

St Oswalds Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 108008 |
| Local Authority | Leeds |
| Inspection number | 324687 |
| Inspection dates | 8–9 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Terry McDermott |

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 | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 250 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr R Stevenson |
| Headteacher | Mrs Fiona Woodall |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 July 2006 |
| School address | The Green Guiseley Leeds West Yorkshire LS20 9BT |
| Telephone number | 01943 873570 |
| Fax number | 01943 870798 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This average size school serves Guiseley, an area with some level of social and economic advantage to the north west of Leeds. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals; from minority ethnic backgrounds; whose first language is not English; who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and who have a statement of special educational need, are all well below average. There is a before and after-school club on the school site, which is not the responsibility of the school's governing body and which did not form part of this inspection. The school holds the Advanced Healthy Schools Award, the Stephen Lawrence Award and the Activemark.

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: 1

This is an outstanding school. It has significant strengths in almost all areas of its work. Pupils make excellent progress in their four years in school, because the high quality teaching throughout promotes very effective learning. Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding, as a result of the excellent care, guidance and support they receive. Everything is driven by clear and incisive leadership, which is sustaining exceptionally high standards. The school is held in high esteem by a large majority of parents, who typically comment, 'The school occupies an important and valued position in the local community. It's a fantastic school!'

Pupils entered the school in Year 3 in 2008 with below average standards. Pupils' attainment on entry has been declining slowly for several years. At the end of Year 6 in 2008, standards were exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science. These pupils made outstanding progress. A very similar picture exists in Year 6 in 2009, and in all other year groups in the school. No group of pupils underachieves.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is underpinned by excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are thoughtful, considerate and respectful. Their behaviour is exemplary both inside and outside the classroom. They have a solid understanding of Christian values as well as an appreciation of cultural diversity. They are not prepared to tolerate unfairness or bias. They recognise and celebrate the achievements of others generously. Pupils display an excellent understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, and they know how to avoid unnecessary risk. They leave Year 6 as confident and well rounded citizens ready to contribute to the community and to take their place in the world.

Lessons are consistently of a very good standard and some are outstanding. Most lessons are a hive of learning activity. Pupils' attitudes to learning reflect their excellent personal development and enable them to make rapid progress. The range of challenging activities set by teachers meets pupils' learning needs closely. The cumulative effect of consistently good or better learning over four years is reflected in pupils' very high standards and outstanding progress.

Pupils are well served by the good curriculum. It is regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils, including any who have particular difficulties with their learning. The very strong focus on gaining an excellent grasp of basic skills is driving standards in English, mathematics and science to a high level. However, opportunities for developing pupils' imaginative, creative and artistic skills are more limited.

The care, guidance and support the school provides is outstanding. Responsibilities for safeguarding are taken very seriously, and the school meets current government requirements. Adults know the pupils very well, and pupils confidently say they can get any help they need simply by asking. They have complete trust in the staff. The school's accurate and easy to use assessment system provides precise and current information about how well pupils are progressing both personally and academically. This is used very effectively to plan appropriately challenging work in lessons, and to swiftly provide support where required. Much of teachers' marking of pupils' work is excellent, and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve.

The headteacher provides determined and highly effective leadership and constantly seeks new ways to improve the school. Her skills are complemented by those of her able and well motivated deputy headteacher. They know every strength and area requiring development in the school. The enthusiasm, dedication, and desire to improve, which they inspire in the staff team, ensures

that pupils make relentless and sometimes remarkable progress. Every adult knows their role and their responsibility, not only in sustaining high standards, but also in moving the school forward. The school has outstanding capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the curriculum offers pupils more opportunity to develop their creative and artistic skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils joined the school at the start of Year 3 in 2008 with standards, which were below average. Attainment on entry to the school has shown a declining trend for several years. By the end of Year 6 in 2008, standards were exceptionally high. In particular, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5, in English, mathematics and science, was significantly above the national average. For this group of pupils, this represented outstanding progress. Inspection evidence indicates that from a slightly lower starting point, standards are similarly high in 2009. Each of the four year groups in the school are making progress at a much higher rate than expected nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress because of the skilful support they receive. No group of pupils underachieves. The school is successfully maintaining very high standards, and consistently meets or exceeds its challenging targets. Achievement is outstanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils behave impeccably. They show very good attitudes in the manner in which they conduct themselves and through the very thoughtful and mature responses demonstrated in lessons. They behave as responsible young citizens, who clearly know how to keep safe and be healthy. Pupils take their work seriously and rise to the high expectations of their teachers. Attendance is well above the national average because pupils love coming to school and this, in turn, contributes to the high standards. The school has a caring 'family' ethos that underpins all activities. This encourages pupils to be considerate and courteous. Bullying poses no threat to the pupils, who say they would know what to do if it occurred, though none could recall any such incidents. The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education gives pupils many opportunities to consider human behaviour and emotions through activities that raise their awareness of the impact of their actions on others. As one noted, 'You have to be careful of what you do because it's so easy to hurt people without ever really intending to'. Pupils make a good contribution to their own community through, for example, their involvement with the active school council, and in their planting with Guiseley in Bloom'. Because standards are so high, and their personal development is excellent, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of learning is outstanding. In the lessons seen, teaching was consistently good, with a significant proportion judged outstanding. All lessons are characterised by: excellent

relationships between pupils and teachers; pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning; teachers' high levels of professional knowledge; and a strong focus on building and consolidating pupils' speaking and listening skills. Most lessons present pupils with many opportunities to work independently and in small groups. They are challenged to think their own way through short sharp tasks. Lessons move along at a swift pace, and often require pupils to explain their thoughts and ideas to their peers. This ensures that learning is very well founded and understanding is secure. Progress is rapid for all groups of pupils because rigorous assessments ensure learning activities are very well matched to their particular needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall. It is improving steadily through continual refinement, and captures the interests of the pupils well. Literacy is given a high priority and this undoubtedly contributes to the very high standards pupils reach. A key strength of the curriculum is the way in which subjects are linked together, making learning cohesive and often including very good opportunities for personal development. For example, pupils in Year 4 used their literacy and information and communication technology skills to produce pamphlets promoting healthy packed lunches. At present, planning does not take enough account of the development of skills in practical and creative subjects. The school is aware of this area for development. The curriculum is lively, well balanced and considerably enriched by a range of additional activities, that extend what is learned in class through educational visits, and activities associated with achieving the Stephen Lawrence Award. There are a good number of after-school clubs, and older pupils benefit greatly from the annual residential visit.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides excellent care for its pupils. Great attention is paid to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment. The high quality of assessment is a major contributory factor to the high achievement in the school. The very effective procedures and systems measure and track pupils' academic progress and their personal development. Adults use the information from assessments to very good effect in planning suitable work that matches the needs of all pupils. Pupils who need additional help are quickly identified at an early stage. Excellent links with a range of professional and other agencies, including other schools within the Guiseley family of schools, ensure that specialist help is available should it be needed. By working in small groups with skilled teaching assistants, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress. Similarly, very good provision is made for those pupils deemed to be gifted and talented so that they are appropriately challenged.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides supportive and persistent leadership, so that adults share a vision in which each individual pupil is encouraged to develop to their maximum potential, both academically and socially. Teachers, middle managers and senior leaders work as a united and enthusiastic team. Morale is high. Each adult assumes their responsibilities at an appropriate level, overseeing and accurately measuring what pupils are learning. School improvement is seen as an ongoing process, and leaders very clearly know how they can make the school even

better. The school takes a strong stance towards equality of opportunity, and works continuously and successfully to challenge and eradicate discrimination in all its forms. This is well supported by good provision for community cohesion, which ensures that pupils gain a good understanding of their local environment, and an improving perspective on international issues.

Governance is good. The governors give generous support to the school, while maintaining a level of challenge, which prevents complacency. The school has moved forward very well since the last inspection. All areas identified for improvement have been fully addressed, monitoring schedules are rigorously adhered to, and the curriculum is becoming ever more interesting to pupils. Leaders are able to sustain the strengths of the school because they identify quickly any emerging areas for improvement, and act promptly to take action to address them. Capacity to improve is outstanding.

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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? | 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 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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/or disabilities make progress | 1 |

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

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|---|---|
| How good are 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 |
| 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 | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 1 |
| 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? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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| 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 eliminated | 1 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 2 |
| 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**

Inspection of St Oswalds Church of England Junior School, Leeds,
LS20 9BT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were extremely impressed with your excellent behaviour, your outstanding attitude to learning, and your happy faces. We enjoyed talking to you about your school, and you made it very obvious to us how much you enjoy being there.

We found that St Oswald's is an outstanding school with the following very clear strengths:

- the consistently challenging teaching in lessons, year after year, which helps you to learn rapidly
- the excellent care, guidance and support it provides, which ensures not only that you are safe, but also that you achieve high personal and academic standards
- the excellent leadership and management by all adults, which constantly seek to make the school better.

These combine to help you make outstanding progress in both your learning and your personal development, from the time you join the school in Year 3, to the time you leave Year 6.

I found that one part of the school could be improved. So I have asked that you be given more opportunities to develop your creative and artistic skills to the same high level as your literacy and numeracy skills.

Thank you all for helping me to reach my judgement. Please continue to be the hard working and happy young people you already are. Good luck to every one of you for the future.