



# Earley St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110009  
**LEA** Wokingham District Council  
**Inspection number** 278342  
**Inspection dates** 8 November 2005 to 9 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Vanessa Ward AI

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

|                                    |                    |                           |                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>              | Primary            | <b>School address</b>     | Church Road       |
| <b>School category</b>             | Voluntary aided    |                           | Earley            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>         | 3 to 11            |                           | Reading RG6 1EY   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>            | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01189261657       |
| <b>Number on roll</b>              | 486                | <b>Fax number</b>         | 01189266358       |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>       | The governing body | <b>Chair of governors</b> | Mr Stuart Gilmour |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 13 March 2000      | <b>Headteacher</b>        | Mr Steve Scott    |

|                             |   |                                    |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The largest group of minority ethnic pupils is of Asian descent. Other groups include children from Black African, Chinese, European and mixed heritages. The percentage of pupils for whom English is not their first language is slightly above average and is increasing. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The social and economic backgrounds of the pupils are mixed, the majority of pupils coming from advantaged backgrounds. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is below average. The number of pupils who join the school other than at the start of the Foundation Stage is low. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Two of the four members of the leadership and management team are relatively new to the school. The school is working to achieve a Healthy Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  |
| Grade 2 | Good         |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   |

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory, with some good features. There are particular strengths in the care, guidance and support which the school provides for pupils, in the quality of the curriculum and in areas of leadership and management. Aspects of the pupils' personal development, such as their spiritual, moral and social development, are outstanding. In the Foundation Stage, the school gives the children a good start to their education and they achieve well. Through Years 1 to 6, the school maintains these above average standards, sometimes achieving higher standards. However, standards in writing have fallen in the past two years, most recently in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Where teaching is good, the pupils achieve well. Not all teaching provides sufficient challenge for different groups of pupils to achieve as well as they might. The school is aware that it needs to make more effective use of the information it gathers about pupils' progress in order to raise achievement by improving teaching and learning. The areas of concern raised at the previous inspection have all been addressed effectively and are now becoming strengths of the school. The senior staff have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the actions required to bring about improvement. However, they currently over-estimate the school's effectiveness. The success of recent improvements, combined with the commitment of staff and governors to support necessary change, indicate that the school is well placed to improve. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

To improve further the school should: \* Raise achievement in writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6 \* Ensure that all teaching challenges pupils to do as well as they are able \* Use assessment data effectively to influence teaching and learning and raise achievement

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

The pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are better than those typically found in three-year-olds, particularly in aspects of personal and physical development. The interesting curriculum and good teaching enables a large majority of the children to exceed the goals expected at the end of the Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 2, although test results show some variation from year to year, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and, by Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Sometimes, the pupils achieve well and attain standards which are well above average, but this is not a consistent feature and hence standards fluctuate. For example, results in writing fell significantly in Year 2 in 2004 and in Year 6 in 2005, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Where test results are lower than expected, the school analyses the causes and implements initiatives to

bring about improvement. This has, for example, resulted in writing standards in Year 2 now rising, and the reversal of gradually declining mathematics standards in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with different abilities and from different backgrounds, including those learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good, with some outstanding features. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. One pupil's comment that 'I'd like this school to go on to Year 7 and after' was firmly endorsed by his peers. Pupils feel that their teachers help them with their work and they respond by engaging positively in lessons. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. A wide range of spiritual and cultural activities helps pupils to respect, understand and celebrate the diversity of faiths and cultural traditions. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They behave well and develop positive relationships with each other. As one pupil commented, 'If you play a game, usually lots of people join in and they don't have to ask'. Pupils are keen to assume responsibilities around the school and to participate in projects that help others beyond the school community. These activities, combined with learning basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, help pupils develop the skills they will need in adulthood. The school council plays an active role and has brought about change such as the provision of additional drinking fountains. The emphasis on sport, and the encouragement of healthy eating, helps pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils feel safe in the school, 'It's the same as being at home!' voiced one pupil.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory over time and accounts for the sound progress that pupils make as they move through the school. During the inspection, much of the teaching seen was good and a few lessons were of high quality. Where teaching is particularly successful, teachers engage pupils thoroughly and continually challenge them to extend their learning in a variety of ways. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, where pupils were inserting video clips into a multi-media presentation. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage their classes well. As a consequence, pupils behave well and enjoy their learning. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with their pupils, so that they know what they are expected to learn. Teachers generally plan well to meet pupils' individual needs, but sometimes all pupils undertake the same work and it is then too easy for some and too hard for others. Teachers are aware that they need to follow the progress of individual pupils more closely to make better use of assessment information when planning learning for their pupils. Teachers'

marking is a strong feature of pupils' work, giving them a clear idea of what they need to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides an enjoyable and varied curriculum for its pupils. Children have a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes through the interesting range of activities provided. In the rest of the school, good links are made between different subjects, with ICT being used effectively to enhance learning. The curriculum is enlivened through a range of visits and visitors. Residential trips enrich pupils' learning and contribute effectively to their social development. A wide range of sporting, musical and artistic activities are offered beyond the school day, all of which add to the richness of pupils' experience. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported by their dedicated teachers and teaching assistants, and are able to enjoy a full curriculum as a result. The school is beginning to identify the specific needs of the increasing numbers of pupils learning English as an additional language, and to put in place strategies to support their learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has good systems relating to the safety and protection of pupils, and all aspects of the procedures are monitored effectively. This enables pupils to feel safe and secure. Parents affirm overwhelmingly that the school is a safe and happy place. The school's promotion of considerate behaviour among pupils is very successful. They know that if they have worries, staff are approachable and helpful. Pupils reported that the school acted swiftly and effectively where an instance of bullying was identified. Those who transfer from other schools speak warmly of the welcoming attitude of both staff and pupils. Pupils feel that the teachers' marking of their work helps them to make improvements, as well as recognising their achievements. The school's arrangements to promote good attendance are effective. Good links are made with local agencies in support of the school's promotion of pupils' health, safety and welfare.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with some significant strengths. The headteacher, deputy and senior leaders share a commitment to bring about school improvement and give a clear lead to the staff and governors. Several new and important initiatives are being introduced but their impact is yet to be seen in terms of raising achievement. For example, a new timetable for monitoring teaching and learning is intended to provide greater rigour and consistency to this aspect of school improvement. In addition, more frequent tracking of individual pupil's progress is being introduced. Previous initiatives to raise standards in ICT and mathematics are

proving very successful. Staff and governors are thoroughly involved in school improvement planning and in monitoring progress towards identified objectives. Governors are fully involved in the school's current initiative to improve learning in mathematics. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and carries out its duties effectively. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and this contributes to the children's good progress. The roles of subject leaders have developed significantly since the previous inspection and they now have much greater influence over teaching and learning in their subjects. This has led, for example, to subject leaders in mathematics and ICT becoming much more proactive in raising standards in their subjects. The school gives high priority to promoting the pupils' personal development within a safe and secure environment. It seeks and values the views of parents and works hard to involve them in their children's learning. The school manages its resources well and makes sure that they support school improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

|  |                       |              |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | <b>School Overall</b> | <b>16-19</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 3   | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 2   | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage  | 2   | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes | NA |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 3 | NA |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 2 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 3 | NA |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 | NA |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 3 | NA |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 2 | NA |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 2 | NA |

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 3   | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3   | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review      | 3   | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 3   | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 2   | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected  | Yes | NA |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>  |     |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily  | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise  | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse   | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health   | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>   |     |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements                                   | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place  | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism                                | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them   | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>  |     |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships   | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them                   | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>                           |     |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills  | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams                                  | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form          | NA  |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy               | NA  |

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, we visited your school recently for two days. I am writing to you, on behalf of the inspectors, to tell you what we found out about your school. We talked to some of you and we would like to thank you for making us feel welcome and for talking to us about your school. It was very useful to listen to what you had to say about what you enjoy doing.

The things we think are good about your school are: \* The way your headteacher and other grown ups look after you and help and support you as you grow. You told us that you feel safe and happy in school and that you know the grown ups will always help you if you are upset or worried. \* The school gives you a good start to school life in the nursery and reception classes. \* This is a happy school and your parents and carers speak well of it. \* Your teachers provide many interesting things for you to do. You told us that this helps you to enjoy coming to school.

We think your school could be even better if your teachers: \* Help you to improve your written work so that it becomes more varied and interesting to the reader, especially in Years 3 to 6.

\* Make sure that each one of you does the best that you can in lessons. \* Make better use of their knowledge about how well you are doing when they plan what you ought to learn next. We hope you carry on enjoying your school and help your teachers as much as you can.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Vanessa Ward, Lead Inspector