

West Ashton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126417
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360078
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

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

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	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Bridges
Headteacher	Jonathan Barber
Date of previous school inspection	17 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who visited eleven lessons or parts of lessons and observed four teachers. Meetings were held with two representatives of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders and a group of pupils. Inspectors looked at some of the school's policies and procedures, pupils' written work and the tracking data from the monitoring of pupils' progress. Seventy-three questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are all pupils making enough progress, especially during Key Stages 1 and 2?
- How effective is the teaching in ensuring that all pupils make the best possible progress and how well are teachers' assessments informing their planning?
- How robust and accurate are the school's monitoring and evaluation, particularly of teaching, learning and pupils' progress?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The remaining pupils have dual British and Asian heritage or come from White Other backgrounds. Only one pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is extremely low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has National Healthy School Status, holds an Eco-Schools Bronze Award and is an Investor in People. There is a before school club managed by the governing body.

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

Since its last inspection, the school has made great strides in improving pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, leadership and management, and pupils' attendance, which is now high. West Ashton enjoys highly positive relationships with its parents and carers, who say they are extremely happy with what the school provides for their children. A parent speaks for many when saying, 'My child is valued as an individual and loves going to school'. This view finds resonance in some of the comments pupils made during the inspection, such as, 'no one feels out of place here' or 'there is always something for you'.

Children get a good start in Reception and continue to make good progress overall. Their progress is uneven, however, particularly in Key Stage 1, but it gains momentum during Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils' attainment, even with small cohorts, has often been above average, occasionally significantly so, by the end of Year 6. Attainment in English, particularly in reading, remains above average. Due to the recent push to improve achievement in mathematics, attainment in mathematics is now also above average, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Teaching is good overall, but because monitoring is focused primarily on the provision rather than its impact on pupils' learning and progress, some deficits remain, particularly in Key Stage 1. Typically, teachers adjust their planning to present the right level of challenge for all groups of pupils to achieve their best. Occasionally, the more-able pupils are insufficiently challenged. Teachers' marking is good. At its best, pupils are informed about what they have done well and where they need to make improvements. This is also the case when teachers comment orally on pupils' progress during lessons.

The school's self-evaluation has correctly highlighted its strengths and weaknesses and effectively informed the priorities for the school's development. Monitoring and evaluation activities are a regular feature in the life of the school. However, although the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good, leaders do not yet monitor the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' written work quite rigorously enough.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in all key stages by:
 - commenting explicitly on the progress pupils make during lessons against the objectives set
 - informing pupils precisely what they have done well in their written work and what they need to do to improve their subsequent work

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- ensuring that the more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged in all lessons
- improving the monitoring skills of leaders at all levels by focusing the evaluation of teaching and learning closely on pupils' learning, progress in lessons and written work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are keen to learn. They engage with their work in lessons well and can be trusted to work on their own. Their enjoyment of learning is palpable when tasks provide challenges as well as opportunities for them to make choices. In one such lesson, pupils were asked to prepare an advertisement for their end-of-year production. The teacher used some familiar advertisements to develop pupils' critical appreciation before the pupils planned their own posters. Their comments demonstrated a clear understanding of what makes an advertisement appealing and their plans showed individuality, an understanding of purpose and a sense of fun.

Overall, pupils' attainment on entry to Reception is usually in line with the levels of skill and knowledge expected for their age, although the range of attainment is widening due to children arriving from an increasing number of different settings. Most pupils achieve at least the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. The attainment levels seen in the current Year 6, in lessons and in pupils' work books, and in the latest provisional national test results, were above average, in keeping with the recent trend. Occasionally, in some lessons, a few of the more-able pupils make slower progress than they are capable of due to a lack of challenge. As a result of a good balance of support and challenge in most lessons, boys are doing well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress as do the small number of pupils with dual White and Asian heritage.

Pupils' behaviour is good and this contributes well to their learning. They willingly take on responsibility for a range of jobs in their classrooms and in the school and help others in the wider community through their fundraising for good causes. The school council has been influential in suggesting and securing a quiet garden in the playground. Pupils say they feel safe in school and their parents and carers are in full agreement with them. Their understanding of how to keep healthy is good and reflects the impact of the school's systematic work towards gaining National Healthy School Status. Their good basic and personal skills and high levels of attendance prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and relate well to each other. Their skills in reflecting on, and learning from, their everyday experiences are well developed. Pupils are curious to learn about different cultural traditions. They found visiting different places of worship and celebrating other religious and cultural festivals enjoyable.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make their learning objectives clear and their planning is suitably linked to them. The interactive whiteboards are used well to explain ideas. Teachers' questioning is well targeted and accurately assesses and extends pupils' thinking during lessons. The benchmarks for successful learning are set and made known to pupils, but are not always used in giving them oral feedback. When support staff intervene with a clear brief, their support is effective and contributes to the good learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These good practices are not always evident in a small minority of weaker lessons. Occasionally, teaching does not sufficiently challenge the more able and marking does not show pupils precisely what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. In contrast, the interventions planned for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well informed by accurate assessment and work well.

The curriculum has breadth and is matched well to the needs and interests of pupils. The focus remains on the development of basic skills, information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils' personal qualities. Cross-curricular links are stronger in literacy than in mathematics, although mathematics links are growing as a result of the dedicated, guided sessions which focus on the application of mathematical skills in wider contexts, including through the use of ICT. Enrichment activities, including educational visits, residential trips and expert visitors to school, all contribute to pupils' learning and

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enjoyment. The Eco-Schools Award recognises pupils' increasing environmental awareness through the curriculum.

Arrangements for pastoral care are good and contribute well to pupils' personal development and well-being. The specific needs of identified pupils are effectively met, either from the school's own resources or with support from external services. Support and advice provided to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable make an effective contribution to their welfare and achievement. The school has success stories to tell where the arranged support worked well and went a long way in overcoming barriers to learning. The well-established transition arrangements ensure the smooth transfer of Year 6 pupils to their secondary schools as well as making new arrivals feel welcome. The before-school club caters well for a small number of pupils.

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?

The headteacher has successfully crystallised a small number of strategic priorities for development from a long list that emerged after a wide consultation. They clearly and accurately capture the school's ambition for the future. Targets for individual pupils and the regular discussions on their progress, rooted in the latest achievement data, have galvanised the staff to aim high for all groups of pupils. The effectiveness of the governing body is now good and governors are well served by the range of information they receive from the school. The governing body is increasingly engaged in evaluating the work of the school and holds it to account for its performance.

Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, are consistently applied by all staff and model good practice. Parents and carers are kept well informed about their children's performance and the work of the school, not least through its well-publicised website. External partnerships provide effective specialist support and enhance the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, sport and modern foreign languages. These links also contribute to teachers' continuing professional development and assist the school to fulfil its commitment as an Investor in People. The school ensures that no pupil is discriminated against and that all groups of pupils, including the small number from minority ethnic groups, have equal access to its provision. The school contributes to community cohesion through its close links with local communities and groups. Pupils' global awareness is strengthened through links with places which are different in character, such as a school in France and one in London.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children make good progress in all areas of learning. A child who speaks English as an additional language was seen to be communicating comfortably due to the support he was receiving. Children relate well to each other, are considerate and care about their own and other children's safety. They have a strong awareness of what physical exercise does to their bodies. In a short dancing session, one child was emphatic that, 'it makes my heart go fast' and that it, 'makes it strong'. The daily provision of phonics ensures that children have a good grounding in linking sounds with letters and they have been doing some challenging work in literacy. In one session, where children knew which letters are known as vowels and which as consonants, the teacher demonstrated that they could be mixed to make new words. When children are physically active, for example when they are dancing to music, their enjoyment is discernible.

The curriculum provides a good balance of activities between those directed by adults and others that are chosen by children themselves. The outdoor provision is used well to extend their learning. Adults are highly skilled in observing and assessing children's progress. The learning journey booklet maintains records of children's achievement in all areas of learning. The environment is secure and stimulates children to explore different materials and equipment. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are effective. Links with parents and carers are valued and parents and carers are actively encouraged to engage with their children's learning at school.

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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

Parents' and carers' responses to the questionnaire were well above the national average. An overwhelming majority of those who responded agreed with almost all 13 statements. There were isolated concerns across 10 out of 13 questions, which did not represent any pattern and were heavily counterbalanced by the very positive responses from the vast majority. Parents and carers believe that teaching is good at this school. Although clearly there were strengths in teaching, the inspection evidence also found some shortcomings, which are reflected in the recommendations made in this report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Ashton Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 99 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	79	14	19	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	79	15	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	63	25	34	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	66	24	33	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	73	20	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	63	24	33	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	60	29	40	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	74	18	25	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	68	18	25	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	79	18	25	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	67	20	27	2	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	56	77	16	22	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	82	12	16	0	0	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



7 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Ashton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Trowbridge, BA14 6AZ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school during the inspection. We enjoyed looking at your work and talking to you about it. The team judged your school to be good.

These are the things we found out about your school.

- Most of you make good progress and reach above-average levels of attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- You like coming to school and attend very regularly.
- Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- You understand how to stay healthy.
- You are keen to do jobs for your teachers and on behalf of other pupils.
- Adults in the school take good care of you.
- You say you feel safe at school and your parents and carers readily agree with you.

To improve your school further, I have asked those in charge to make sure that:

- teachers tell you clearly what you are doing well and what you could do better, and give harder work to those of you who could do with more challenge
- leaders in the school check your progress in lessons and in your written work more thoroughly.

You can also do your bit by following up carefully your teachers' advice on your written work.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector

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