

# Spaxton CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123790
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	340426
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Caroline McKee

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	62
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Deborah McInerney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2010
<b>School address</b>	Spaxton Bridgwater TA5 1BS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Seven lessons were observed and four teachers seen. The breakfast club, after-school club, extra-curricular club and off-site rehearsals for the school production were also observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils and a member of the governing body.

Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documents such as the school's development plan, pupils' work and monitoring and attendance records. Inspectors also evaluated the responses from 28 questionnaires from parents and carers and responses from pupils and staff.

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

- whether the school's current data support the pupils' improvements in 2009
- how well the curriculum and provision for personal development impact on the all-round development of each pupil
- the effectiveness of the monitoring at all levels of leadership to ensure that academic improvements are being sustained.

## Information about the school

Spaxton Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average, as is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Almost all the pupils are White British and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The school provides a breakfast club and after-school provision. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are catered for in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The school holds a number of awards such as the Healthy Schools Award and Arts Mark.

**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

Spaxton Church of England Primary School is a good school. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress and so by the time they leave in Year 6 they are above average. The school has worked hard to improve its curriculum to one that is outstanding. It is creative with a thematic approach and has a strong focus on the arts, providing a rich range of music, drama, art and dance. The pupils say they really enjoy all of the opportunities and it undoubtedly adds a dimension of confidence when speaking and performing.

The headteacher has fostered a whole-school team spirit and a corporate responsibility where everyone is encouraged to help make decisions. The school has a good understanding of how well it is doing. As a result, it has a good capacity to sustain its improvements. Although the governing body is supportive, it does not always ask questions to monitor all aspects of leadership.

Pupils benefit from very effective pastoral care to ensure that their personal needs are met. Parents are appreciative of the school. One wrote, 'The school has a very caring atmosphere and really acknowledges every child's individuality.' Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those who are not making as much progress as they should, benefit from good support and from an effective team of teaching assistants. They work in a close partnership with class teachers to help pupils to make good progress.

Children in the Reception class get a good start to their education. They enter the school with skills and abilities that are a little below those expected for their age, although these can vary considerably with the small numbers in each group. The broad range of activities provided in the stimulating environment inside and outside mean that they learn well and make good progress. Progress in Key Stage 1 dips to satisfactory because there is less challenge for the pupils to excel in their learning. Progress accelerates again after this and continues through to Year 6. The school recognises the need to raise expectations again so that more pupils reach the higher levels. Standards are higher in reading than they are in mathematics and writing.

The school has established very effective partnerships with other organisations. For example, well-focused visits and projects with their associated secondary school, and specialist French and physical education teaching, ensure that pupils feel very comfortable and secure when they transfer. The school has worked hard to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's education. Although this is having a positive impact with parents of younger children, there are still too many pupils missing school for holidays. Attendance is broadly average and improving.

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Teaching is good overall. The very positive and supportive relationships between the teachers and the pupils ensure that they are attentive and focused on learning. They work well in groups and across different age groups. There is, however, insufficient information in the classrooms and in their books to inform pupils about what they need to do to improve. The quality of marking has not been systematically monitored and as a result, the pupils are not always able to take the initiative to improve their own learning.

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

- Improve the quality of marking and availability of helpful guidance so that pupils understand and work independently to improve their learning.
- Accelerate the rate of progress for all pupils, particularly in mathematics and writing, by raising expectations.
- Embed a systematic approach to monitoring of teaching so that governors can fulfil their role more effectively and so the headteacher can effectively identify areas for improvement.

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

Overall, pupils achieve well in lessons because they find them interesting and are keen to take part. For example, the good use of their own ideas of how to say 'no' led to some imaginative and lively script writing in Years 5 and 6 and also developed their moral understanding on a range of social issues that were relevant to their lives. Good support from teachers and teaching assistants has helped pupils to extend their writing and mathematical skills to be above average, though these are still not as strong as reading. The school has a good assessment system to track pupils' achievements. It clearly identifies the need for extra support for those who are not making expected progress. Although this system has not yet been extended to science, other data show that pupils are making satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards their learning targets. Ongoing oral feedback in lessons is effective but the marking of work does not clearly give the pupils a structured approach of how to improve nor is there sufficient information, or examples of high quality work in the classrooms, for pupils to explore their own ways to improve. Pupils enjoy their learning. They are very attentive in lessons and their behaviour is outstanding. They support each other and show empathy for children who may be struggling with an aspect of work. Pupils have an excellent understanding about healthy lifestyles, and keep fit by participating enthusiastically in physical education lessons and in a good range of sports. They also have an excellent understanding of healthy eating, and there is a high take-up for the award-winning cooked school meals. The school council contributes successfully to the school and local communities, and was instrumental in improving the playtime facilities and creating a garden of reflection. Pupils' understanding of the world of work is enhanced by their involvement in fund-raising events for charities. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is excellent and

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reflects the school's Christian ethos. Their social and cultural development is good, although their knowledge of different parts of the British Isles and life in an urban society is not developed fully.

*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>1</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers manage their classes well to ensure that pupils stay focused on their learning. Most teachers use interesting resources and maintain a good pace to lessons. Teachers use questions successfully to encourage pupils to share their ideas, although they do not consistently challenge pupils to extend a deeper level of thinking. Discussions with the pupils show that they find teachers' marking of their work generally helpful in identifying what they need to improve, although this has not been consistent throughout the year.

The outstanding curriculum offers a wide range of interesting activities and is enhanced well by extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors. For example, a choreographer and a professional musician worked with all the pupils to present the school dance production at a professional theatre and linked it to the current theme of the rainforest. Not only

<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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did it advance their knowledge of the theme, it developed leadership skills, independence, team work and enhanced their self-esteem. The pupils have a say in what they want to learn when planning the curriculum and enjoy this ownership. Good links with local secondary schools provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their sporting skills.

The good care and support are key factors in helping pupils enjoy school and encouraging them to try hard. Pupils benefit from good support in classroom activities and through effective induction processes when they join the school and particularly good support when they move to their next school. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit particularly from close individual attention and the school's effective links with external agencies. The care and educational elements of the school's breakfast and after-school clubs effectively build on the school's creative ethos and are valuable additions for the pupils who attend. They are very well managed and organised, meeting all safety requirements.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: 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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Since the last inspection, the school has successfully improved the quality of teaching, curriculum and care and support. Governors continue to be supportive and recognise the need to be increasingly involved in improving the school. The evaluation of teaching is helping to raise standards but is not systematically monitored at regular intervals.

The school is very effective in promoting equal opportunities, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and tackling discrimination. Pupils are treated as individuals and their needs are well met. The school has improved its engagement with parents and carers since the last inspection, for example through improved communication and an open forum for parents to attend. It has worked hard to improve attendance and to get all parents to adhere to the school's policy for holidays. A few parents have been slow to respond. The school develops cohesion within its own community very successfully. It actively promotes cohesion within the local community, for example through links with the church and other village concerns. Its action plan highlights the need to develop links with communities in the wider national frame. The curriculum ensures that pupils have a good knowledge of other religions and they enjoy their links with a school in Kenya.

All safeguarding procedures are carried out effectively to provide a secure and safe

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learning environment. The headteacher and governors place high priority on pupils' safety and procedures are managed well. Regular training for staff, particularly in child protection issues, ensures that they are vigilant and provide good support.

*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: 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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</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**

Reception Year children make good progress because they benefit from a well-planned and organised programme of activities. They settle in quickly because of the very good links made prior to their arrival in school. Parents are pleased with the way in which their children settle and how they are kept informed and involved. There is mostly a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that the children choose to do themselves; however, sometimes, there is too much control rather than guidance. Relationships are good. Staff know the children well, and have a good understanding of their different interests and how they learn. Teaching is good and adults provide consistently good support to each child and promote their learning successfully. Good leadership and management have maintained a strong focus on checking carefully on how each child is doing.

Detailed planning ensures that the range of activities covers all required areas of learning. For example, the outdoor area is used fully to include a wide variety of activities, although there are too few displays of numbers to develop numerical skills. Staff make good use of detailed assessment information to ensure that individual needs are met. As a result, children make good progress in all areas of learning.



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*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**

Responses were received from half of the families at the school. The overwhelming majority were supportive and appreciative of the school. Almost all felt that their children were making enough progress. There were some concerns over leadership and teaching but the team and many other parental comments found these to be at least good. One concern was about how swiftly the school identified children with special educational needs; however, other parents felt that this was very well managed. There were extremely positive comments about the ethos of the school and the high levels of support for individual needs. The inspection team was in agreement with these views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Spaxton 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 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 62 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	71	7	25	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	61	9	32	2	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	50	11	39	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	64	8	29	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	71	6	21	2	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	61	9	32	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	54	11	39	2	7	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)	14	50	11	39	2	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	54	11	39	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	46	10	36	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	46	10	36	5	18	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	50	8	29	5	18	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	57	9	32	3	11	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](http://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"><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 pupils' 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.**



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spaxton Church of England Primary School, Spaxton TA5 1BS

Thank you all so much for making us feel so welcome at your good school. Nearly everything about your school is good: the teaching, how well the school is led and managed by your headteacher, and how well you make progress to attain above the levels expected for your age. Your behaviour is outstanding because of how you help and support each other, and so is your understanding of how to stay safe and live healthily, and your aspirations to reach for the best possible especially when performing. I was most impressed with your rehearsal at the theatre, especially when playing the boom whackers with no adult help at all.

You have an exciting curriculum that gives you such a wide range of experiences and the chance to try your best in sport, music, drama and dance. The displays around the school are lively, exciting and show off so well all that you achieve, especially your animation work. We found that the teachers and other staff care for you so that you are safe and very well prepared for your next school and life in general. We were impressed with your headteacher and the way she makes you feel about how well you can do. She encourages the staff to improve their teaching and try new ideas to make your learning fun.

We have agreed with your school that there are three things that will help it to become even better.

- We have asked the teachers to improve the marking of your work and share information about what you can do to improve, so that you can better plan your own next steps of learning.
- We want the teachers to increase the challenge for all pupils, particularly in mathematics and writing, so that you make even faster progress.
- We have also asked the headteacher and governors to create a method of systematically checking that teaching improves and is consistently good.

We wish you all every best wish for your future lives!

Yours sincerely

Caroline McKee

Lead inspector

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