

The Ridgeway Church of England (C) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123151
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340292
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	null null
Headteacher	Ruth Franklin
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors saw four teachers at work in nine lessons. They held meetings with governors, parents, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, information on pupils' progress, safeguarding and other documents. Questionnaires from 31 parents and carers, 38 pupils and eight members of staff were scrutinised.

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

- the learning and progress of more able pupils in writing
- the impact of all leaders on provision and progress
- how well provision supports learning about cultural diversity
- the development of outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well members of staff support the individual interests and personal development of pupils.

Information about the school

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The school has a below-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nearly all of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The school has received several awards including the Healthy School Award and Activemark.

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

Pupils learn quickly at this successful and welcoming school. They benefit from working in small classes and groups and appreciate the wide range of interesting activities provided. They were right when they told the inspectors, 'We are a friendly society.' Good care, guidance and support enable pupils to develop individual interests and to become considerate citizens. Children learn quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where literacy skills are taught especially well. In Years 1 to 6, teachers plan interesting activities enabling pupils to enjoy school and to make good progress. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is above average. However, the writing of more-able pupils is less well developed than their skills in other subjects. The school is working well to close the gap between reading and writing by teaching sounds and letters with greater rigour. Writing is not of consistently high quality because teachers do not always tell pupils precisely what they should achieve in a lesson or use marking to show them how well they are doing and to challenge them to do even better next time.

Pupils are polite, enjoy school and behave well. They develop good personal skills, although they have a limited understanding of diversity because they have few opportunities to meet people from other cultures and they are not taught enough about cultural diversity.

There are good procedures for self-evaluation that enable the headteacher and senior managers to know what needs to be done next to improve the school further. Areas where changes are needed are quickly identified and decisive action is taken. This ensures that all groups of pupils continue to achieve well and enjoy learning and confirms the school's good capacity to continue improving. However, some subject leaders are not yet fully involved in monitoring and evaluating progress within their areas of responsibility. As a consequence, they do not always have a sufficiently detailed picture of trends in attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the levels of challenge for more-able pupils in writing by:
 - making expectations for each lesson clearer
 - ensuring marking is consistently challenging and shows pupils how well they are doing.
- Improve pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own.
- Provide greater opportunity for subject leaders to monitor and evaluate progress across the school.

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

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and learn quickly in most lessons. Although their progress in writing is not quite as rapid as in other aspects of literacy, the most able also make good progress overall. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, enjoyed taking part in the ‘maths minute’ where they worked swiftly through mental mathematics tests that closely matched their level of ability. In a literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils were keen to write questions to put in their letters to an author. Consequently, pupils of all abilities achieve well and attain levels that are above average by the time they leave the school. Their good reading, numeracy and personal skills prepare them well for the next stage of education and later life.

Pupils feel safe at school and behave well. They show their willingness to learn by attending school regularly. They enjoy taking responsibility for tasks around the school. For example, the thoughtful school councillors are preparing a secret outdoor staffroom for the hot weather. Pupils cooperate with each other really well when working in small groups or pairs and listen and respond sensibly in lessons. In a science lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils helped each other to look at apple blossom on a branch and decide where the apples would grow. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 also enjoyed talking about what they might find if they were able to go under the ground.

Pupils have good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They respect one another and reflect on the world around them. They are involved in discussions for improving the village pond and raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to meet others from different ethnic backgrounds and consequently they have a limited understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils are keen to demonstrate why the school has achieved the Activemark and Healthy School Award. They greatly enjoy taking part in physical activities such as ‘wake up and shake up’ and devising their own actions for these daily sessions. They mostly choose healthy options for their packed lunches.

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

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

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	
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers provide pupils with interesting and varied tasks that increase their enjoyment of school and their enthusiasm for learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed a multiplication game where they all rushed to point to the right answers. Good relationships enable members of staff to manage behaviour well and learning is brisk in most lessons. Good subject knowledge is shared with the pupils successfully with the aid of good resources including information and communication technology. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the interactive whiteboard was used well to demonstrate how to convert improper fractions to mixed numbers. Occasionally when working together as a class, there is a slight drop in pace because some pupils are not actively involved in the learning.

Links between subjects are being developed well and pupils appreciate the wide variety of clubs and visits offered. These activities contribute well to the pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school. There are suitable plans to extend the range of visitors from different cultural backgrounds to help pupils learn more about diversity. Members of staff provide good care and support for all pupils by supporting their individual interests and ensuring that they all can learn quickly. Assessment procedures are firmly in place and are used to set individual targets. Tasks are explained to pupils, although this information is not always specific enough to help pupils of differing ability to know precisely what is expected of them, especially in their written work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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?

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

Leaders have a clear understanding of what works well and what needs to be developed next. This information is used effectively to embed ambition and to drive improvement. Teaching and learning are monitored by various leaders and good support is given to help teachers extend their skills. The school is good at promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. For example, there have been recent improvements to the systems for measuring attainment within year groups. These are helping to prevent dips in progress and to quickly address any underachievement for groups and individuals. The monitoring of pupils' progress is currently largely undertaken by the headteacher. Other leaders have too little opportunity to evaluate pupils' progress over time so that they can have a full picture of trends in attainment and progress.

Governors are knowledgeable and supportive and provide a good level of challenge for senior leaders. At the time of the inspection, the school's safeguarding arrangements were found to be good. Pupils are kept safe and report that they feel safe. There are detailed plans to make these arrangements even better, for example by dating policy reviews. Leaders have good relationships with external agencies and parents and carers, enabling them to provide good support for pupils who are finding life difficult. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils currently have a limited awareness of cultural diversity. The school has suitable plans to extend pupils' understanding by increasing links with schools in contrasting locations, but these are at an early stage of implementation.

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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Most children join the school working within the levels expected for their age. They make good progress, especially in literacy, and attainment is slightly above average by the time children enter Year 1. Members of staff work together well to provide an interesting and varied curriculum indoors and outside. Children are well behaved and work together happily. For example, children enjoyed hunting for, and sequencing, numerals hidden in the outdoor area. Children benefit from focused support in learning about letters and sounds. They are taught in the same class as Years 1 and 2 and consequently there are some restrictions in providing children with choices about where they are going to work. Leaders are looking at ways to provide greater freedom for children to make choices about their learning. They are seeking ways of enabling children to come in and out of the classroom without disturbing the older pupils. Provision is well organised and children’s differing needs are met well. Close relationships between staff and parents enable children to settle into class routines and gain confidence. Children’s progress is monitored rigorously at an individual level and information is shared with parents in the children’s ‘learning journeys’. End-of-year information is not yet fully evaluated to identify trends over time and between areas of learning.

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

There was a good response to the parental questionnaire. Most parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children are happy, are kept safe and are taught well. A few parents and carers who replied to the Ofsted questionnaire expressed concerns over the way they are informed about their children’s progress and how well the school deals with their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team agrees with parents and carers that pupils are safe and happy and that teaching is good. The school provides ample opportunities for parents and carers to find out how well their children are doing. Leaders are planning more frequent questionnaires and newsletters to involve parents and carers more fully. They already provide an open invitation to parents and carers to discuss any concerns and provide information on the school website.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Ridgeway Church of England (C) 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 67 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	58	13	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	71	9	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	29	18	58	3	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	35	19	61	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	45	17	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	29	19	61	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	35	18	58	1	3	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)	8	26	19	61	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	29	54	68	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	35	17	55	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	39	14	45	4	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	39	18	58	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	55	12	39	2	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.



28 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Ridgeway Church of England (C) Primary School, Wantage OX12 9UL

Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to this good school.

These are the best things about your school.

- You enjoy school and are right when you tell us that you 'learn new stuff each day'.
- You behave well and are polite and friendly.
- We agree with you when you say 'the teachers are kind'.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school even better.

These are the things we have asked your school to do next to make it even better.

Your headteacher and staff know that there is still work to be done to make the school even better. We have suggested three things that we think will help.

- Improve your writing by asking your teachers to show you exactly what you should achieve in each lesson and help you gain a clearer understanding of how well you are doing.
- Increase the opportunities for you to learn about cultures other than your own.
- Allow teachers who look after a subject to see how well you are learning in all the classes. This will help them make sure that you make even better progress.

Thank you once again for talking with us about your school and showing us your work. We were very impressed with your kind ideas to provide teachers with an outdoor staffroom. You could help your teachers further by making sure you always do your best writing.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector

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