

# Aloeric Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126474
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	315566
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anthony Shield

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	368
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Owen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Janman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	St Michael's Road Melksham SN12 6HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 702563
<b>Fax number</b>	01225 791529

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Aloeric Primary School is bigger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British origin and live in Melksham or the immediate area. On entry, pupils' attainment is slightly below average, and a higher proportion of pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are slightly more boys than girls in most years.

## 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 and improving school, although there are some good features in what the school offers. In particular, a strong commitment to the care and valuing of individual children is a key part of the school's approach. This results in friendly, well-mannered and responsible pupils. Their good personal development is one of the strongest aspects of the school, and the result of good care, guidance and support.

Following a period of absence, the headteacher has successfully tackled the dip in performance in 2006. An action plan to tackle underachievement has been effective, resulting in an improving picture of teaching and learning, and better results in national tests taken in 2007 in Year 6, particularly in English. Achievement is satisfactory and overall standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. The progress of average pupils, while satisfactory, is less secure than that of more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Better leadership in mathematics and science is leading to improving standards, but weaknesses in the application of numeracy skills across the curriculum and the understanding of investigative skills in science remain a barrier to more rapid progress. At Key Stage 1, although boys' writing remains an area of relative weakness, important gains have recently been made in the quality of their writing. Children make a good start in the Reception Year.

Pupils are keen to do well and take pride in their work. Their enthusiastic approach contributes much to their progress. Behaviour is good, and pupils are kind and thoughtful to each other. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and has many good features. It is improving as subject leaders provide clearer direction to what should be taught and how. Classrooms are attractive and purposeful environments in which teachers make learning enjoyable and fun. Although work is planned carefully, it does not always provide enough challenge, particularly for pupils of average ability. The good curriculum is enriched by a wide range of clubs, especially for music and sport.

The school is now well placed to build on recent improvements to secure good progress more consistently for all pupils. Given what has already been achieved in a short time, the school's capacity to improve further is good. The way forward, building on what has already been achieved, is clearly mapped. Self-evaluation is good although some systems are not yet deeply rooted in practice, particularly in the use of performance data by all staff to provide work at the right level and set challenging targets.

Parental confidence in the school is good. Typical of many comments made by parents were: 'My children have blossomed here', and 'A thriving school with an emphasis on the child. My child is always very happy to go to school – that's priceless!'

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When children enter the school, their skills and experiences are slightly lower than usually found, particularly in relation to their language and mathematical development. Well-planned and stimulating activities promote children's development effectively, and children make good progress in all areas, although their progress in mathematical development is less secure. Children are increasingly confident in making choices, sharing and taking turns. They explain confidently what they are doing and use language imaginatively in role-play. They are keen to get involved and relationships are good. Behaviour is calm and purposeful. Both teaching and

the curriculum are good, meeting children's needs well and inspiring a keen involvement. There are good arrangements to ensure children's health and safety and links with parents ensure a close partnership of shared goals. The Foundation Stage is well led, and good curricular links are made to Year 1. The coordinator has an accurate view of the quality of provision and well-judged plans for further improvement.

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

- Extend pupils' application of mathematical skills across the curriculum and their investigative skills in science to raise standards further.
- Use the knowledge of how well pupils are doing to plan challenging work which meets the needs of all pupils, especially those of average ability.
- Make more effective use of performance data by all staff to identify strengths and weaknesses and set challenging targets.

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

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

At Key Stage 1, standards are broadly average, and pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Writing remains an area of relative weakness, particularly amongst boys. However, improvements in the 2007 tests, particularly the proportion of able pupils reaching the higher levels, have been encouraging, and reflect the school's drive for higher quality writing.

Standards in Key Stage 2 are also average and achievement satisfactory. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007 in mathematics and English showed a marked improvement on results in 2006, when a number of pupils underachieved. English, in particular, has made impressive improvements, and over half of pupils achieved a Level 5 in 2007. Standards in mathematics also improved, although not so significantly. However, results in science have continued to drift lower. In recent years, the progress of pupils of average ability has been satisfactory but not as consistent as that of more able pupils and those with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are friendly, responsible and polite. They get on well with each other and with their teachers. Central to the school's values is the belief that every child is special. This results in an especially happy atmosphere. Pupils enjoy school and grow confidently, developing good social skills. Attendance is above average. The school's emphasis on positive reinforcement through praise and rewards successfully promotes good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are considerate of others and take their responsibilities seriously, whether as house captains, school council members or classroom monitors.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and the importance of diet and regular exercise. Sport has a high profile in the school and pupils take part enthusiastically. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are confident that bullying will be sorted out quickly. They are keen to help out and enjoy

contributing to the wider community. However, the school council has only recently been established and the school has more to do before pupils feel confident that this forum makes a difference. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' progress is satisfactory. While much teaching is good and improving, some inconsistencies remain. In the classroom, warm relationships and keen attitudes prevail, and enthusiastic learners respond well to interesting and fun lessons. Classrooms are attractive and displays support learning. Pupils are encouraged to check their work and take care with its presentation. At the heart of the teachers' approach is an emphasis on encouragement through praise and reward. Merit stamps are much in demand and Year 5 pupils respond well to 'Einstein of the week' awards. Teaching assistants provide well-targeted support, enabling pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to work more confidently and make progress.

While expectations of what pupils might achieve are higher than in the past, there is room for greater challenge in some of the tasks set and for these to be targeted more precisely at individual pupils, particularly those of average ability. Marking is done conscientiously. While feedback on progress is mostly good and pupils know what they need to do to improve, this is not always the case.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum provides a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy, balanced by breadth and depth in its provision for foundation subjects, including Spanish. The impact of the curriculum on pupils' personal development is good. The school is working effectively to provide more coherence and relevance through cross-curricular topics. However, the use of data to ensure the curriculum is matched carefully to individual needs is not consistently good. Good partnerships have been made with the local secondary school to provide support in subjects like design and technology. Investigative work in science has not until recently been given sufficient emphasis. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their involvement in the good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly music and sport. The school regularly wins local and county competitions in swimming, rugby and cross country, and the girls' football team proudly reached the national finals last season. Further enrichment is provided by a wide range of visits and visitors.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's commitment to the care and welfare of each pupil is clear. This ensures pupils feel cared for and safe. Staff are well prepared and many have undertaken additional specialist training, such as first aid or training in treating allergy reaction. Close links with outside agencies and parents are effective in ensuring pupils who require additional help are well supported. Arrangements for the safeguarding of children, their health and safety and overall welfare are well established. Comprehensive whole-school systems for tracking pupils' progress enable a keen eye to be kept on pupils at risk of underachieving, although in the classroom, this remains inconsistent.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, because decisive and successful action has been taken to improve both standards and the quality of provision. The headteacher leads with realism and his analysis of what needs to be done has been thoughtfully planned. Crucially, however, he has fully involved the whole staff. Good team work has been a vital part of the improvements and an increasingly effective contribution is being made by all staff to school improvement. 'We don't want to let each other down' is typical of the attitudes demonstrated by staff. The mathematics and English coordinators, in particular, lead with confidence, but to a considerable extent the increasingly effective leadership shown by all subject leaders in embracing change and driving the school forward has been critical. The impact of strategies to improve literacy have been in place longest and had most effect, while those in mathematics and science are just beginning to make a difference. Annual reviews of progress in individual subjects carried out by subject leaders are proving an effective tool for self-evaluation. However, while performance data are being collected, analysis and use by all members of staff to identify strengths and weaknesses and spot trends are less confident. Realistic targets are being set to raise standards but as yet these are not particularly challenging. Committed and hard working governors are making a particularly strong contribution through their links with subjects and their thoughtful insights into the school's 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?	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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

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	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 the 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?	2

<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	3
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	3
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

11 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Aloeric Primary School, Melksham, SN12 6HN

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We greatly enjoyed talking to you, and particularly liked the friendly welcome you gave us. Your school is improving and it is providing you with a satisfactory education.

- What we liked most about your school
- Your headteacher and teachers have worked successfully to make your school better, and are continuing to look for improvements.
- You are well behaved, friendly and play together well.
- You make good progress when you first join the Reception class.
- Most of you make satisfactory progress, but you could do better in mathematics and science.
- You try hard in lessons and enjoy all the activities and clubs the school arranges for you. We enjoyed listening to the CD of the choir singing and hearing about the successes of your sports teams.
- Your teachers make your lessons interesting and fun.
- The school takes good care of you, ensuring you feel safe and well looked after.
- What we have asked your school to do now
- Make sure that you do even better, particularly in using your number skills in all subjects and in investigating things in science.
- Make sure that all the teachers check your progress carefully in order to plan the next step for your learning.
- Make sure that all teachers use the information about how well you are doing to ensure you do even better!

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection.

With best wishes for the future!

Yours faithfully

Mr Tony Shield Lead inspector

11 October 2007



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Lead inspector