

# Berkswell Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104093
<b>Local Authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	323962
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ted Wheatley

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	218
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robin Burns
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Wellings
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 December 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Berkswell Coventry CV7 7BJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01676 532141

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	323962

**Fax number**

01676 535794

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 March 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

- The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:
- whether the recent fall-off in achievement has been reversed
- how well the school has dealt with relative underachievement
- the accuracy with which the school identifies those areas it needs to work on and improve in the main school and Early Years Foundation Stage.

Evidence was gathered from data on current standards and achievement, examination of pupils' work and school documents, observation of lessons, and discussions with the headteacher, governors, staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but varies considerably between year groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises the Nursery class and the Reception class. Most of those children who join the school in Reception have already attended the Nursery. There is an on-site before- and after-school club, which is managed and run independently. This was inspected separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is excellent. The headteacher, supported extremely well by staff, governors and parents, provides exceptional drive and direction for the school to maintain its success, and to improve further. The great majority of parents hold the school in high regard. Typical responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were: 'My children have had an excellent start to learning at Berkswell,' 'Parents are encouraged to be part of school life,' and, 'Children are encouraged to develop their potential, whether it is academic, sporting or, artistic, or in other areas.'

Standards have fallen a little in recent years, but this is mostly a result of the changes in ability on entry which has fluctuated between broadly average and above average. Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Achievement has been excellent for several years, although it slipped slightly in Year 6 national tests in 2008 because of weaker results among a very small number of pupils. As a consequence, the school has taken prompt action to improve support for individual pupils and ensure that work is matched carefully to pupils' needs. Pupils have exceptionally good reading, writing and mathematical skills. They are confident and have excellent independent learning skills, evident in the way in which they plan and carry out scientific investigations. Children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Standards have risen over time and almost all now enter Year 1 with above-average skills.

Personal development and well-being are excellent. Pupils love being at school. Their attendance is outstanding and their enthusiasm for learning in lessons and all other aspects of school life is infectious. They are articulate in expressing their opinions and feelings about school and the fun they say that teachers inject into learning. They feel safe and secure and their behaviour is exemplary. Older pupils look after younger ones extremely well. Pupils make mature contributions to the school's links with charities, local organisations, and schools in other countries. Links with the local church and other Christian activities are particularly strong. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are keen to ensure their opinions are listened to in the school and class councils. For example, pupils have initiated the purchase of sports equipment, making the school more 'colourful', and making sure all pupils' concerns can be expressed through a suggestions box. They are very aware of the importance of eating healthily and taking part in physical exercise. The great majority join in at least one sports activity. Pupils are extremely well prepared for their future lives, with good literacy, numeracy and computer skills, excellent social skills and grasp of the issues they must face as teenagers.

Teaching and learning are excellent. Teachers have outstanding subject knowledge and high expectations. They organise lessons extremely well to provide challenging, interesting activities that capture pupils' attention, provide opportunities for independent learning and ensure fast progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to provide excellent learning support for pupils of all levels of ability. Teachers use assessment information about pupils' performance effectively to plan work matched to ability and to set targets for pupils. They encourage pupils to evaluate their own work and to look for ways to improve it. This is supported by mostly good marking that gives accurate information about progress and how pupils can improve their work. However, occasionally, marking offers too little guidance or pupils do not follow advice given. Relationships are outstanding and contribute significantly to the way pupils develop confidence in their own abilities. The curriculum is exceptionally wide and the international dimension enables pupils to acquire an excellent understanding of how people

live in other countries and to respect values and beliefs of cultures other than their own. Links between subjects are extremely good and the range of enrichment activities, visits and visitors is very wide. For example, there is a residential arts visit to Dunfield House in Herefordshire, a trip to France, activities for gifted and talented pupils, sports, drama and scientific activities, and after-school clubs. The level of participation in out-of-school activities is excellent. Parents appreciate the wide range of opportunities that pupils are offered beyond the academic curriculum.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and procedures to ensure pupils are safe are exceptionally rigorous. A caring atmosphere permeates the school, and pupils and parents know that any concerns will be dealt with effectively and kindly. Safeguarding requirements are fully met. Measures to deal with rare unacceptable behaviour or absence are effective and pupils have a very good grasp of what is expected of them – and know exactly what the headteacher's reaction will be if they disappoint her! Links with families, other schools and external agencies are exceptionally good and contribute significantly to pupils' well-being and enjoyment of school. Academic guidance is extremely good. Pupils know their targets, and the great majority, but not all, know how to achieve them.

The school accurately identifies what it needs to do to continue to improve and to sustain excellent achievement, and takes appropriate action swiftly. It has rapidly responded to the need to promote community cohesion and, through the 'Berkswell Global Curriculum', has ensured excellence in this area. Policies to promote equality of opportunity are rigorously implemented and highly effective. Governors have an excellent knowledge of the school and provide outstanding support and challenge to help the school continue to improve. They have worked effectively to help plan new buildings and an outside play area for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Taking this together with the school's highly effective response to areas it needs to improve, the capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Provision is outstanding. Children achieve exceptionally well and leave Reception with standards that are above average. The school provides children with an excellent start in the Nursery, which one parent thoughtfully described as 'the right balance between teaching, fun, play and discipline, which clearly works'. Children settle quickly to school routines, feel safe and learn effectively. The teaching and learning are consistently good or better, and children enjoy many opportunities to explore the world around them and discover things for themselves. The classrooms are extremely well organised to give children a rich variety of experiences in all the different areas of learning. The outdoor area is stimulating, and although there is no easy access for the Reception children, the staff make exemplary use of the available outdoor space so that children can develop independence in their choices of activities. Plans to improve the outside area, and to build new Nursery and Reception classrooms, are advanced. Children choose happily from the range of activities on offer, for example washing Humpty Dumpty's clothes outside in warm suds or galloping around on hobby horses as the King's men! They make equally excellent progress in their academic, social and practical skills as staff observe children's learning and development carefully, and use these observations well to plan future activities. Children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent, because adults give them responsibility for taking care of themselves and to ensure they know how to stay safe and live healthily. Children work in a secure environment where excellent welfare arrangements are in place. They are supported well by adults who know their individual needs. They learn the rules quickly and

behave exceptionally well. The provision is led and managed very well, with excellent communication between the classes and a clear focus on how to make improvements.

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

- Ensure that marking supports the effectiveness of academic target setting by always providing guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, and by making sure that the guidance is followed.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	1
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Berkswell Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Coventry, CV7 7BJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We spoke to quite a few of you and you gave us some really useful information about how good you think your school is and why you like it so very much.

These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You are at an excellent school and the headteacher, staff and governors work really hard to make sure it stays that way and becomes even better.
- You make excellent progress and if your progress slows a little, as it does from time to time, teachers work very effectively to put that right.
- Teaching is outstanding.
- The range of subjects and activities is very wide, and helps you to gain an excellent understanding of, and respect for, other people in the world.
- You work really hard, your behaviour is excellent and you behave safely.
- You take on responsibilities in school and the community willingly and carry them out extremely well.
- You have an excellent understanding of the importance of staying healthy. You eat sensibly and almost all of you enjoy taking part in physical exercise.
- Adults take excellent care of you and there is real feel of being in a caring 'family'.

To improve things, we have asked the school to:

- make sure that marking helps you know how to reach your targets, always give you advice about how to improve your work, and make sure you follow any advice given.

You can help too by asking if you are not sure what your targets are or how to reach them.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley

Lead inspector