

Whitewater Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116345
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338800
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Brooks
Headteacher	Matthew Irving
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed nine lessons taken by five teachers and support sessions led by teaching assistants. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at curriculum plans, assessment records, minutes of meetings and 51 parental questionnaires. They also had informal discussions with parents.

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

- the extent to which the gap between pupils' achievement in reading and writing is narrowing
- how well the mixed age Reception/Year 1 class provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how successfully this rural school is promoting community cohesion and children's knowledge and understanding of diverse communities within the UK and beyond.

Information about the school

The school serve a rural community and is smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with 5% from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. Around a fifth of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is above average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. Others have behavioural and emotional difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class.

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. Since the last inspection, every aspect of the provision has improved, resulting in much better progress and higher levels of attainment. The governing body works extremely effectively in tandem with school leaders to drive improvements. The good headway made in recent years owes much to this close partnership. Governors visit regularly and circulate notes from their visits to colleagues. Rigorous self-evaluation, including close monitoring of teaching and meticulous tracking of pupils' progress, enables the school to pinpoint precise areas for further development. It has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

Pupils enjoy learning and their behaviour is exemplary. Because of effective teaching and their positive attitudes to learning, pupils achieve well. During lessons, they sustain their concentration because teachers maintain a brisk pace, clarify what pupils need to do to succeed and set tasks which challenge all groups. By the end of Year 6, levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science are above average. Pupils make good progress throughout Years 1 and 2, but do considerably better in reading than writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from sensitive and effective support, which enables them to reach their individual targets.

All adults know every pupil and this contributes to the outstanding level of care provided. Pupils thrive in the secure and supportive environment and are extremely well prepared for their subsequent education and beyond. Attendance levels are high. Pupils get along with one another very well and take full advantage of the good range of enrichment activities. They enjoy playing and learning in the extensive and varied outdoor areas, although some opportunities are missed for pupils to explore and investigate within the school grounds. The spacious outdoor learning area for Reception children is not used as effectively as it could be to promote their all-round development. In this small school, almost all staff willingly take on extra responsibilities, contributing well to a continuous drive for improvement. The school succeeds in meeting its aims to promote tolerance, mutual respect and a love of learning, underpinned by Christian values. The vast majority of parents are pleased with all the school offers. Reflecting these views, one wrote, 'We feel lucky and grateful to be part of such a nurturing yet inspiring and challenging school community.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Narrow the gap between pupils skills in reading and writing at Key Stage 1, by:
 - sustaining the current emphasis on improving opportunities for them to write

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across the curriculum

- providing more prompts for the next steps for improvement in their written work, displays of vocabulary and promoting the use of resources, such as dictionaries and thesauruses
 - sharing further examples of good quality pupils' writing to demonstrate how children might improve their own written work
- Improve outdoor provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by providing better resources especially for promoting their physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

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

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. Across the school, pupils make good progress in mathematics, many reaching above average levels of attainment. For example, Year 5 pupils demonstrated their well-developed geometry skills as they identified acute, obtuse and reflex angles on the South African national flag. A drive to improve pupils' attainment in writing in Key Stage 2 has borne fruit. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop good skills in writing for different purposes, such as persuasion. Good examples were seen of pupils using descriptive language to create a mood. A Year 3 pupil wrote, 'The tiger's amber eyes narrowed. Sanja jumped.' A poem by a Year 6 pupil, entitled 'My Magic Box' included:

I will put in,

The echo of no one speaking

A golden bone from a dinosaur

A tender tear from a hurt lion

The last voice ever heard.

Pupils in Year 2 generally read very well and are gaining insights into different genres and authors. One commented, for example, 'Eileen Browne believes certain groups of people are not represented in books.' Although most pupils reach the expected levels in writing, their written work does not generally include the sentence construction, punctuation and vocabulary they come across in their reading.

Pupils who find difficulty in communicating, because of their limited language skills and/or speech and pronunciation problems, generally make good progress. Indeed, many reach the expected targets for their age. The sensitive support provided for the very few pupils experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties enables them, for the most part, to sustain their concentration and move forward.

Pupils' warm greetings to visitors are indicative of their mature interpersonal skills and very good social and moral development. They enjoy taking part in artistic and musical activities. These promote their spiritual and cultural development well. They are proud of their school and there is a strong sense of community and mutual support as they work cooperatively in lessons and play happily in mixed-age groups. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe from harm.

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They are keen to take part in the good range of physical activities on offer and are well aware of the benefits of exercise and a balanced diet. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school through taking on a wide range of responsibilities, such as playtime leaders and 'paramedics'. School councillors take their roles seriously and were involved recently in the selection of a new deputy headteacher.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils have a sharp awareness of the contribution they can make to their own learning. Teachers enable them to do this by setting out clear criteria for success and helping pupils to assess their own progress. Skilful questioning in lessons draws on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding and provides a model for pupils' feedback to one another. When looking at three of her classmates' plans for an adventure story, one pupil asked, 'What relationship do Ben and Beth have □ are they siblings or friends?' Teachers use a variety of resources very effectively. Pupils in Year 3 were fully absorbed, for example, when studying photographs of a village in India. A clear emphasis on promoting their geographical skills was evident as they used terms such as

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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climate and landscape during their discussions. Pupils also gain a good idea of what they need to do next from teachers' effective marking. For example, in response to her teacher's comment, 'Good use of punctuation and paragraphs. Can you think of different words for said?', the pupil wrote 'whispered, begged, shouted, ordered'. Although examples of good work and prompts for improvement, such as lists of 'powerful' verbs, are displayed in then older classes, they are less evident in Key Stage 1, and pupils do not use aids such as thesauruses as often as they could to extend their vocabulary.

The curriculum is well planned to engage pupils and promote their academic progress and personal development. Good work is evident in art and design, music and design and technology. While working in such subjects, pupils have good opportunities to practise and consolidate their basic skills. Pupils gain very good levels of competence in using the internet, creating multimedia presentations and their own video recordings, and are aware of e-safety issues. The pond and wild area are used to provide first-hand experiences in science but not used as extensively as they could be as a resource for other subjects.

A highly inclusive ethos ensures that concerns are quickly highlighted and addressed with sensitive support. Every child is recognised as an individual. Comments from pupils indicate that they understand where to find help. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, are extremely well supported. Arrangements for transition into and out of the school are very effective because of the well-established links with parents, pre-school settings and receiving schools.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has played a pivotal role in ensuring all staff are focussed on improvement. Senior staff, including subject leaders, observe lessons, look at pupils' books and analyse assessment information closely to identify any anomalies and address them. The governing body receives regular reports from school leaders and acts as an effective sounding board. Every person's role in self-evaluation is defined clearly, and all aspects of the school are systematically and thoroughly reviewed.

Governors are innovative in their approach. For example, they suggested links to the Olympic Games and the Queen's Jubilee in planning the school's 300-year anniversary in 2012, thinking of ways the celebrations could promote community cohesion. They keep

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a close watching brief on emerging issues, by setting up sub-groups, for example, to look at new government guidelines on equality. The governing body ensures policies for the safeguarding of pupils are implemented effectively.

The school's strong commitment to equal opportunities and addressing any discrimination is evident in the way that any discrepancy in the achievement of different groups is quickly identified and addressed. Community cohesion operates very well at the school and parish level, and good progress is being made in exploring and promoting an understanding of diversity within the wider society. Positive links are being forged with schools overseas and the school is seeking ways to engage pupils with children living in diverse communities within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with the skills typical of their age group. By the time they are ready to enter Year 1, children have made good progress, reaching levels above those expected across all areas of learning. They settle quickly within the positive environment, establishing good relationships with adults and with other children. They play happily together, showing respect for others as they share and take turns. This was evident as children counted the number of cubes fitting into different containers. One asked politely, 'Excuse me, will you please pass the number 8 (container)?' They make particularly good progress in speaking and listening and early writing, counting and problem-solving skills. The 'Beach Caf ' role play area generated lots of dialogue as children served ice-cream and proudly showed the hats they had made for the official opening. One used a well-formed sentence as she informed the inspector, 'Mrs [school

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secretary] is going to cut the ribbon for the opening of our beach hut.'

Observations of the progress children make are recorded in their learning files and help staff to plan the next steps. A systematic approach to teaching children to recognise letters and sounds provides a secure foundation for reading and writing. Several children use their knowledge of phonics to create sentences successfully.

The provision is generally well managed, although the outdoor area is rather sparse and under-used. This restricts children in their choice of how, and where, they engage in areas of learning such as language and creative development, and further their knowledge and understanding of the natural world. Care is taken to ensure the Reception and Year 1 groups work at an appropriate level. Policies and procedures are consistently applied and this contributes to the security of the setting. Children's needs are supported by effective partnerships with parents.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

The large majority of questionnaires were positive in their views of the school. All parents felt their children enjoyed school. The concerns raised by few parents did not reflect the general view. The inspection established that parents are offered good opportunities to express their views and that these views are considered carefully. Inspectors found that improvements to the effectiveness of the school owe much to the dedicated and successful leadership of the senior management team.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whitewater Church of England Primary 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.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 103 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	75	13	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	76	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	47	25	49	0	0	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	49	20	39	4	8	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	27	53	20	39	4	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	47	19	37	4	8	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	63	18	35	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)	25	49	24	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	51	19	37	5	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	41	26	51	2	4	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	29	27	53	4	8	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	24	47	18	35	5	10	4	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	65	13	25	3	6	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

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.



17th June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitewater CE Primary School, Rotherwick, Hook, RG27 9BG

It was lovely to meet all of you when we inspected your school recently. We did enjoy talking to so many of you and we were very impressed with the way in which you care for each other and for your school. Whitewater is a good school. All of the staff work really well together to make sure that you have lots of exciting experiences and this helps you to enjoy your learning. Your school is a happy place. This is something that you told us and all of your parents agreed.

All of the staff and people who work for you in school make sure that you are very well cared for and this means that you feel safe and confident. Your teachers know you very well and make sure that the work they give you matches what you need to learn. This means that you make good progress.

Although we know your school is good, it is our job to help it become even better. We have suggested two things for the school to do now to improve:

- help children in Key Stage 1 to do as well in their writing as they do in reading
- provide more resources in the Reception outdoor area to help the youngest children explore the world around them, at the same time developing their social, language, creative and physical skills.

You can help by contributing your ideas about what helps you learn. Thank you again for your help, and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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