

Yattendon Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110026
Local Authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	325083
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	59
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Liz Kenrick
Headteacher	Mrs Kathryn Simmons
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Yattendon Thatcham RG18 0UR
Telephone number	01635 201 397
Fax number	01635 200 347

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school situated in a village location. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is for Reception age children within a mixed-age class alongside Year 1 pupils. There are two other mixed-age classes for the older pupils. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly associated with the slow acquisition of language skills, is lower than average, and very few have statements of special educational needs. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds, and very few have English as an additional language. No pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has obtained Healthy School Status and been awarded the Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents are pleased with all that it provides. Parental views were typified by this comment from one: 'The children are very fortunate to be in a small school where their emotional and physical welfare are nurtured in a safe environment. Every child is treated as an individual, and all their needs met from the very start of the Foundation Stage.' Pupils really appreciate the friendly and helpful staff. They enjoy school because everyone gets on so well together.

The headteacher and the governors have a clear commitment to raising standards, and provide good leadership and management. They have been successful in improving all aspects of the school, and show a good capacity for further improvement. Several parents commented how the school has 'gone from strength to strength'. The staff provide outstanding pastoral care that contributes to pupils' excellent personal development. Governance has improved substantially since the last inspection. Governors carry out their statutory duties well and are actively involved in the work of the school. The contribution that the school makes to community cohesion is good, and equal opportunities are promoted very well throughout the school.

Children in The Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning, and enter Year 1 with standards that are just above those expected of five-year-olds, and well above in their personal development. Individual progress records and results of tests and assessments show that pupils make good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Consequently, standards are rising each year. Currently, Year 6 pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age. In previous years, within Key Stage 2, progress in science has been slower than in English and mathematics, because strategies to help those who found the subject difficult were not as well developed. The current teacher for the older pupils, however, provides such good support that they are now making the same progress, although from a slightly lower starting point. Consequently, standards within science are not yet as high as in English and mathematics. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress in lessons because of consistently effective teaching across classes, and outstanding support and guidance.

Teachers are knowledgeable and are skilled at making lessons enjoyable within a supportive and caring environment. Work matches the needs of pupils because the teachers' good planning is securely based on their accurate assessment and personal knowledge of the pupils' abilities. Target setting and regular marking of work are well established. The curriculum is good and includes the provision of French for all pupils. It is complimented by 'Challenge Weeks' and a very good range of well-attended extra-curricular activities. The success of these special weeks has shown how much better pupils achieve if the subjects are all linked together into one topic. Pupils' progress is accelerated when they are presented with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in different subject areas of the curriculum.

Pastoral care is outstanding and safeguarding requirements are met fully. The school's strong links with external agencies ensure very good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The very good links with the feeder secondary school, and the close links with other primary schools in the area, help the older pupils when they move between the schools. Relationships are exceptional throughout the school. Pupils behave extremely well, enjoy school, and know how to keep themselves safe. Attendance is good. Pupils make a good contribution

to the community. They eat healthily and take part in sport with enthusiasm. Their personal development and academic skills ensure that they are well prepared for their future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with a wide range of skills and abilities which vary from year to year. Currently, their skills are close to expected levels of development. The care and attention given to children's welfare are excellent. Children happily settle into school because of the very welcoming and supportive environment. Parents appreciate this and the approachability of staff, who are always willing to sort out any problems. Children learn well because a wide range of activities is provided for them across all areas of the learning. There is a very good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those which the children choose for themselves. The outside area has been improved considerably since the last inspection and now provides a very good range of opportunities, whatever the weather. The classroom, shared with the Year 1 pupils, is very well organised so as to provide many learning opportunities. Year 1 pupils are very good role models for the children in the Reception Year. The teaching is very supportive and caring, while developing all areas of learning. Tasks are very well matched to children's individual needs, and there are numerous opportunities for them to question and explore their own ideas. Monitoring of children's progress is rigorously carried out, and action taken to provide additional support where it is needed. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is very effective in her role, and parents recognise this. She works with her staff very well to provide excellent support for the children throughout the day. Improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been rapid and the impact of the outstanding aspects within the provision is apparent. Staff are now consolidating their procedures to ensure ongoing improvement in progress and standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science.
- Develop a curriculum that links between different subjects to help pupils make greater progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress to reach above-average standards in all subjects by the end of Year 2. Standards in Key Stage 1 are improving steadily, and the 2008 national assessment results showed results in mathematics to be exceptionally high. Small class sizes demand caution when interpreting statistical data, but individual records show that all pupils make good progress in all subjects. Standards in writing in 2008 were slightly lower than in other subjects, but this has now been addressed through extra support. Test results show that for several years the progress that pupils make in Key Stage 2 has been improving, and the most recent assessments of Year 6 pupils, for 2008, show that the pupils made good progress in English and mathematics, while progress in science has been satisfactory. Standards in English and mathematics are above average, but standards in science are still broadly average. These results, combined with the scrutiny of pupils' work, are consistent with the good teaching seen across the school. In all classes, the level of work and the support provided is appropriate, and pupils of all backgrounds and abilities achieve well. Pupils who find learning more difficult make similar progress in lessons because of the outstanding support provided by teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The caring and understanding nature of the pupils is demonstrated by the way they support their friends. The older pupils support younger ones well and listen patiently to their views when teachers ask them questions. Behaviour is outstanding, ensuring that all pupils learn in a safe and happy environment. Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers make the lessons fun. During an assembly seen during the inspection, both pupils and adults participated together, demonstrating how outstanding pupils' overall enjoyment is and the excellent relationship between the staff and pupils. Pupils eat healthily during the day and are aware of what choices they should make. This has contributed to the school being awarded Healthy School status. Pupils are mature and sensible and take on the responsibilities available to them, such as school councillors and peer mediators. Their outstanding personal development, combined with the good level of basic skills, ensure that they are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers' good subject knowledge, classroom management, and the outstanding relationships with pupils ensure that pupils pay attention in lessons. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities, and teachers make good use of assessment information in their planning. Planning is very good and addresses the needs of a wide range of abilities and ages within the mixed-year-group classes. All pupils make good progress, and teachers make lessons interesting and fun. Often, this is achieved by the effective use of clear and challenging timescales for activities. Teachers use a very good range of activities and resources to stimulate pupils' learning through visual displays and interactive software. Learning objectives are shared with pupils, who know what targets they have and what they need to do improve. Teaching assistants provide extremely good support for those who need additional help. Marking of pupils' work is regular and identifies errors in the work, and teachers use praise well to motivate the pupils. On occasions, opportunities are missed to give written guidance as to the next steps in pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is adjusted to meet pupils' needs. The school has introduced French to help develop their cultural understanding, as well as to provide an additional focus on extra support in writing. The curriculum is currently being reviewed because pupils have been seen to make more progress in lessons if the various subjects are all dealing with the same topic. A school development plan item is to introduce a topic-based curriculum to link subjects together more. Pupils of all abilities are catered for, and this is demonstrated by the overall good progress that pupils make in class. Parents commented on how pleased they are with the support given for those with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as how effective the 'Challenge Weeks' are for all pupils. There is a good range of clubs open to all ages, and the many well-attended sports clubs have contributed to the school being awarded the Activemark.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pastoral care of pupils is outstanding. The school has established strong links with external agencies to help ensure that pupils are cared for and supported well. Child protection procedures are securely in place. Health and safety requirements are met. There are very good procedures for managing behaviour. Staff know pupils well, and all pupils feel valued. Pupils say that teachers are very caring and fair. All pupils are treated equally and included in all activities. Pupils who need extra help are very effectively provided for and make good progress. Their individual education plans are of high quality and ensure that pupils receive appropriate resources. Any pupil who joins the school with little knowledge of English is well supported, with specialist support and through peer support. Attendance continues to be above average, but close monitoring is maintained by both the headteacher and the governors. Academic guidance is very good and is consistent across year groups and in all subjects. Pupils say that they always get good advice on what they need to do and that teachers spend time talking to them. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets, which they say are reviewed regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and governors share the same vision for the school based around improving its standards. Governors fulfil all their statutory duties and make a very good contribution to supporting school improvement. The headteacher has ensured good improvement. Much has been achieved by the introduction of secure systems for monitoring performance, and through an ongoing development of staff responsibilities. All staff are now very effective in evaluating the impact of the school's work on pupils' achievement and have identified weaknesses in science provision, but have had insufficient time to address them. A very well-devised school development plan is used to identify priorities which have resulted in higher standards in English and mathematics. The plan gives ownership of actions to both staff and governors, and is accessible to parents through the very good school website. Challenging targets are set to aid improvement. The leaders have an outstanding approach to equality of opportunity, and ongoing improvement of this is identified as a priority within the school development plan. Community cohesion is good. The headteacher has assessed the community needs and has ensured that governors and staff contribute to actions which address these needs. The school is now an integral part of the local community, and links are being made to become further involved with the national and global communities. Parents make very supportive comments on the success of the involvement of the village community in school activities.

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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?	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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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/or disabilities make progress	2

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

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	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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	1

Leadership and management

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	1
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 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	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**

25 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yattendon Church of England Primary School, Thatcham, RG18 0UR

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work, and seeing how your school is helping you learn. I was impressed by your enthusiasm for learning and by how polite you were to visitors.

Your school is providing you with a good education and it is making sure that you make good progress in your work. These are some of the good things about your school.

- The school has improved rapidly since the last inspection.
- Leadership and management, including that of the governors, are good.
- The way you are looked after and kept safe is outstanding. As a result of this, you make excellent progress in your personal development.
- Relationships throughout the school are outstanding.
- Your behaviour is outstanding.
- Teaching and learning are good and you achieve well as a result.
- Most of your lessons are made to be fun, and teachers try to give you a good variety of activities.
- There is a good range of clubs and after-school activities.

In order to improve the school further, I have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to:

- help you do as well in science as you do in other subjects
- develop the curriculum to provide more links between subjects, to help you make faster progress.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

John Horwood

Lead Inspector