

The Minster CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126368
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	340967
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Rundle HMI

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	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Dorset
Headteacher	Mrs S Worringham
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors spent the majority of the time looking at learning. They visited 29 lessons, observed nine teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and parents. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school development plan and its self-evaluation, tracking information on pupils' attainment and progress, governing body and curriculum documentation, staff and pupil questionnaires and 79 parental questionnaires

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

- the progress pupils have made by the end of Key Stage 2
- the impact Every Child Matters is having on pupils' opportunities and development
- whether teaching and the curriculum are sufficiently challenging to enable all pupils to reach their full potential, especially in English and at Level 5
- whether priorities for improvement are focused well enough to reverse the decline in standards in Key Stage 2.

Information about the school

The Minster is an average-sized primary school in the middle of Warminster. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Reception class. The school has slightly more girls than boys on its roll and most pupils are White British. The proportions of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, or who are entitled to a free school meal, are well below average; the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has national Healthy School status, an Activemark, the Silver Eco-Award and the full International School Award.

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

The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have a realistic view of the school's work because of rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. School improvement planning is ambitious and tackles areas of weakness effectively. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has brought about improvements since the last inspection in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. All staff share her commitment and drive in achieving the best for all pupils which means that the school has good capacity to improve further.

From below average attainment when they join the school, pupils make good progress and attain standards that are broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Senior leaders acknowledge that they have not yet done enough to improve pupils' writing skills. Pupils are polite, welcoming and keen to talk about their learning. Behaviour in and around the school is good for the vast majority of pupils. Pupils work cooperatively together in classrooms and in the playground. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through the wide range of responsibilities they readily undertake. The class and school councils, together with the eco-team, have brought about a number of positive changes. Pupils' views are sought through school surveys, recorded and responded to. The recent introduction of a children's self-evaluation form, that replicates whole-school procedures, is a reflection of senior leaders' commitment to involving pupils in making decisions about their school.

The redesigned curriculum is clearly linked to pupils' interests and experiences. The themed approach leads to imaginative and effective learning opportunities that pupils enjoy. Pupils were particularly enthusiastic about the astronaut training and the 'return of the mummy' themes. Senior leaders carefully monitor the curriculum to ensure that it continues to meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Some inconsistencies exist in the use of assessment and tracking data to ensure all pupils are challenged to attain their best at all times, and in the use of feedback so that all pupils understand how to improve their work further. Relationships between staff and pupils are productive because all adults know the pupils well and take good care of them. The support for pupils with behavioural, social or emotional difficulties is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' writing by:
 - embedding the development of writing skills in all areas of the curriculum

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- increasing the opportunities for pupils to use extended writing.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring:
 - more consistent use of assessment and tracking information and teachers' day-to-day records to set tasks that extend and challenge all pupils to fulfil their potential
 - consistently good verbal and written feedback so all pupils understand the next steps in their learning.

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

In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils practised and developed their skills well. They were enthusiastic and worked hard to complete tasks. In one lesson pupils made good progress in science by learning about the different properties of wood and rocks in relation to building castles; in another they used poetry effectively to explore working together. The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books, and the assessment and tracking information held by the school, confirm that pupils are making good progress overall and that standards are returning to above average levels. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use extended writing in their work across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make no more than satisfactory progress overall because the quality of their learning varies too much between age groups and subjects. Senior leaders are aware of this and have put in place a number of measures that are leading to positive changes in pupils' attitudes and work.

The vast majority of pupils say they feel safe in school at all times. Pupils know who to talk to if they have a concern and say they are confident that staff deal effectively with any issues. Behaviour is good, although a small group of older pupils expressed some frustration that the school is not always able to improve the behaviour of some of their peers as quickly as they would like. Pupils are developing healthy lifestyles through two hours of physical education each week, additional short activity sessions throughout the day and after-school sport. They have a well-developed understanding of the importance of a balanced diet. Pupils know right from wrong and are aware of how others might be feeling. They are curious about the world around them and talk knowledgably about other countries, cultures and religions.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well to set high expectations and to engage and motivate pupils to learn. However, the planning and use of tasks to extend and challenge pupils with different abilities is yet to be consistently employed across the school. A good range of methods and resources, especially information and communication technology (ICT), is used to stimulate pupils' interest further. For example, in one lesson pupils were able to use a combination of text and images flashed up on the interactive whiteboard to create their own visions of a character from a Dickens story. In all lessons teaching assistants are deployed well to support individuals or groups of pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively to develop pupils' knowledge, although the same emphasis is not given to checking pupils' understanding of the work. All pupils know their targets in English but these are not consistently used in verbal and written feedback to help them understand the next steps in their learning.

The redesigned curriculum ensures pupils have a broad range of experiences across the school, including good opportunities to use modern foreign languages. Good links are created between subjects and there is an appropriate emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Pupils are enthusiastic about music and religious education. As one pupil said, 'Lessons are exciting and fun; the teacher makes difficult work fun with lots of research.' There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities with high levels of participation, particularly in sport and the school choir. Good care and support for pupils are central to the school's work. Good arrangements are in place to help children settle into school and to support them when they move to

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secondary school. The school has secure procedures to support pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities, and the most vulnerable. The school makes full use of the services of external professionals where applicable, especially when trying to bring about changes to the behaviour and the attitudes to learning of a minority of pupils. Senior leaders and governors are closely monitoring the impact of support for all pupils and have good plans in place in extend it further.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels have worked together well to bring about positive changes since the last inspection. Governors are fully involved in setting the strategic direction of the school and have greatly improved the systems and structures to help them to understand information and to hold the school to account. The school has effective strategies to promote equality across the school, including challenging pupils' views on stereotyping and discrimination especially through school assemblies and circle time. Procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils are secure and all adults at the school receive regular training on child protection. The school is fully aware of the views of a small group of parents who have expressed concerns about the safety of their children in one class and are doing everything they can to tackle this and bring about change. The school makes a strong contribution to community cohesion. For example, it has international links to China and effective partnerships with other schools both locally and nationally which extend pupils' understanding of other beliefs and cultures. Good links and partnerships also enhance opportunities for the staff's professional development.

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

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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 make good progress across all the areas of learning but especially in their communication, language and literacy skills because of the quality of teaching. For example, all adults model good writing, sound and letter blends so pupils are excited to learn new things. A good range of resources and activities is available and the outdoor environment is used extensively throughout the day. Children particularly enjoyed splashing and skipping along the snake to reinforce their learning of the letter 's'.

There are highly effective partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants, who offer good one-to-one support for individual pupils. They have high expectations, using their subject knowledge well when teaching and when asking questions during child-initiated activities to help children make progress. Children are encouraged at all times to be both independent and cooperative in classes.

Good links exist with parents and induction arrangements for children when they start at the school are good. The school has good plans to extend relationships with parents further through 'home learning journeys'. The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are secure and the resulting information is used well to set tasks that reinforce learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear vision for further improvements and is effective in ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the provision.

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 vast majority of parents are very positive about the school's work. They are pleased with the information they receive about their child's progress and most feel their child is

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well prepared for the future. About one third expressed concerns related to inappropriate behaviour and how this was being dealt with. Inspectors followed up their concerns and investigated thoroughly the issues raised. Taking full account of parents' views, inspection evidence indicates that senior leaders and staff do everything expected of them when incidents of inappropriate behaviour arise. They take all appropriate measures, including using local authority services and external professionals, to help resolve issues. The school recognises more could be done to keep parents informed of the actions being taken and the changes that occur. A minority of parents commented positively on the introduction of coffee mornings to discuss issues and share ideas.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Minster CoE 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 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	49	37	47	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	47	38	48	0	0	4	5
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	41	44	56	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	34	43	54	9	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	34	44	46	6	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	42	40	51	6	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	30	48	61	6	8	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	35	43	54	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	28	47	59	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	19	35	44	19	24	9	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	20	45	57	9	11	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	19	24	43	54	9	11	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	34	42	53	8	10	1	1

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools 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">■ 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.



22 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Minster CE Primary School, Warminster BA12 8JA

I am writing to thank you for making us feel welcome and for talking to us when we came to visit your school recently. I also want to tell you what we found out about your school.

The Minster provides you with a good education. All the adults who work at the school know you and your needs extremely well and take good care of you. The vast majority of you behave well in class and in the playground but a small number of you need to take better control of your behaviour at times. You work hard in lessons and make good progress.

There have been changes to the way the curriculum is planned for this year and we have asked the school to review two things. The first is to increase the time you spend using extended writing to help to improve your writing overall. The second is to ensure that all of you are challenged to do your best at all times and that adults make sure you know what you need to do to improve. You can help by listening and working hard, by responding to feedback and wanting to attain your best.

I hope that you continue enjoying school and learning new things. Thank you once again for showing us your school.

Yours sincerely

Judith Rundle

Her Majesty's Inspector

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