

Wylve Valley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 134977 |
| Local Authority | Wiltshire |
| Inspection number | 341587 |
| Inspection dates | 22–23 September 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Lorna Brackstone HMI |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 115 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sue Jiggins |
| Headteacher | Debi Downing |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 September 2006 |
| School address | Cherry Orchard Codford Warminster BA12 0PN |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents such as a recent audit carried out by the local authority. The inspectors also considered the 36 parental questionnaires that were returned to the team.

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

- progress of boys in Key Stage 1 and girls in Key Stage 2, to determine whether the quality of teaching and the curriculum matches their needs
- progress in the pupils' personal development, to test the school's view that this is a strong feature
- equality of opportunity for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, given that there is split provision over two sites
- the effectiveness of ambition by all leaders to drive improvement and challenge weaknesses.

Information about the school

Wylve Valley is a small school on two sites which are about four miles apart. On the Steeple Langford site there are 28 pupils in two classes, a mixed Reception and Year 1 class with eight pupils, and a mixed class of 20 for Year 2/3 pupils. The site at Codford has 87 pupils in four mixed age range classes. These include mixed year groups for Reception/Year 1, Year 2/3, Year 4/5 and Year 5/6. Both sites serve diverse village communities. Few pupils are entitled to free school meals, There is a falling roll with varying rates of mobility throughout the school. However, mobility overall is not high. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups but all pupils speak English as their first language. On each site there is an independent pre-school. Most children attend one of these settings before starting school. The Early Years Foundation Stage is a mixed Reception and Year 1 class with two children at the Steeple Langford site and at the Codford site there are 14 children in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The Codford site has a breakfast and after school club which are managed by external providers.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school's performance has deteriorated since its last inspection. Pupils' attainment has fallen and many pupils underachieve. Although, for example, attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 has recently improved, attainment in science remains below average and in relation to pupils' starting points, this represents inadequate progress. This has occurred because of weaknesses and inconsistencies in teaching which restrict pupils' progress in lessons and over time. Leaders and managers have failed to react and intervene quickly and consistently to the fall in pupils' attainment. The underperformance of girls, for example, has been identified but any measures to rectify this are not yet evident.

Teaching is not consistently strong enough to improve pupil attainment. A minority of lessons move along at a good pace and teachers ask probing questions to ensure that the pupils know what they are learning. However, timing is slow in too many lessons and pupils are required to sit inactive for long periods of time. The work planned does not always take into account what the pupils already know. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are inconsistent and do not help them understand what they need to do to move on to the next step of their learning.

A number of aspects of the school's work are satisfactory or better. Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and are confident about approaching an adult if they have a problem. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are in local authority care are given good quality support. Individual guidance from teaching assistants helps them to make satisfactory progress. Subjects are creatively linked across the curriculum using topics such as 'Take One World', and all year groups are taught French. However, the curriculum is not planned well enough to secure progression in key skills or to deepen subject knowledge and understanding in all subjects. This hampers the progress pupils can make and limits their ability to reach high attainment.

Leadership is not sufficiently distributed and does not cover key areas such as the Early Years Foundation Stage or the monitoring of pupils' progress. It is also stretched too thinly across the two sites which has led to inconsistencies in the quality of provision. Governors are supportive of the school and are fully aware of the areas requiring

development. However, they have not held the school sufficiently to account in relation to its underperformance. Overall, the school does not provide adequate value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
- improving teachers' use of assessment so that lesson activities challenge all groups of pupils to do well, and clear guidance is provided on how the pupils can move onto the next step of their learning
- ensuring that the work teachers set builds on what pupils already know, understand and can do
- improving teachers' management of time in lessons.
- Urgently review provision at the two sites to ensure that:
- children in parallel classes have access to good quality teaching which enables them to progress at a consistently high rate
- senior leaders and managers manage their time more effectively and share best practice among all the staff.
- Develop the roles of senior and middle leaders and managers by:
- ensuring monitoring and evaluation help teachers develop their skills and fully understand what they need to do differently to accelerate pupils' progress
- increasing their accountability for the performance of pupils and making better use of target-setting processes to raise standards.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils respond and behave well in lessons when activities are interesting and contain a clear purpose and practical application to what they are learning. However, apart from those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, not all pupils make as much progress as they should in lessons or over the longer term. Following an initiative to improve reading standards in Key Stage 1, teacher assessments for 2009 indicate that they have gone up. However, the number of pupils attaining higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics has declined over a three-year period. In Key Stage 2, unvalidated data from the 2009 national tests indicate that pupils attainment in English has improved, particularly in reading. Attainment in mathematics is close to national averages but attainment in science has remained below average for three years. Given their starting points, too many pupils do not achieve the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2.

When interviewed, pupils agreed that behaviour was good and parents echo this judgement. Pupils understand the school rules and have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. Their social and emotional development is of a high standard. Any incidences of bullying are resolved promptly. Pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

and this is reflected in their Healthy School Award. School meals are nutritious and well balanced although they are only taken by around 40% of the pupils. The activities and games organised during school and the high participation rate in extra-curricular activities provide good opportunities for pupils to physically exert themselves. Pupils make a good contribution to school and community life. They take responsibility for enhancing the school environment and their efforts have been rewarded by recognition of their eco awareness. They also participate eagerly in village fetes, dancing competitions and fundraising events. The curriculum is used well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of other ethnic groups, cultures and faiths. As a result, pupils have good spiritual awareness and strong cultural development. Although not all the pupils achieve as well as they could in their academic skills, they transfer to secondary school as well-rounded individuals who work well together.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 4 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 4 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

While much of the teaching observed was satisfactory, there were many instances where teaching was barely satisfactory or inadequate. Teaching is inconsistent through

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

the school and is too variable between parallel age group classes. During the inspection two good lessons were observed. In these lessons:

- teachers' good use of questions challenged pupils to explore ideas and explain their thinking and enabled them to make good progress
- lessons were fun, focused activities enabling both boys and girls and those who were vulnerable to build on what they already knew
- resources were used effectively to engage pupils and provided a good platform for learning.

In one lesson, for example, the 7,000-year span back to the Stone Age period was illustrated by a long piece of string with a mark to signify every 1,000 years. The pupils eagerly followed this string to the outdoor classroom where they were required to make drinking pots from clay. Pupils worked together to build on their skills and explored ways to create a waterproof pot. The teacher intervened with short focused questions which enabled all the pupils to work quickly on their task.

In the less effective lessons, common features were that:

- planned activities were not always based on prior learning and were less effective in meeting the needs of all groups of pupils
- expectations of pupils were too low and time was not always used effectively to ensure pupils built on their knowledge and skills
- some groups were allowed to spend too long on low-level tasks such as cutting, sticking, ordering and completing work on photocopied sheets; this failed to challenge thinking, consolidate English skills or extend the learning of the more able pupils
- learning targets were not used effectively by staff to help pupils know exactly what they needed to do to reach the next level.

Evidence from the work scrutiny also confirmed that teachers' expectations were not high enough and pupils were not given enough information on how they could improve their work and move onto the next step of learning.

Creative and expressive arts are promoted well and pupils enjoy learning French. The themed approach to the curriculum provides pupils with a rich variety of opportunities to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. However, there is not enough focus on the systematic development of key skills and there is no overview to ensure that individual year groups cover an appropriate curriculum for their age and ability. For example, weaknesses in the provision for science, which is not rigorously taught, result in standards that are below average. Good attention is paid to pupils' personal development and relationships through the teaching of social and emotional aspects of learning and in the school's day-to-day routines and procedures.

Pupils are well cared for because relationships are supportive and considerate. As one pupil explained, 'All of the staff and children are really kind and helpful'. Good links with local authority services ensure that vulnerable pupils are well looked after. Transition arrangements between the pre-schools, the two sites and the local secondary schools are good and provide pupils with the guidance they need to prepare themselves for the next stage of their education.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 4 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, staff and governors demonstrate a strong commitment to the personal development of the pupils. The school's inclusive aims are generally maintained and leaders and managers have identified the underperformance of girls in Key Stage 2. However, inconsistencies across parallel age groups have not been tackled. Senior leaders and governors are very clear about the strengths and weaknesses within their school and the recent request for a local authority audit was timely. However, senior leaders and middle managers cannot convincingly demonstrate that they have the capacity to raise standards and improve pupils' progress without external help. This is because:

Governors are clear about their duty to ensure the best outcomes for the pupils and have started to challenge the senior leaders of the school in greater depth. They seek parents' views and share the information they collect to improve the premises. Partnerships are promoted well and there is regular contact through the school website and newsletters. The school is very much part of the two communities it serves and works closely within the local Warminster cluster. By employing a language assistant through the school's international links, they develop effective connections with the wider world community. Topic work is planned carefully to provide the pupils with an informed understanding of life in other communities such as China. At the time of the inspection safeguarding procedures were secure and evidence shown indicated that they were reviewed regularly.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 4 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 4 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 4 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

The majority of children join the Reception year as confident speakers who are eager to learn about the world around them. Given their readiness to learn, the outcomes at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage indicate that they are not making fast enough progress in developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy. Children are well cared for and most enjoy the social aspects of school life. However, there is no leader for this key stage, and so significant differences in the provision have been allowed to develop between the two sites. These include:

- differing arrangements for starting Reception
- inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning
- inconsistencies in the outdoor provision
- duplication of resources
- limited access to the wider aspects of school life because one class shares a site with only one other class.

For example, a good lesson was observed in a mixed-age class which contained only one Reception child. As the teacher and teaching assistant worked with the Year 1 pupils on a practical activity that stimulated their interest, questions were carefully crafted to involve the Reception child and assist progress. However, in an inadequate Early Years Foundation Stage lesson, a larger group of youngsters sat for a long period of time and were then required to do a task that lacked meaning and interest. One outdoor area is vibrant and interesting while the other one lacks creativity and offers little to stimulate the children. Although both settings plan together and have worked closely with a consultant to improve aspects of their teaching, no one takes responsibility for coordinating or evaluating provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 4 |

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Views of parents and carers

Of the 36 questionnaires returned most parents were supportive of the school's work. This was endorsed in one parental questionnaire which highlighted how happy they were with the school. Almost all agreed that pupils enjoy school, are kept safe and helped to have a healthy lifestyle. They also felt that the school prepared their children well for the future and most parents were happy with their children's experiences at school. Inspectors agree with almost all of these views. A small minority of parents expressed concerns about how the school dealt with poor behaviour. Inspectors found that pupils' behaviour is generally good. Some parental concerns were raised about the amount of progress their children make, including those with particular needs. Inspection findings indicate that pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities generally make satisfactory progress. However, inspectors confirm that not all pupils make adequate progress. A small minority of parents who returned the questionnaires expressed concerns about how the school communicates with them and responds to any suggestions they make or concerns they have, and this was raised with senior leaders.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wylve Valley 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 115 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 13 | 36 | 22 | 61 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 13 | 36 | 23 | 64 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 4 | 11 | 20 | 56 | 9 | 25 | 2 | 6 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 8 | 27 | 18 | 50 | 6 | 17 | 1 | 3 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 11 | 31 | 20 | 56 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 7 | 19 | 21 | 58 | 7 | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 12 | 33 | 21 | 58 | 3 | 8 | 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) | 6 | 17 | 23 | 64 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 5 | 14 | 18 | 50 | 9 | 25 | 2 | 6 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 5 | 14 | 22 | 61 | 6 | 17 | 2 | 6 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 5 | 14 | 19 | 53 | 8 | 22 | 2 | 6 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 6 | 17 | 24 | 67 | 4 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 10 | 28 | 24 | 67 | 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 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.



24 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wylve Valley CofE VA Primary School, Warminster, BA12 0PN

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly into your school. We enjoyed watching you in lessons and at play. It was interesting talking to you about your school, visiting lessons and looking at your work. We would like to share with you what we found.

We think there are things that your school does well. All the staff take good care of you and you told us that you are always made to feel welcome. You enjoy lessons and like the extra activities the school provides at the end of the day. Visiting places like Stonehenge and HMS Victory helps to make your learning come alive. Many of you behave well in class and around school. You know about the importance of eating healthily and taking plenty of exercise.

Your teachers work hard but are not ensuring that you do well in your work, and there are things we think could help them in their teaching. We have decided that they need extra help from outside the school to support them in this, and other inspectors will visit your school to see how well it is improving. Here are some of the main things that need to be done.

- We have asked your teachers to improve the amount of progress you all make. It is important that they always have the highest expectations of what you can do, and make sure that lessons move at a fast pace with activities that challenge you all to do well.
- Teachers need to link lessons to what you have learnt previously and give you more guidance on how you can move onto the next step of your learning to support your progress.
- The leaders and managers of your school need to reconsider the use of the two school sites so that you all get the best possible education. This could help them to share the best teaching among colleagues and give the headteacher more time to concentrate on running the school.
- We have asked that senior leaders check the quality of teaching more frequently to ensure that you are always making progress.

We hope that the school, with your help, will quickly get better and better. Thank you again for your help. It was a pleasure to meet you all.

We wish you all the best for the future,
Lorna Brackstone and Stephen McShane
(Her Majesty's Inspectors)

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