

Orleton CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116836
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	326458
Inspection date	19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	191
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	Bev Jenkins
Headteacher	Matthew Dunkerley
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Orleton Ludlow SY8 4HQ
Telephone number	01568 780366
Fax number	01568 780366

Age group	5–11
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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:

- achievement and standards in Key Stage 2 in mathematics, and the effectiveness of recent strategies introduced for improvement
- the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the senior management team
- the attainment on entry of children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage, and their subsequent progress in learning in their first year.

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and pupils' work, and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as described in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Orleton Church of England Primary is a slightly smaller than average school and serves a wide rural community. Its numbers have grown in recent years and this trend is continuing. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. The number of pupils entering the school during the school year has increased significantly during the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Orleton Church of England Primary is a good school. Its greatest strengths are the personal development and well-being of pupils, and the provision for their care, guidance and support, all of which are outstanding. The school ethos is happy and purposeful, with very good relationships throughout. The school has a supportive and inclusive environment. Pupils love coming to school, describing it as 'exciting' and 'brilliant'. They enjoy their learning because they are provided with a very rich, imaginative and stimulating curriculum which encourages their desire to learn. This is reflected in one parent's comment, 'I am astonished at my child's wide range of knowledge.' Pupils join in the wealth of activities provided with considerable enthusiasm, are kind and considerate to each other, and have consistently high attendance. A large majority of parents bestow considerable praise upon the school, characterised by one who said, 'The school has a very happy and stimulating learning environment, and we feel privileged that our children attend it.'

Children make a good start to school in the Reception class and make good progress in an exciting environment, both indoors and outdoors. This good progress continues throughout Years 1 to 6, where most pupils achieve well and usually reach standards above the level expected for their age when they leave. Standards have been sustained at a good level for several years in English and mathematics, and have sometimes been very high in science. However, in the most recent national tests in 2008, the school experienced unexpectedly weaker results in mathematics in Year 6. Boys especially, underachieved, whilst most girls attained average standards. The school, with the strong support of the governing body, has taken rapid action to ensure improvement takes place and can be sustained. This has involved the grouping of pupils by ability in Years 4 to 6, and the appointment of an experienced specialist teacher. The school has also been very thorough in its analysis of the reasons for the sudden drop in mathematics achievement. One important conclusion resulted in the school making more provision for the increasing number of pupils entering the school in years other than Reception. Most pupils are now making good progress in mathematics and standards are rising. The school's leaders are determined that this will be maintained and, as a result, the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are now extremely rigorous.

Pupils achieve particularly well in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are well above average. The school has received awards for its good practice for several years. Pupils use computers confidently and independently, and ICT is also an integral part of many homework tasks. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support and their achievement is good. Good teaching is helping pupils to develop independent learning skills and considerable confidence in expressing themselves. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in creative activities involving problem solving. For example, pupils in Year 5 are designing and constructing, under the supervision of an architect, an outside wooden canopy area as an additional learning resource. Teachers have improved their marking and give good improvement points to help pupils' learning, although sometimes a few teachers do not correct basic spelling errors. Occasionally teachers do not settle pupils into learning tasks quickly enough, resulting in a minority of them losing concentration. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and outside is consistently good, although a small number are occasionally reluctant to cooperate with each other. The school makes good provision for the learning of gifted and talented pupils, especially through links with the local high school and a learning network with other schools.

The school is justifiably proud of pupils' knowledge of healthy lifestyles and how they put this into practice. This is shown by the 'Food for Life' Beacon School award, the Healthy Schools gold award, Activemark and the 'Heartstart' award, all of which have been earned in the last two years. In addition, over 80% of pupils eat the excellent healthy school meals cooked on the premises. School councillors are proud of their contributions to the daily life of the school, and many older pupils are regularly involved in caring for younger pupils, for example through paired reading. Pupils also make a very positive contribution to the local community through their Eco committee, links with the village 'Evergreens', and participation in the village pantomime, Orleton gardening club, and the Ludlow Food Festival. Community cohesion, which is outstanding, is further strengthened by links with schools in Wolverhampton, Africa and New Zealand. Pupils are prepared excellently for their future lives. In addition to their above average standards, they are actively involved in budget management, a school enterprise week, developing thinking skills, and learning to be resilient and valuable team players.

The good leadership and management have considerable strengths. The highly effective leadership of the headteacher is based upon his excellent knowledge of all pupils in the school and their progress and needs. Additionally, he has created a loyal and united staff. They share his high expectations for the development of the school, and for the welfare and care of the pupils. Consequently, pupils are very well looked after, feel safe, and benefit from the excellent links with other agencies and partners. Leaders set challenging targets for all pupils and are mostly successful. Recently, however, there have been some failures to reach them, because a few pupils have not made the progress predicted by the school, especially in mathematics. This has led to robust reviews and actions, which are already resulting in better outcomes. School self-evaluation is detailed and accurate, and reflects clearly the recent impact of the initiatives taken by senior staff. The school has an exceptional governing body, decisively led by the new chair of governors. Governors have an impressive record of challenging school managers and holding the school to account. Additionally, they are highly supportive and have considerable professional expertise in financial management.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children within the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children thrive within a warm, safe and happy learning environment, where the provision for their welfare, as well as their personal development, is outstanding. Children enter the Reception class with skills and experiences that are typical for their age, although there is a wider range of abilities than in the past and considerable differences between year groups. Children make consistently good progress and rapidly become confident and independent learners. Most reach, and some exceed, the goals expected by the end of Reception, and standards when they enter Year 1 are above average. Good teaching, including effective planning and continuous assessment, and sensitive and knowledgeable leadership, are the main reasons for the children's good achievement. Planning ensures that the competent support staff and volunteer helpers are deployed effectively. Regular assessment through observations, photographs, formal tasks and staff discussion is integral to the good progress children make in their learning and social development. Children often assess their own work and that of their friends in simple tasks. They are provided with a very stimulating environment, especially the exciting outdoor area, which gives them enjoyment and constantly stirs their imagination. They greatly enjoy tending their chickens, collecting the eggs daily, and selling them, or cooking them for healthy snacks. These opportunities are linked particularly well with the 'Food for Life' scheme, which gives

children very good early knowledge of healthy eating. Their behaviour is excellent, and they collaborate very well with each other and adults. Many parents comment how delighted they are with the start their children are given by the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the recent improvements in teaching and the provision for mathematics in Key Stage 2 are consolidated, so that all pupils consistently reach the standards of which they are capable.

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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	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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

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?	1
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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**

20 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Orleton Church of England Primary School, Ludlow SY8 4HQ

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome when we visited your school yesterday. We loved seeing your chickens, and hearing about how the Reception class sell the eggs. You really impressed us when you talked about your hopes for the future, especially those who want to become doctors and lawyers, and a professional footballer! You told us how much you enjoy school, and we can see why. This is what makes us agree with you:

- You are well taught, make good progress and usually reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- You behave well in and out of school, and really enjoy your learning. You get on very well with each other, and with the adults in your school, who care for you and keep you safe, particularly those of you who have more difficulties than others.
- You lead very healthy lives, especially through your healthy eating. We are so pleased that many of you choose to have wonderful healthy school lunches. It is good that you also have so many sporting opportunities and team games.
- We are very impressed with how much you do in the local community, how you mix with other schools, and how you learn from schools in other parts of the world.
- Your teachers give you an exciting curriculum, which you enjoy, especially the many opportunities you have to use ICT.
- Your headteacher knows you all very well. He and his senior team and the school governors are doing their best to give you the best possible start to your education, and are always trying to improve the school. We hope that you want to improve too.

We have asked them to make sure that you all do as well as you possibly can in mathematics. You can help by making sure your teachers know if you cannot understand some of your learning in mathematics.

Yours faithfully

Rod Braithwaite

Lead inspector