

Knights Templar Church of England and Methodist Community First School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123860
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380752
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2012
Lead inspector	Colin Lee

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Liz Murphy
Headteacher	Frances Burns
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2010
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

Inspection team

Colin Lee

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed the teaching of nine teachers in a total of ten lessons. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at its data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, other planning documents and procedures for keeping pupils safe. He analysed 29 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as speaking to a group of parents and carers. Questionnaires completed by staff and Key Stage 2 pupils were also analysed.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils are taught in five single-age classes for Reception and Years 1 to 4 and a mixed-age class of Years 1 and 2 pupils. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also above average. Childcare provided by the school includes a breakfast and after-school club, as well as a holiday club. The school has received awards for several aspects of its work, including the Healthy Schools Plus Enhanced Status. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has made significant improvements, particularly in the last two years, that have greatly enhanced the quality of provision and pupils' achievement. It is not an outstanding school because inconsistency in teaching holds back the highest levels of pupils' progress in some year groups.
- Nearly all pupils achieve well and most make good progress in relation to their starting points. Pupils in the current Year 4 have made outstanding progress so that attainment at the end of Year 4 is now above the levels expected for pupils' age in reading, writing, and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make rapid progress. However, the progress of the more-able pupils in writing and mathematics fluctuates, being no more than satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
- The impact of good teaching is seen in pupils' good achievement, their love of learning and their determination to work hard and do well. Sometimes teachers' guidance to pupils is insufficient. In Years 1 and 2, more able pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging work. Teachers use the whole curriculum very effectively to improve key literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes give lessons a very purposeful atmosphere. Pupils say they feel very safe in school, which reflects parents' and carers' views. According to pupils, bullying of any form is almost non-existent. They say that rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour, which tend to happen at playtimes rather than in lessons, are dealt with quickly.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Outcomes and quality of provision are improving quickly. High priority is given to management of performance through rigorous checking of teaching and pupils' progress. The new curriculum is good and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the more-able pupils make at least good progress in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by providing them with more challenging work.
- Increase pupils' progress in lessons by making sure that they always fully understand how to achieve the lesson objectives.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers feel that their children are achieving well and this is confirmed by inspection evidence. Progress has accelerated since the previous inspection. From starting points that are often below expectation, especially in language development, good progress has led to attainment that is broadly average overall by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the end of Year 2. The current Year 4 pupils have made outstanding progress this year and their attainment is above that expected for their age.

Children make particularly good progress in language development due to the emphasis placed on developing language skills in every learning situation. A group of children tending the garden area successfully read plant labels, building up words like 'radish' by sounding out the letters. Others showed with great pride the sentences they were writing, and accurately counted the number of letter sounds in the words they wrote.

Pupils in all classes are good at learning how sounds link together (phonics) and pupils' attainment in reading and writing is often above the expected levels for their age. Year 2, where reading standards are broadly average, is an exception. Standards have been higher at the end of Year 2 in the past, but this year's cohort has a particularly high proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs. Reading attainment is well above the expected levels by the end of Year 4. Pupils in this age group show a love of reading. They read fluently and expressively, and have excellent comprehension skills.

School data show that, in recent years, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum levels in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 has been below the national average. The school has identified strategies intended to close this gap through improving teaching; things are improving but the full impact is yet to be seen. The school is rapidly closing the previously significant gap between the achievement of boys and girls in writing, where boys were far less successful. In a Year 4 lesson when pupils converted a comic strip into a play script, boys responded very positively to the content and produced good quality writing. Year 2 boys' enthusiasm was evident when the boys read their writing about plant growth to the class, showing, as required, good use of time connectives, such as 'firstly', 'then' and

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'finally'. The writing was purposeful because, having planted seeds earlier, they were writing about a practical experience.

The good curriculum's emphasis on real life situations is improving the quality of learning in many subjects and teachers use the whole curriculum well to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. The current whole school theme of the Olympic Games is producing much good achievement in mathematics. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 converted data on sports they would like to do in the Games from tally charts to bar graphs. All quickly produced accurate graphs and showed complete understanding of how to use the information to answer questions about their graphs. In this lesson, as in many others observed, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs responded exceptionally well. The skilful support of teachers and teaching assistants is helping these pupils make outstanding progress.

Quality of teaching

Thorough monitoring by senior leaders has ensured that teachers focus on providing a consistently high quality of learning in every lesson. This is having a very good impact on pupils' progress. Most learning activities are carefully matched to pupils' abilities and needs and each task builds systematically on what has been learned before. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, attitudes and work and pupils show determination to meet those expectations.

The teaching for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well matched to their needs. For instance, pupils needing extra help in developing their social skills are given highly effective support that raises their confidence and helps them establish good relationships with their peers at work and play. While most lessons provide work well matched to pupils' different needs, sometimes sufficient challenge is not provided for more able pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2. This is why their progress dips to satisfactory in these year groups.

All lessons start with teachers explaining what is to be learned. Teachers are not so consistent in explaining to pupils what they need to do to achieve these lesson objectives. This means that, while pupils usually review at the end of the lesson how well they feel they have done, the usefulness of this can vary. In the best teaching, pupils compare their own work, and often that of others, with a checklist of what should be included. This was seen, for example, in a Year 4 lesson when pupils looked for the good features of a partner's written work and suggested improvements. Reading is taught well throughout the school. From the start, children learn about the sounds letters make (phonics) in a systematic way that enables them to build skills quickly, and they are encouraged to develop a love of reading for pleasure and information.

Teachers provide pupils with constructive feedback through good marking. They also carry out thorough, regular assessments and use the information well to identify any pupils falling behind. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop

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creative skills and often use these to explore aspects of different cultures. Some excellent artwork is displayed around the school. Strong links with an inner city school do much to develop pupils' understanding of social and cultural differences.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour is due to the school's guidance and very effective, consistent behaviour management by most adults. The majority of parents think that most pupils behave well. Pupils comment that behaviour has improved since the introduction of a behaviour code that emphasises that they are the ones who choose how they are going to behave. Staff respond quickly to circumstances that might affect a pupil's behaviour, resulting in disruption to lessons being very rare.

Pupils reflect the view of all parents and carers who returned questionnaires when they say that they feel completely safe in school. Pupils say there is no bullying in school and are confident that it would be dealt with promptly were it to occur. They understand well different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying and gender or racial discrimination. Relationships between pupils are a significant strength. The harmony between pupils was very evident in the well-run breakfast club. Both the oldest and youngest enjoy opportunities such as buddy groups when mixed age groups of pupils work, play or worship together. This is an aspect of school life that pupils said they particularly like. Above average rates of attendance are another sign of this enjoyment.

Leadership and management

Leaders' and managers' relentless drive for improvement is having a very significant impact on pupils' achievement. Work is already underway to eliminate remaining gaps to ensure progress is consistent. The headteacher has very successfully promoted highly effective teamwork at all levels. Self-evaluation is accurate and sharply focused on checking the quality of teaching and its impact. This has prompted a comprehensive professional development programme for teachers and teaching assistants that has impacted particularly successfully on pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. The extent of the significant improvements since the last inspection and, in particular, the increased effectiveness of leadership and management and better achievement by nearly all pupils show that the school has a resounding capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

In order to ensure that the needs of every pupil are fully met, the curriculum has undergone major redevelopment. It is good rather than outstanding because it is too newly introduced for its full impact to be seen. It ensures that pupils' learning is based on building up basic skills and this has led to their improved achievement in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and there are particular strengths in the promotion of spiritual awareness.

By ensuring that all groups of pupils have a curriculum matched to their needs and

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that all are encouraged to maintain comparable rates of progress, the school successfully promotes its core values of providing equal opportunities for all and eliminating all forms of discrimination.

The governing body takes great care to ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements and that staff are thoroughly trained in attending to health and safety, risk assessment and child protection issues. Governance makes excellent use of the skills and expertise of individual members, using these purposefully in its independent monitoring and evaluation of school improvement. The result is a governing body that is very well informed about the school's work, holds the school to account and matches the excellence of the other aspects of leadership and management.

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.

28 June 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Knights Templar Church of England and Methodist Community First School, Watchet, TA23 0EX

I am writing to thank you for helping me during the inspection of your school. I especially enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views, and reading your responses to the questionnaire. I have taken these views into account. You go to a good school and this confirms what nearly all the parents and carers think. Here is what I found.

- You work hard and make good progress. Some of you are making outstanding progress, for example those of you in Year 4.
- The standards you achieve by the end of Year 4 are well above the level expected at that age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is excellent support for those of you who sometimes need extra help and, as a result, your progress is often outstanding.
- You are taught well and teachers give you many exciting learning activities.
- Your behaviour is good and I was very impressed by how well you get on with one another and particularly by how older pupils look out for the younger ones.
- You say you feel very safe in school. This is because all the adults do an excellent job in looking after you.

The leadership of the school is outstandingly and all the staff and governors work very well together to help the school to improve. They want to make the school even better. I have asked them to make sure the teachers explain more clearly, in lessons, what it is that you should include in your work to make it 'tick all the boxes'. I have asked the teachers in Years 1 and 2 to make sure that those of you who find learning easy have plenty of work that really makes you think hard.

All of you can help your teachers to make your school even better by continuing to work hard to improve and enjoying your learning. Thank you once again for your help during my visit, and best wishes for your work in the future.

Yours sincerely

Colin Lee
Lead inspector

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