

# Speen Church of England (Voluntary Aided) School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 110468               |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Buckinghamshire      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 337506               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 15–16 September 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Nina Bee             |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Infant   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–7  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 36   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Amanda Cleaver   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Denise Nayna   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 8 November 2006  |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Flowers Bottom Lane<br>Speen<br>Princes Risborough<br>HP27 0SX |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited four lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors, groups of pupils and parents. She observed the school's work, and looked at policies, internal and external monitoring evidence, academic performance data, teachers' planning, and safeguarding documentation. Twenty-three parental questionnaires were analysed along with two staff questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following:

- the teaching of writing throughout the school
- how well pupils are guided and supported through the use of targets and the quality of teachers' marking
- how well the school promotes community cohesion
- the quality and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation.

## Information about the school

This is a very small school. Nearly all of the pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Reception class. At the time of the inspection, almost all of the children in Reception attended school part time.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school where pupils flourish in a happy, safe and secure environment. As one parent correctly wrote, 'The school is very much at the heart of this community.' It is a stimulating place to learn and play. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that is on offer. The school links well with others in the community to plan many exciting educational visits out and invites interesting visitors into school to talk and work with the pupils. For example, an author recently visited school and pupils learnt how to develop poetry. Older pupils proudly spoke about the poem they took part in devising. In addition, the school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which are very well attended. These particularly support the physical education programme and reinforce the importance of taking regular exercise. The way these activities enrich and extend the good curriculum that is offered is excellent. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about school, and this is reflected in the above average levels of attendance and the smiles on their faces as they go about their daily activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils are kind and considerate towards one another and very polite towards the adults who help them learn. Visitors to the school are quickly absorbed into the warm and caring atmosphere. Pupils work well together in lessons and play sensibly when outside in the playground. Their behaviour is excellent in all they do. Effective links with the local church enable the pupils to begin to develop a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Despite having some planned opportunities to begin to learn about the different cultures, religions and beliefs found in modern Britain, their knowledge and understanding in this area are not well developed. The pastoral care that pupils receive is good. Those pupils with specific learning needs are well catered for, enabling them to take part in all activities. Adults value all that pupils say and do. Consequently, pupils grow into confident, articulate young people. Children in the Reception class get off to a good start, and parents are really pleased about this. As pupils move through Years 1 and 2, learning and progress in reading, mathematics and science are good in relation to their starting points. Progress is not always so rapid in writing. While teaching is good overall, teachers do not always give pupils enough clear guidance on what they need to do to improve and reach their targets. This is particularly apparent in writing. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly. As a result, teachers are easily able to identify those pupils who might need additional support.

Staff and governors are committed to giving the pupils the best deal possible. There have been some good improvements since the previous inspection. Identified priorities, such as improving how the school engages with parents, have been very successfully developed, and as a result, this aspect of the school's work is outstanding. Parents are

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overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school's work. They say that they feel privileged that their children attend such a wonderful school. Parents state that they are well informed and that any concerns are always listened to and quickly sorted out. In addition, above average standards and good progress have been sustained. These successes along with the school's accurate self-evaluation indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of guidance pupils receive by ensuring that: - teachers' marking gives all pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve and reach their targets, especially in writing - pupils are reminded what they need to do to develop their basic writing skills in all subjects across the curriculum.
- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity and the different religions in modern Britain by ensuring that: - pupils are given more opportunities to reinforce and develop their learning in this area - opportunities are not missed to promote and reinforce learning when pupils take part in educational visits or work with visitors invited into school.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils achieve well because teaching inspires and motivates them so that they enjoy learning. They are keen and eager to answer questions and this greatly contributes to the learning. Teachers' planning is thorough and usually caters well for pupils' individual needs through well-focused, sensitive support. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. There is no evidence to suggest that there is any difference between the progress of girls and boys. Higher attaining pupils are generally challenged well enabling them to consistently make good progress. Learning occasionally slows when activities are not accurately matched to the needs of all pupils. Standards attained in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average in Year 2. Some pupils reach even higher standards. However, the school recognises that standards in writing are not as consistently good as in other areas. This is because teachers do not always give enough clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, both in oral feedback and marking. Pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of the need to take regular exercise and eat healthily. They talk confidently and knowledgeably about which foods are good for you and why it is so important to eat them. All are very proud of the extremely healthy packed lunches they bring to school each day. Pupils show a good awareness of why they should keep themselves safe as they talk about sun and water safety and the potential dangers of electricity. As one pupil correctly explained, 'You must never touch an electric plug with wet hands.' Pupils speak sensitively about children who are not as fortunate as they are. They recall how they 'collect toys to put in parcels to send to children in far away countries'. With their good personal and social skills, excellent behaviour and above average academic skills, pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well organised and resources, including interactive whiteboards, are used effectively to make learning more interesting. You could have heard a pin drop as pupils in Years 1 and 2 watched and listened very carefully to the story of Katie Morag. Afterwards, one of them confidently said, 'Katy lives on an island in Scotland, you know.' Another chipped in 'Like us. We live on an island. There is sea all around us.' Teaching assistants contribute well to the good learning that goes on in most lessons. Occasionally, when the whole class is given the same activity, some pupils are not sufficiently challenged because their needs are not as well catered for.

Pupils enjoy receiving supportive comments and stickers for good work. They understand why they have targets written on cards in their books. Some marking includes good quality written advice on what pupils need to do to improve and reach their targets. However, this is not consistent.

The curriculum is suitably planned on a two-year rolling programme to cater for pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are taught together. However, teachers do not always finely grade activities so that all abilities are catered for. Opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills

<sup>1</sup> 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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in all subjects are not always taken. All pupils benefit greatly from the outstanding number of visits out and visitors invited into school, although opportunities are sometimes missed to ensure pupils get as much out of them as they might, particularly in relation to cultural and faith diversity. In addition, there is a good range of extra-curricular clubs that are offered to reinforce and develop learning in all subjects. The physical education programme, the arts and pupils’ personal and social development are particularly enhanced by these activities. While taking part in these activities, pupils are regularly involved with events in the village and consequently become valued members of the local community.

There is a strong focus on developing personal and social skills as pupils move through this caring environment. As a result, the school turns out well-rounded individuals who are confident and enthusiastic young people. Pupils with specific needs are effectively supported to enable them to make similar progress to their classmates.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Good leadership and management, especially by the headteacher, is one of the reasons why this school is so successful. She has a clear idea of how the school is doing and is ambitious and passionate that this school does not stand still. Staff and governors work well together and are determined to make improvements where necessary. This determination to improve further, alongside the school’s accurate self-evaluation and track record of sustaining improvements, means the school’s capacity to improve further is good. All staff continually make sure that all pupils’ individual needs are considered and all get the deal they deserve, and that no pupil is discriminated against. Governors are proud of the school’s achievements and of their contribution to the process. They are well informed and so are able to support and challenge the school well. For example, they have been very involved recently in improving links with parents. As a result, parents have good opportunities to be involved in the work of the school and all speak very highly of it. They also speak very highly of the staff and how well their children are looked after and catered for. The team effort in this small school is tremendous.

Staff and governors have developed a good plan of action to promote community cohesion. The school community is very close and looks after one another well. Impact is most evident in the school’s links with the local community. Photographic evidence shows that pupils have good opportunities to mix with others from many different

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backgrounds when they take part in local and national festivals. There are plans to link with a school which has pupils from different ethnic heritages. The school takes the health and safety of its pupils seriously and fulfils all safeguarding requirements. Staff and governors work well together to ensure that pupils work and play in a safe and secure environment.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>2</b> |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction procedures enable children to quickly settle into school life. Year groups are often small and children’s skills on entry to school vary year-on-year. The current Reception children entered school with levels that are generally expected for their ages. School data and inspection evidence indicate that children achieve well during their time in Reception. By the time they start in Year 1, most children reach levels that are above average. Teaching is good. Activities are well planned and the covered, secure outside area as well as the school grounds are used effectively to support learning. Children were seen learning effectively as they played imaginatively issuing tickets and driving the train to Marylebone station. This activity was supported well by the teacher who developed children’s language skills and confidence well. Children are given clear guidance on how to record work in books as they develop basic writing and numeracy skills. Marking of children’s work is supportive and informative. As they get older and begin to write groups of words and simple sentences, marking does not always show the children what they need to do to improve. More guidance is then needed to improve basic sentence construction and the spelling of simple words. Personal and social skills are well promoted in all that the children do and behaviour is good. There are good



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arrangements to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children. Clear records are kept on all children which show the good progress children are making and where any additional support may be needed. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Sessions run smoothly because the adults are well organised and have a good idea of how young children learn.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage                          | 2        |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage                       | 2        |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2        |

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents express the unanimous view that their children go to a good school. All of the 23 returned questionnaires included positive written comments. Parents wrote about 'how the wide range of extra-curricular activities enhance the learning and development of their children' and that 'their children grow in confidence and develop an appetite to learn'. Others wrote about the 'strong leadership of the headteacher and the inspiring teachers'.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Speen CofE VA 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 36 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |     | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|-----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %   | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 21             | 91  | 2     | 9  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 23             | 100 | 0     | 0  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 18             | 78  | 5     | 22 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 19             | 83  | 4     | 17 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 20             | 87  | 3     | 13 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 19             | 83  | 4     | 17 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 23             | 100 | 0     | 0  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| 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) | 20             | 87  | 3     | 13 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 20             | 87  | 3     | 13 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 20             | 87  | 3     | 13 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 18             | 78  | 5     | 22 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 19             | 83  | 4     | 17 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 21             | 91  | 2     | 9  | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 39  | 58   | 3            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 13  | 50   | 33           | 4          |
| Secondary schools    | 17  | 40   | 34           | 9          |
| Sixth forms          | 18  | 43   | 37           | 2          |
| Special schools      | 26  | 54   | 18           | 2          |
| Pupil referral units | 7   | 55   | 30           | 7          |
| All schools          | 15  | 49   | 32           | 5          |

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul> |
| 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.**



16 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Speen Church of England (Voluntary Aided) School, Princes Risborough, HP27 0SX

Thank you for making my visit to your school so much fun. I really enjoyed talking to you and coming into lessons to see how you were getting on. I was very impressed with all you have learnt about eating healthily. The lesson you told me about when you made smoothies sounded lots of fun and I can see why you thought it was your best lesson ever! I think the way you behave in assembly, in lessons and while playing during breaks is excellent and you should all be very proud of yourselves for that. Your parents think you go to a good school and they are right.

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

- The children in Reception get off to a good start.
- Teaching is good and you all learn well because of this.
- Exciting visits out and interesting visitors who come into school, to talk and work with you, make learning even more fun.
- You are all well cared for and looked after.
- By the time you leave at the end of Year 2, most of you reach standards that are above those normally reached for pupils of your age.

I have asked the school to do two things to improve the education you receive.

- Make sure that when teachers mark your work, especially when you do writing, they give you clear advice on what you need to do to improve and reach your targets.
- Improve your knowledge and understanding of some of the different backgrounds and beliefs of people who live in our country.

Keep smiling, working hard and having lots of fun as you learn.

Best wishes

Nina Bee

Lead Inspector

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