

Old Church C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	104224
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	377039
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	Derek Aitken

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Bonhomme
Headteacher	Jeff Perrins
Date of previous school inspection	15 July 2008
School address	School Street Darlaston Walsall WS10 8DL
Telephone number	0121 5686329
Fax number	0121 5265973
Email address	postbox@old-church.walsall.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	25–26 April 2012
Inspection number	377039



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Aitken

Additional inspector

Tracey Kneale

Additional inspector

John Taylor

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by 14 teachers, and scrutinised pupils' work. Inspectors listened to pupils reading. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 124 parents and carers, 110 pupils and 22 staff.

Information about the school

Old Church C of E Primary is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage, but one fifth of pupils have minority ethnic heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average. While staffing is stable and well established, long-term sick leave affects staffing in Key Stage 1. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage through two part-time Nursery classes and two Reception classes. A breakfast club operates on the school site. This is managed by the governing body and was inspected as part of this inspection. The school has Healthy Schools status and holds the Anti-bullying bronze 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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the school has been successful in improving their literacy skills in Key Stage 2. The school is not yet good because attainment in Key Stage 1 and achievement in mathematics are not high enough and teaching is not consistently good or better. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils achieve satisfactorily and leave Year 6 with attainment that is broadly average. They achieve better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1, where expectations for their progress are lower and time is used less profitably. Key Stage 2 pupils make better progress in English than in mathematics, where opportunities are missed to extend their skills, for example, in solving problems.
- Teaching has good features, such as focused questioning and brisk pace which rapidly move pupils' learning on. Teaching quality is more often satisfactory than good or better, because lesson planning, marking in mathematics and oral assessment are not consistently used well to capitalise on pupils' positive attitudes and ensure they are fully challenged.
- Pupils behave well and are very keen to support each other's learning in shared activities. Children in Nursery and Reception become independent and develop close relationships with their peers and adults. Pupils and their parents and carers are right to think the school is a safe place.
- The leadership of teaching is firmly established and provides managers at all levels with a clear understanding of how to improve this key skill across the staff. The effectiveness of the work to improve teaching in Key Stage 1 has been reduced by staffing discontinuity. School performance is managed satisfactorily.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 by:
 - setting challenging targets to raise staff and pupils' expectations and develop greater accountability for improving pupils' rates of progress
 - reviewing the timetable structure to make best use of time to accelerate pupils' learning.
- Improve pupils' achievement in mathematics by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and investigative tasks
 - making more consistent use of marking to clarify pupils' next steps in learning.
- Ensure that leaders and managers improve the quality of teaching to good or better so as to raise achievement by:
 - ensuring all lessons are carefully planned to challenge all groups of pupils
 - always making good use of whole-class questioning and oral assessment to move pupils' learning on briskly.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children's skills and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are well below national expectations, particularly in language and communication. They make good progress, especially in the Nursery, where planning is sharply focused on the next steps they need to take to move their learning forward. They quickly overcome any initial reluctance to get involved in activities and steadily develop the language they need to express their ideas, for example, about the lives of frogs. By the end of Reception the gap with national attainment has narrowed but children's skill levels remain below those expected nationally. These gaps remain throughout Key Stage 1, where the continuity of pupils' learning has been affected by staff absence and, by the end of Year 2, pupils are typically working six months behind their peers nationally.

Progress improves in Key Stage 2, where expectations for pupils' progress are stronger. For example, in 2011 the more-able Year 6 class achieved the school's best results in English for five years. More-able pupils can select adjectives correctly, for example in recreating imaginative ghostly scenarios. By the end of Year 6, attainment is in line with the national average at Level 4, although only a small proportion of pupils achieve the higher Level 5 in mathematics. While most pupils enjoy mathematics and work accurately with basic operations, they are less confident and secure when they attempt to apply their knowledge to problem-solving tasks and to investigating shapes and volumes.

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 findings do not fully endorse the view of parents and carers that pupils make good progress. However, all groups of pupils make at least sound progress over time in lessons. Consequently, there are no significant variations in the performance of pupils with regard to gender, ethnicity or eligibility for free school meals. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. On a few occasions, they make good progress as, for example, in a Year 3 English lesson where they created complex sentences using connectives to describe 'hairy monsters'.

Pupils' reading skills in Year 2 are below average. Lower- and middle-attaining pupils read simple language accurately and understand how to segment and blend unfamiliar words correctly. They struggle to draw inferences, express preferences and make comparisons with texts from wider reading. By Year 6, pupils improve their reading skills to attain average standards due to broader exposure to challenging texts where they are required to think imaginatively and interpret meaning, as they were seen to do, for example, in reading and analysing poetry. Their improved reading provides useful support for their written work.

Quality of teaching

Inspection findings do not fully endorse the view of most parents and carers and pupils that teaching is good, because there is not enough good teaching to enable pupils to achieve their full potential as learners, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics. Nursery and reception children are keen learners and activities are usually carefully chosen to promote their learning. Occasionally, in the teacher-directed sessions, expected outcomes are not defined sharply enough to inform future planning and move children's learning on quickly.

In all lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' positive behaviour promote a purposeful climate for learning and secure pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils relate well to the staff, who manage them well, sometimes with an easy humour. Teachers make skilful use of the interactive whiteboard to maintain pupils' attention and provide them with regular 'hands-on' opportunities to test out their ideas. The curriculum is more purposefully developed in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1, where tracking and target-setting are less securely developed and some timetabled activities take up too much time.

Occasionally, teachers make expert use of questions to probe and extend pupils' thinking and well balanced, challenging work provides good opportunities for pupils to learn briskly and imaginatively. Reading skills are taught well in Key Stage 2. This was demonstrated in an English lesson where pupils focused well on atmospheric, descriptive vocabulary associated with the topic of the highwayman. Other lessons are less sharply planned to ensure consistent challenge for all groups of pupils and the pace of learning sometimes drops. While teachers provide pupils, individually, with useful support and oral feedback, opportunities are sometimes missed to assess and summarise what the class has learnt and refocus groups of pupils on the next

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

steps of their learning.

Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to involve less-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs fully in class activities, including oral work. This good practice promotes the pupils' self-esteem and motivates them to persevere with their work. Teachers make good use of marking to support pupils' attainment in English to which pupils regularly respond to improve their work but feedback is, by comparison, less effective in mathematics.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' positive attitudes and enjoyment of the wider aspects of school life, for example the good range of extra-curricular opportunities for sport and music, predispose them well for learning, and support their sense of well-being in school. The evident warmth in relationships is nurtured in the Early Years Foundation Stage where staff are adept at modelling good behaviour and in encouraging children to become independent. Consequently, from an early age, almost all pupils behave responsibly and show consideration for each other. They demonstrate increasingly mature attitudes as they move through Key Stage 2, benefiting from some well-planned opportunities in lessons to reflect on issues and develop a moral stance, for example against wrongdoing. Pupils' behaviour for learning is good. They concentrate and persevere even when not directly supervised by the staff or when the pace of learning drops. They achieve as well as the quality of teaching allows. Older pupils, in particular, take a clear pride in presenting their work neatly.

Inspection findings are endorsed by the vast majority of parents and carers who believe that their children are safe in school. Pupils agree and consider that the school is a cohesive community, promoted through the house system, school councillors and 'happy helpers'. They appreciate the work in procuring 'buddy benches', supporting play activities and carrying out litter-picking duties. Pupils of different ethnic heritage engage well with each other at work and play. Several parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed some disquiet about pupils' behaviour in lessons and bullying. Inspectors judged behaviour to be good in lessons and saw no evidence of any disruptive behaviour at playtimes or around school. Inspectors found behaviour over time to be good. They noted that the school has found it necessary to exclude only two pupils for short periods in the last three years. Pupils report that lesson disruption is minimal and is restricted to a small number of pupils with challenging behaviour which is mostly managed well by the staff so that these individual pupils are better able to manage their behaviour. They say that there are a few occasions when pupils use verbal abuse to annoy and intimidate each other, but they are not threatened by this as they feel resourceful enough to deal with it. Pupils are aware of other forms of bullying but inspectors found no evidence that they have experienced them in school. The small breakfast club provides pupils with a settled and satisfactory start to the school day. Pupils' attendance is usually above average and has climbed sharply this year after a chicken-pox epidemic reduced rates last year.

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

Leadership and management

School self-evaluation is accurate in its diagnosis of key strengths and areas for development. The school has appropriate, well-considered structures in place to monitor key aspects of provision, especially teaching, and devise new initiatives, for example through working parties, to profit from the helpful professional development provided and improve outcomes for pupils. These procedures ensure that pupils regularly achieve nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6 and, especially, improve their literacy skills, for example, writing in Key Stage 2. Leaders have worked successfully to increase the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in English. Leadership has been less successful in Key Stage 1 due to discontinuity in staffing, an imbalance in the morning timetable structure and assessment and target-setting procedures which have not always been challenging enough. There has been sustained improvement in pupils' attainment in English arising from better teaching of the subject in Key Stage 2. Pupils' behaviour for learning is positive and attendance has improved to be above average. Despite the setback of staffing difficulties in Key Stage 1, the school's track record indicates that it has the capacity for further improvement.

The school promotes equal opportunity in learning and ensures that no group or individual underachieves. Relationships are very positive; there is no discrimination. The curriculum fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. Moral and social development is promoted well and pupils enjoy artistic and musical pursuits, but they have limited opportunities to acquaint themselves with other contemporary global cultures.

The governing body under new leadership has implemented useful plans to gain a better first-hand understanding of provision and to hold leaders more firmly to account for pupils' achievement. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current requirements.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 April 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Old Church C of E Primary School, Darlaston, Walsall
WS10 8DL**

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school and for sharing your views with us, including through the questionnaires you completed. Yours is a satisfactory school with some very positive features.

- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception.
- You enjoy school and the good relationships you have with each other and the staff support your learning well in lessons.
- You behave well, are keen to learn, concentrate hard and keep trying even when you find some work more difficult.
- You make satisfactory progress overall in your learning and, by the end of Year 6, you reach broadly average standards.

We have asked the staff to do a number of things to help you make faster progress.

- Review the Key Stage 1 timetable and set more challenging targets for the progress of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils.
- Give you more chances to use and apply your mathematical skills, for example in solving problems, and make better use of marking to help you improve.
- We want your school's leaders to make all teaching at least good by making sure all lessons are carefully planned and questioning is well used to move your learning on.

You can help by continuing to work hard, especially in mathematics, and by continuing to attend regularly.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**