

# Dr South's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123195
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314536
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Williams

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	54
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	11
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Davis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Helen Barnard (acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 May 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Bletchington Road Islip Kidlington OX5 2TQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 372323

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 September 2008
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**Fax number**

01865 372323

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. They investigated how well the school is tackling its priorities in writing and mathematics; whether provision in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has improved sufficiently; and the extent to which monitoring is giving leaders an accurate view of teaching and learning. Evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' progress, scrutiny of samples of their work, observation of lessons, parents' questionnaires, and discussions with the headteacher, staff, two governors and pupils.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Almost all of the pupils at this small school are from White British backgrounds and none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion eligible for free school meals is much lower than usually found. There are fewer pupils identified with learning difficulties than in most schools. In the main, their needs relate to moderate learning difficulties. Reception children are joined by the village pre-school group in the Partnership Foundation Stage Unit (PFSU). The school has Healthy School status and the Eco-school and Sports Active Mark awards. The acting headteacher joined the school at the beginning of term.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school, in which pupils achieve well to reach above average standards. A combination of good leadership and teaching, together with pupils' positive attitudes, ensures that they enjoy school, behave well and make good progress in their all-round development. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, and are particularly pleased with the impact made by the new acting headteacher. One reflected the views of many in describing, 'A lovely small school with a lot to offer.' Indeed, the school maximises the advantage of its small size and is highly inclusive, so that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are able to achieve well.

Small numbers in each year group mean that analysis of the national test results must be treated cautiously because the performance of individual pupils can have an exaggerated effect on the results. Nevertheless, taken overall, the results reveal above average standards; standards in science have been exceptionally high in Year 6 in recent years. Within this positive picture, there has been some fluctuation, and the school rightly identified the need to raise standards in mathematics. Better support for less able pupils, and increased challenge for the more able, contributed to improved, provisional results in 2008, particularly at the higher Level 5.

This improvement is due in no small part to good leadership from governors during a period of temporary leadership, and reflects a good capacity to improve further. The acting headteacher has 'hit the ground running'. Her review of the quality of teaching and learning, undertaken prior to her taking up the post, has ensured that she has quickly gained a very clear understanding of what is working well and what can improve. Important areas of teaching and provision were identified, including for example the need to improve aspects of pupils' writing. Clear strategies, including the setting of personal targets, have been established to secure improvement. Much of this is new and has yet to achieve its full impact. However, other improvements are already achieving results. For example, staff have worked successfully to improve lesson planning, so that objectives for learning are identified clearly and take account of the mixed age classes. These objectives are tailored to meet pupils' individual needs, ensuring that more able pupils are challenged and those needing extra help are appropriately supported. Lessons move at a brisk pace. Pupils are fully engaged in their learning, enjoying, for example, acting as interviewers and interviewees, or using glove puppets to develop an understanding of dialogue. The small number of staff share responsibility for co-ordinating subjects, although there are few opportunities for them to monitor directly the work in other classes.

One of the strengths of this small school is that staff know their pupils well and keep a close eye on their welfare. Parents appreciate the high level of care staff provide for their children. Tight procedures are in place to safeguard pupils, secure their health and safety and protect those who are potentially vulnerable. Pupils feel safe and confident that someone will listen to them if they are troubled. Staff monitor also pupils' day-to-day academic progress closely. Those with moderate learning difficulties are supported well, so that they make good progress. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and pupils are praised for their efforts. However, there are too few comments aimed at helping pupils to understand how they can improve. A system of setting personal learning targets for pupils has been introduced to help deal with this, but many pupils' understanding of their targets remains patchy and some pupils feel that their targets are too easy. Staff assess pupils' work regularly, particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, from class to class, there are inconsistencies in the way the results of these assessments are recorded. In some cases, for example, there are gaps in the information

collected from previous schools. This makes it difficult for staff to check precisely on the progress made by individual pupils, and to set them suitably challenging targets.

Consistently above average attendance levels reflect pupils' enjoyment of school. They particularly appreciate the good range of opportunities outside of lessons, and the visits to places further afield, including a very popular residential trip for those in Class 3. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives and they make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Careful planning for literacy and numeracy contributes to pupils' good progress, and means they are well prepared for their future lives. Pupils make a good contribution to their school. The School Council is rightly proud of its efforts to raise funds for charities and its members are excited about their plans to develop the pond area.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children join the EYFS with skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age. They make good progress and, by the end of Reception, the vast majority reach or exceed the goals expected of them. They achieve well because teaching is good. Staff provide a good balance of activities that promote children's personal and social development. Consequently, children gain confidence, develop independence and enjoy working alongside others. They quickly understand classroom routines and waste no time in settling to their learning. Staff keep a close eye on children's progress, keep careful records and ensure that their welfare needs are well met. The EYFS is well led. Provision has improved since the last inspection and arrangements within the PFSU work well. Teamwork is a strong feature and there are good systems to ensure that children join or leave the Reception Year smoothly. Resources are plentiful to support all areas of learning, although some equipment is old and worn. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make, one noting, 'My child is thriving in Reception and I can not rate this school more highly.'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve marking and target setting to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of how they should improve.
- Improve systems to monitor and track pupils' progress.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

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

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dr South's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Kidlington, OX5 2TQ

Many thanks for the way you welcomed us to your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you work and play. A special thank you goes to the school council and the other pupils who met with us to give us your views. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Many of you, and your parents, told us that you go to a good school and that you feel you are doing well. We agree. You are making good progress because the headteacher and the other staff make sure that you all have the chance to do your best. They make sure that those of you who can do harder work get it, and there is extra help for those who need it. You also do well because you work hard, behave well and try your best. Well done, and please keep it up because this is so important. We were pleased to see that your mathematics work has improved and the staff have plans to keep improving your writing. We know you will want to help. The school council do a good job and they are right to be proud of the money you have raised for charity. Good luck with your plans for the pond.

Because you are a small school, your teachers know you well and keep a close eye on you. They mark your work regularly. We have asked them to make sure that their comments help you to know how to improve your work. Your new targets will help with this, but it is early days, and some of you are not quite sure what your targets mean. You can help by reading your teachers' comments carefully and by making sure you understand your targets. If you are not sure, ask your teachers because they want to help. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that they record your assessments carefully, because this will help them to check that everyone is getting on well.

Even though yours is a good school, the headteacher and the other adults want it to be even better. We know you will help them and we wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams

Lead Inspector