

Oldbury-on-Severn Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109169
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	377886
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	John Eadie

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Gazard
Headteacher	Debbie Dix
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Eadie

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited fifteen lessons, seven of these were paired observations with the headteacher, and observed four teachers. He spent more than 65% of the available time observing teaching and learning. He met informally with parents and carers and had meetings with pupils, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's website in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at their self-evaluation, policies and procedures, particularly those relevant to keeping pupils safe. The inspector evaluated the school's information on the progress that pupils are making. Questionnaires returned by parents and carers of 20 pupils were analysed.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs is broadly average. A very large majority of the pupils are White British, and none speaks English as an additional language. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress set by the government. An above average number of pupils join later than the normal time of starting school, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The school is increasing in size, for instance the Reception year group is already full for September.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because pupils’ achievement in writing, whilst good and improving, is not as strong as their achievement in reading or mathematics. Despite efforts to improve it, attendance is still average. The school has a number of strengths, particularly in pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in the curriculum. These are outstanding and contribute significantly to pupils’ enjoyment of school and their engagement.
- Pupils are achieving well through the school. Achievement in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection, where it was an area identified for improvement. For example, in mathematics, two thirds of Year 6 pupils are on course to gain the higher Level 5 or even Level 6 in the national assessments this term.
- The key reason for pupils achieving well is the consistently good quality of teaching. Several lessons observed had outstanding features. A noteworthy improvement since the last inspection is the way that teachers’ marking shows pupils how they can improve. Pupils also like the targets set for them, saying that they show them how well they are doing.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and behave well and safely. As a parent rightly commented, ‘The school is exceptionally strong at developing social skills with all ages and groups mixing together and looking after each other.’ Pupils say that all types of bullying are rare, minor and dealt with very well when they occur.
- Leadership and management are effective. There is a very clear determination to continue on the upward path, shared by all staff and governors. The leadership of teaching has been a key driver of progress and a good range of staff training has been undertaken, focused on specific areas for development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils’ achievement in writing by:
 - ensuring that the basic skills of sentence structure and punctuation are developed consistently
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length.

- Promote the importance of good attendance to all parents and carers and ensure that absence is reduced by working directly with the local authority and families of the small number of pupils who are absent too often.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' learning is typified by enthusiasm and enjoyment. When asked what the best thing is about their school, several unusually replied 'literacy' or 'numeracy'. This was exemplified in lessons observed at all ages, where pupils enjoyed the tasks set for them and their successes. For instance, in a mathematics session in the youngest class, pupils were thoroughly enjoying the challenge of sorting shapes into groups dependent on their properties. In a literacy lesson in the next class, pupils were really involved in writing newspaper reports on the school fair, which had taken place on the previous Saturday. In a numeracy lesson for the oldest class, pupils were tackling a challenging task with enthusiasm and considerable success. This involved reading London Transport Underground maps and timetables.

Attainment when children join the Reception class varies, as is common with small cohorts; although, it is generally a little below levels expected for their age, particularly in their communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in the Reception class and their attainment on entry to Year 1 is a little above average. Good progress continues through the rest of the school and pupils in the current Year 6 are well on track to reach well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave. All of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are making good progress, a large majority strongly agreeing with this statement. Pupils' attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2 and is well above average by the end of Year 6. Progress is particularly rapid in reading throughout the school as, from their earliest days, pupils benefit from a structured programme to develop their skills of word building. However, progress in writing, while still good, is not as rapid as that in reading. This is because pupils' sentence structure and punctuation have been less well developed, although a structured programme is being put in place to raise standards here. Pupils also do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates, relative to their abilities. They achieve well because particularly careful plans are made for their learning and they are supported well by skilled teaching assistants. Pupils who join the school late are quickly made to feel at home and through careful analysis of their needs are quickly enabled to make good progress. Other groups, including the small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, are also making good progress. For example, a group of gifted and talented pupils recently won a National Young Engineers competition for designing a glider which carried a quail's egg the furthest distance. This group had to investigate the principles of flight, biomimicry, the shape of wings, conducted upcurrent experiments and also investigated aerodynamics with an engineer from British Aerospace.

Quality of teaching

Pupils say that teachers make their lessons interesting and enjoyable. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are being taught well, a large majority strongly agreeing. Teachers plan effectively for the range of ages and abilities in their classes and in many cases are almost offering a curriculum matched to individual needs and abilities. A strength is the high number of other adults who ably assist in moving pupils' learning on. This is particularly effective in the support of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, who are supported very well. The progress of these pupils is monitored carefully and precise plans made for their learning.

The school is very keen to raise standards of teaching still further, so that it is outstanding. An area for development currently is ensuring all lessons have a lively pace. Occasionally aspects of lessons, whether tasks or teachers' input, are not as brisk as they could be. The pace of learning in these lessons is not moving at the optimum rate. Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, pupils are given many opportunities to work together in pairs or groups. They learn about a wide range of other cultures, both in religious education, where there is a good focus on other religions, and in subjects such as history and geography.

Teachers use assessment successfully to track the progress of pupils and to identify any in need of extra support. Very good interventions are put in place to help them catch up. Teachers' marking is very effective and a significant improvement since the last inspection. It gives pupils very clear guidance on how they can improve their work. The targets set for their next steps in learning are precise and individual and pupils say that they help them enormously to know what to learn next and to keep a check on their own progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour observed during the inspection was good and pupils confirmed that what was seen is typical. It was particularly good during lessons, where pupils are very considerate of the needs of others. A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire rightly regard behaviour as good. A particular strength is the family atmosphere evident in the school where pupils feel safe. As a parent commented, 'No Reception child would be afraid to approach any Year 6 pupil.'

A very small minority of parents regard bullying as not being dealt with well. In discussions, the pupils were open and said that incidents did happen, but regarded them as being minor and dealt with very well. They have a very good knowledge of different types of bullying, racist and cyber for example.

Despite leaders making efforts to improve attendance, it is still average, as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Leadership and management

There is a very clear sense of shared purpose and ambition, ably led by the headteacher. This is exemplified well in the considerable progress that has been made since the last inspection in pupils' achievement in mathematics and in teachers' use of assessment and marking. Much of this has been a result of careful analysis and very effective staff training. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and this knowledge is based on regular visits. They are supportive and challenging and conduct evaluations of their own performance. Given the improvements noted and the shared aspirations, the school is well placed to continue to improve. It says much that the next step forward, to improve pupils' achievement in writing, has already been identified and effective strategies to achieve this are already having an impact. Leaders, managers and members of the governing body are effective in ensuring that the arrangements to keep pupils safe are rigorous. Statutory requirements concerning safeguarding are met.

The curriculum is outstanding because of the extremely carefully planned broad range of experiences provided. Despite having very limited indoor space, very good provision is made for physical education as all pupils go to a local sports centre one afternoon each week, where all swim and have a session in the hall there. The curriculum for literacy and numeracy is very carefully planned so that specific skills are practised in other subjects, such as religious education and science. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning. A particular strength is the creative afternoon each week. Pupils are very enthusiastic about this, where they are given opportunities to work with pupils from all classes on a wide variety of creative experiences. Discrimination is not tolerated and equality of opportunity is high on the school's agenda, permeating the curriculum, where there is almost an individual curriculum created for each pupil.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because of the excellent provision made for it. The school has connections with two communities abroad which, along with the wide range of other cultures studied, contribute very effectively to pupils' cultural awareness. The school has also worked strenuously to ensure that pupils' understanding of the diverse range of cultures in their own country is developed very well, despite the monocultural nature of the locality. For instance, the older pupils are taken on a residential visit to London each year so that they appreciate that not all environments are like their own. Pupils have a very keen sense of right and wrong and many opportunities are available for developing their spiritual awareness. For instance, the live pictures from a nesting box, where five blue tit chicks are being tended by their parents, are extremely popular amongst all ages.

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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oldbury-on-Severn Church of England Primary School,
Thornbury BS35 1QG**

Thank you so much for welcoming me so warmly when I visited your school recently. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and hearing how much you enjoy school. I was particularly impressed with how much was raised at your fair last Saturday. I am not surprised that you enjoy your school as it is a good school.

These are some of the things I found about your school.

- You are making good progress through the school and reach well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time you leave.
- You are making good progress because you are being taught well. You are also fortunate in having so much adult help in class.
- You behave well and are very polite and welcoming. A number of your parents mention how well you all get on together and it was good to see all ages playing together.
- You enjoy a super range of learning experiences. You told me that you especially enjoy the creative afternoons.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors know clearly what they want to do to make your school even better.

There are two things I have suggested could be improved.

- Although you are making good progress in writing, it is not quite as fast as in reading or mathematics. A plan needs to be put in place to ensure you improve your sentence structure and punctuation. You should also have more occasions when you write at length.
- Some of you don't attend school as regularly as you could and so are not making the best progress.

I am sure you will help by continuing to work hard, particularly with your writing.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie, Lead inspector

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