

Yatton Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109214
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	337242
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ruth Summerell
Headteacher	Jonathan Heywood (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 17 lessons or parts of lessons and observed 13 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and some Year 6 pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' work in literacy and mathematics, curricular planning, assessment and tracking information for each year group and the school's procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. Inspectors also considered 145 questionnaires that were received from parents and carers as well as those returned by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact on pupils' progress of strategies to improve writing across the school
- the impact of initiatives to improve the performance of girls and higher attaining pupils in mathematics
- the effectiveness of the school's assessment systems and how well information is used to plan next steps in learning the effectiveness of the school's monitoring systems in bringing about improvements in teaching and learning and accelerating pupils' progress, particularly in writing.

Information about the school

Yatton Church of England Junior is a large junior school. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. An average number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The main areas of need are learning difficulties, dyslexia and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties and autism. The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their positions in an acting capacity in September of this year, while plans for federation with the infant school, with which they share a site, are formulated.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school currently provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. Nevertheless, it is improving rapidly. The last year has seen significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and as a result previous underachievement is being eradicated swiftly. This means that although progress from their starting points remains satisfactory, pupils have made accelerated progress this year and are now achieving appropriately. Attainment is average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

When the acting headteacher took up post, he immediately instigated a robust review of the school's practice. This resulted in an accurate evaluation of where the school was currently placed. Priorities for improvement were clearly identified, an action plan drawn up and a rigorous monitoring system put in place to ensure that strategies were acted upon. The help of the local authority was sought and this resulted in much useful training and support for staff, to which they responded with commitment and dedication. There is now a real vibrancy in the school. Staff demonstrated very clearly in their questionnaire responses that they share this renewed drive for improvement. This, combined with much improved teaching and academic outcomes for pupils, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

The quality of teaching is now good. As a result, attainment, particularly in writing, has risen significantly in the last year from below average to the levels expected for pupils' ages. The content of pupils' written work is often imaginative and exciting but spelling and punctuation skills are still not as good as they should be.

Procedures for assessing pupils' learning have become much more robust. In addition, staff have a clear understanding of how to use the information from these assessments to plan pupils' learning in a more measured and precise way. This means that all groups of pupils are generally well provided for. The school has largely addressed failings in mathematics. Girls are now achieving much better than they were. Nonetheless, higher attaining pupils are sometimes held back in lessons because they are not given tasks that challenge them sufficiently.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors found pupils to be polite and considerate and pupils themselves say that behaviour has improved dramatically in the last year. This is partly due to the introduction of 'zone boards'. No-one likes being moved down a zone! Pupils make a good contribution to the school, local and international communities through participation in a range of events and through their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. The curriculum is lively and interesting and pupils benefit

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from a good range of visits and visitors such as Farmer Nick. Pupils enthusiastically support the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The school cares well for its pupils and provides good support for them.

A good audit has been carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's community cohesion policy and an action plan is fully in place. Steps are being taken to fill any gaps to ensure that pupils understand the range of religious, ethnic and cultural diversity in Britain today, but are still at an early stage of implementation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' spelling and punctuation skills in order to raise attainment in writing still further.
- Ensure that tasks for higher attaining pupils in mathematics consistently provide them with the challenge they need to move forward.
- Fully implement the plans to link with a school in a contrasting area so that pupils can gain first-hand experience of meeting with and learning from pupils from different cultures.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' above average attendance is reflected in the way they enjoy school life. They listen attentively in lessons and enthusiastically answer questions. They work well together in pairs and small groups. This was particularly evident in a Year 4 English lesson when pupils were discussing the feelings that children might have experienced when they were evacuated during the Second World War. They have a good understanding of what living a healthy lifestyle entails and participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities. They make a good contribution to the day-to-day life of the school and school councillors are proud of their roles. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and look after each other well. Pupils' writing has improved because they are encouraged to discuss and plan much more rigorously and are much more interested in tasks given to them. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were observed 'hot-seating' each other in order to discover as much as they could about Michael's character in 'Kensuke's Kingdom'. They asked relevant and pertinent questions which enabled them to make mature and rational hypotheses. Progress in mathematics has improved, particularly that of girls, because of a greater emphasis on problem solving and pupils being encouraged to apply the skills they have learned. Pupils make good progress when tasks are carefully matched to their needs, but this is not always the case for higher attaining pupils. In one Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, higher attaining pupils were observed carrying out the same task as those working at a lower level instead of being provided with more challenging work from the outset. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from individual and small group support and their progress, too, has improved over the last year. Pupils are highly competent at using information and communication technology (ICT). This, together with their rapidly improving academic

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progress and personal qualities, prepares them well for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are enthusiastic and actively participate in their lessons because teachers make them interesting for them. This is because the curriculum is relevant and is effectively designed to meet the needs of pupils well. There is a good balance of different subjects, and ICT is used well to support all aspects. The focus on improving pupils' writing has been highly effective. There are good opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English and these are planned systematically across the school. For example, pupils in Year 3 effectively planned their arguments as to whether Boudicca should be supported or not? depending on whose side they were on.

Teachers explain clearly what pupils are going to learn and the means by which they should reach the goals set in the lesson. Their questioning skills are particularly strong and used well to assess the level of pupils' learning as well as to prompt them to deeper thinking. Marking of pupils' work is of good quality. Comments are constructive and pupils say they find them very helpful. Pupils' progress is carefully assessed and this

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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information is used well to set targets for improvement. Pupils know their targets and these are effective in challenging them and giving them something to aim for. They have lots of opportunities to discuss and compare their thinking with partners. They are becoming adept at measuring how effectively they have learned by checking through their success criteria at the end of each lesson.

The school aims to develop the confidence, independence and enthusiasm of the pupils and this is reflected well in the day-to-day life of the school and is considerably aided by the critical skills challenges that pupils are offered. The school takes particular care to identify pupils' individual needs at an early stage. Staff work closely with parents and a wide a range of outside agencies to provide the right support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher and leadership team are very well focused on improving attainment and accelerating pupils' progress, while maintaining the strengths that make the school a happy and secure place for pupils. Staff at all levels share this ambition and there is good commitment from all staff to achieve the best for the pupils. They are involved well in monitoring the quality of their areas of responsibility by working alongside colleagues in the classroom and examining planning and pupils' work. They have become much more effective at identifying where pupils are in their learning and taking action to address possible weaknesses before they become concerns. Initiatives taken are working very well but have not yet had a full impact on pupils' attainment.

Governors are very supportive and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they are rather over-reliant on the acting headteacher for information and they do not visit the school frequently enough to observe and experience its work at first hand. They ensure that all safeguarding procedures are robust and leaders endeavour to ensure that pupils, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, are valued and free from discrimination. They have a good policy in place to promote community cohesion although the school has not yet implemented all strategies identified on the action plan.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Nearly half of the parents and carers of pupils registered at the school responded to the questionnaire. Most are very pleased with what the school offers their children but there are a few concerns. Some feel that they do not receive enough information as to how well their children are doing. Inspectors found that the school has greatly improved its contacts with parents this year. Family learning courses, open afternoons have all been introduced and an open door policy extended in an effort to give parents greater understanding of what their children are learning and how well they are doing. A few are concerned with the progress their children are making. This concern may well have been justified in the past but this year has seen such good improvement in the teaching and learning that pupils have caught up to where they should be.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 145 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yatton Church of England Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	46	71	49	5	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	79	54	63	43	0	0	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	25	87	60	15	10	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	27	81	56	18	12	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	53	37	76	52	11	8	3	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	27	78	54	22	15	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	33	87	60	6	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	27	84	58	11	8	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	29	80	55	17	12	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	33	74	51	16	11	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	24	80	55	16	11	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	48	33	70	48	17	12	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	41	64	44	13	9	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yatton Church of England Junior School, Yatton BS49 4HJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You were really polite and friendly and helped us to learn a lot about what you do and what you enjoy. Your school gives you a satisfactory education and is rapidly improving.

What we found about your school

- It is a friendly and happy place in which to work and play.
- You enjoy coming to school and behave well.
- You achieve the standards you should in English and mathematics and do really well in science.
- You show a good understanding of how to live healthily and how to stay safe.
- Your teachers plan interesting lessons and now mark your work really well so that you know what you have to do to improve.
- You benefit from a good range of after-school clubs as well as some interesting visits and visitors.
- Your headteacher and teachers are working very hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now

n You have done really well this year in improving the quality of your writing but your spelling and punctuation are not as good as they could be. We would like teachers to make sure that you learn to spell more accurately and use the correct punctuation. You can help by taking even more care with your work.

n You are also doing better in mathematics this year, but we have asked the teachers to make sure that those of you who find learning easier are really challenged by the tasks they set you to do.

n We would like to see the school implement the plans to set up a link with a school in a different area so that you can learn more about the different cultures that can be found in this country.

We are sure that you will do all you can to help all adults who work with you to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard Lead Inspector

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