

Morgan's Vale and Woodfalls Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 126406 |
| Local Authority | Wiltshire |
| Inspection number | 315535 |
| Inspection date | 29 April 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Eira Gill |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 104 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Justin Dicks |
| Headteacher | Graham Nagel-Smith |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 January 2004 |
| School address | Morgans Vale Road Redlynch Salisbury SP5 2HU |
| Telephone number | 01725 510740 |
| Fax number | 01725 512189 |

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|--------------------------|---------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school. Children's attainment on entry is broadly as expected for their age but varies considerably from year to year. The pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds and most are from White British families. A very small minority of pupils come from a Traveller heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above average and is higher in some year groups. The number of pupils with a statement of special education needs is higher than the national average. In the last two years, more pupils than would normally be expected have joined the school during the school year.

The school has attained Investors in People status and the Active Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Morgan's Vale and Woodfalls is a good and improving school with a strong community and Christian ethos. The headteacher has been highly successful in maintaining a calm and industrious community where the care of pupils is outstanding, and their behaviour exemplary. Pupils say, 'We feel very well cared for'. Their concentration and excellent response to reflective and spiritual moments are very evident in assemblies. Pupils enjoy their learning immensely. Links with parents are good. They are very appreciative of the efforts made by all staff; typical written comments are, 'Teachers are enthusiastic and this is passed on to my child – she loves to learn', and, 'Fantastic school! It's like an extended family'.

Good leadership and management as well as effective strategic direction from the governing body ensure that pupils' academic achievement is good and standards reached by Year 6 are above average overall. All groups in the present Year 6 class make good progress. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average. Pupils who are potentially capable of attaining at higher levels are performing better than expected in all three subjects. In writing, however, standards are average and pupils' presentation skills do not meet expectations.

Children make a positive start in the Reception/Year 1 class and make good progress. They are very happy and well cared for. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good from Reception to Year 6. Marking is thorough and encouraging, although planning does not include enough time for pupils to improve their work in lessons, particularly their handwriting. Strengths lie in the effective contribution to pupils' achievement by the teaching assistants, fairly small teaching groups, excellent behaviour management and strong relationships. One parent commented, 'Teachers are very aware of our children's strengths and weaknesses and are prepared to go that extra mile to encourage them'. Pupils trust the teachers and know they are valued. They say, 'The headteacher and teachers are great and have supported us throughout'.

The school provides a good enriched curriculum and links between subjects are developing. Academic guidance is good for all groups of pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result. Pupils know their targets, and the efficient system in place for tracking the performance of individual pupils is proving effective in raising standards and keeping parents informed. Leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school is accurate. All pupils have challenging long-term and short-term targets to guide their progress and these are having a positive effect on raising standards. The development plan in place to bring about improvement is based on good self-assessment. However, it does not always focus on achievement as an indicator of the success of actions taken by the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children's skills are broadly average when they start in the Reception/Year 1 class but are weaker in their social, emotional and language skills. Because of the strong care provided for them and the very good links with the pre-school on site, most children settle quickly. In all areas of learning, children make good progress. Children are making good progress in their mathematical and physical development and are reaching or exceeding expectations. They also make good progress in their social and

language skills, although these remain below the level expected for their age. Children enjoy their activities and their behaviour is good although they do tend to call out a little too much during teaching sessions. Structured learning programmes now focus more closely on improving the children's listening skills and are helping to improve their short attention span. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting the children, especially those who have learning difficulties.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that pupils are given more opportunities to improve their skills in handwriting and in the presentation of their work, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Give pupils more time in lessons to improve their work in response to the marking comments made by teachers.
- Ensure development plans are evaluated in terms of their success in improving standards and achievement for all groups of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry varies year on year. These variations mean that standards fluctuate in Years 2 and 6 when pupils take part in national assessments and tests. In 2007, standards were broadly average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This year, standards are above average in mathematics and science and, are average in writing. Although some pupils in Years 5 and 6 have good handwriting and presentation skills, too many are not meeting expectations for their age. Overall, however, pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress in relation to their starting points throughout the school. The introduction of smaller teaching groups for Years 5 and 6 is proving to be a successful management tool in improving progress. Challenging targets are met and the improved tracking systems show that all groups are making good progress overall, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are very aware of the high expectations of staff and this helps to foster many aspects of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially their behaviour. The school knows that the pupils' multicultural awareness is a weaker area. Spiritual awareness is strong, with many opportunities for reflection and very good links with the church. Pupils are very attentive in lessons and concentrate well. The youngest children in Reception mostly work well together and enjoy good relationships. The 'walking bus' encourages pupils to walk to school from home and heightens their awareness of healthy living. Attendance is above average. All pupils feel valued, safe and secure. They act as 'buddies' to new pupils, who quickly make friends and settle down. Older pupils encourage the younger ones to play across the whole age range. More than one parent commented, 'It's great how children mix and know other children not in their class'. Their understanding of healthy diets and safe lifestyles is good. All pupils make a very positive contribution to the school through their class and school councils. The school agrees that more opportunities could be organised for pupils to contribute to the local community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons have clear learning aims, explanations are clear and most tasks are interesting. A particular strength of the school is the way different groups of pupils are catered for. Pupils with learning difficulties are often taught in small groups, and the support from teaching assistants is effective. Gifted and talented pupils are helped by working with older pupils at specific times and this organisation ensures they are attaining at appropriate levels, particularly in reading and mathematics. The pace of lessons is usually appropriate although, occasionally, teachers move on a little too quickly and pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings they may have. Some imaginative and potentially outstanding teaching was observed when teachers linked science and drama using forest materials to initiate learning. This was exciting for the pupils and they were totally engrossed in what was happening. However, teaching does not focus enough on improving pupils' handwriting and presentation skills in Years 5 and 6 and pupils do not have enough time to improve their work in response to teachers' marking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A broad curriculum and a wide range of after-school activities, as well as visits and visitors, contribute well to the pupils' good personal development and healthy and safe lifestyles. The curriculum is further enriched by annual residential visits for either Years 5 or 6. The 'Shake and Wake' initiative for five minutes each morning is successful in ensuring pupils adopt a healthy lifestyle and reinforces team building. The introduction of French is improving pupils' speaking and listening skills and widening their cultural awareness. Links are gradually being developed between subjects such as science and drama. ICT has improved since the last inspection, although it needs broadening further to cover the full breadth of the ICT curriculum. Links with other providers, church groups and local organisations are good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support of pupils are good overall and care of the pupils is outstanding. Good induction procedures and effective links with pre-school providers ensure that children in the Reception group make a confident start. Child protection protocols are fully in place and effective. Health and safety procedures are robust. Procedures for ensuring good attendance are very effective. Parents think that the school cares for their children well. One commented, 'The school gives all children, particularly those with special needs, a great start in life.' Very efficient systems are in place to ensure high levels of care for all groups of pupils, including those who have joined the school at times other than in Reception. Liaison with parents and outside agencies are very effective in gaining extra support for pupils who need it. Academic guidance for other pupils is good. All staff, including the teaching assistants, have worked together effectively to create small focus groups to ensure any pupil who is not keeping to their intended 'pathway' is given appropriate support. There is clear evidence of effective target setting for pupils in both English and mathematics. Pupils are very aware of what they need to do to improve their work although teachers do not often refer to their targets when marking.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher involves all staff fully in this small school. The capacity of the school is improving well as a result of professional development, clear direction from the headteacher and effective support from the governing body. The headteacher's leadership of the care of pupils is outstanding and his expectations of their behaviour are very high. Subject leaders are encouraged to take initiatives to promote school improvement. A good example is the successful tracking system now in place that enables the headteacher and staff to spot those pupils who are not making appropriate progress. Challenging but realistic long-term targets are in place for pupils, based on reliable analysis of their performance. Formal monitoring of teaching and learning takes place, although school leaders do not always use the good information held through monitoring to check how consistently teachers set day-to-day targets for those pupils who need to improve their handwriting skills. Self-evaluation is accurate. The school mostly knows what needs improving and is doing something about it. The development plan, however, does not focus sharply enough on evaluating the success of its actions in terms of how much they raise pupils' achievement. Governors are effective and fully prepared to challenge the school. They now make more frequent visits, with a sharper focus, ensuring greater efficiency in their work.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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|---|---|
| How good is 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 |
| 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 | 2 |
| 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

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| 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 |

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morgan's Vale and Woodfalls CofE (VA) Primary School, Wiltshire SP5 2HU

Thank you for welcoming us so politely to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you. You were very sensible and friendly in the way you answered our questions and spoke to us about your school. Yours is a good school and you are rightly proud to belong to it.

What works well in your school:

- Your headteacher, senior leaders and governors take excellent care of you and make sure teaching is good.
- Your behaviour is exemplary.
- You have good attitudes to your work and you really enjoy school.
- You all have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyles, and how to keep safe.
- You make good progress in reading, mathematics and science.
- Those of you who find it a little bit more difficult to read and do maths are making good progress with the help of your teachers and all the assistants.
- You have a wide choice of clubs to go to after school.
- The way you take responsibilities, for example those of you in the school council, and have done your best to improve the school in different ways. Well done!

I have asked the headteacher and governors to do the following things to help you make better progress:

- Make sure that that the teachers give you encouragement and help to improve your skills in handwriting and in the presentation of your work, particularly those of you in Years 5 and 6.
- Ask the teachers to give you time in lessons to read their marking comments and then have a go at improving your work.
- When the school tries out new ideas, to make sure that they check up to see how well they are working later on, especially to see how much they help your learning.

Yours sincerely Eira Gill ? Lead inspector

Annex B

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Yours sincerely

Eira Gill

☺ Lead inspector