching is excellent and there is a very good balance between activities where children work with the teacher and those where they find out things for themselves. Adults are very skilled in asking questions or prompting children to help them understand easily. Arrangements to assess and track children's progress are outstanding. In particular, the record of individual children's achievements, including photographic evidence, is of a very high standard.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing to the same high level as those in reading.

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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?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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**

2 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Singleton Church of England Primary School, Singleton, Chichester, PO18 0HP

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their time to speak to me. I think your school is excellent and am delighted that you and your parents agree.

Here are some of the things I found out were especially good about the school.

- You make very good progress and by the time you leave standards are much higher than in most schools.
- Your personal development is excellent, behaviour is outstanding and you all get on very well together. You develop into very friendly, thoughtful and mature young people.
- Teaching is excellent and I agree with you that the activities staff plan for you are really interesting and help you do your best.
- Adults take especially good care of you so you feel very safe and happy in school and enjoy learning very much.
- You get lots of excellent advice on how you can improve your work; those of you in the older class are very good at checking your own progress.
- Your school is exceptionally well led and managed and staff are very good at planning how to help your school improve even further.

I have suggested one thing for your school to do now.

- Although you do very well in English, your reading is better than your writing. I have asked staff to help you do just as well in writing. You can help by continuing to work hard at the targets you are given.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson Lead Inspector