

Kidmore End Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123202
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	327867
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Trevor Davies

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	197
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Knott
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Maul
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chalkhouse Green Road Kidmore End Nr Reading RG4 9AU
Telephone number	01189 723149

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2009
Inspection number	327867

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kidmore End Church of England School is a one-form entry primary school in a small village. Most of the pupils are drawn from local villages and suburbs of north Reading. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, but a range of ethnic backgrounds are represented. Most pupils remain in the school for their whole primary education. The proportion of pupils with some degree of learning difficulty is below the national average. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage and children start school full-time in the year in which they are five years old. A private club provides childcare facilities four days a week after school. The school has achieved the Activemark and an Eco Award.

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. Pupils achieve well because of their excellent attitudes to learning and good teaching. The headteacher provides good leadership and a clear direction for the school. A parent summed up the views of many when she said, 'We believe this is a really good school and is teaching the children to be responsible citizens'. Pupils' good basic skills in English, mathematics, science and information communication technology (ICT), alongside their positive attitudes, prepare them well for the next stage of their education. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an outstanding experience for children when they first enter the school at the age of four.

Children's attainment on entry to the school is above the national average. Pupils make good progress throughout the school so standards are consistently well above the national average by the time they reach Year 6. Although an above-average number of pupils achieve the highest Level 5 in English, mathematics and science, the higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Performance in writing remains a relative weakness for some pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress due to the careful and well-targeted support.

The quality of teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers are knowledgeable in subject areas and encourage all pupils to participate well in lessons, contributing to their good progress. Pupils enjoy all lessons, but particularly the more active ones such as physical education, art, science and ICT. A broad curriculum is enriched by a wide range of opportunities for pupils outside lessons, including the very successful choir and orchestra. The extra provision made for the lower achievers is excellent.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils very much enjoy school and are confident learners with high self-esteem. Their behaviour is exemplary and attendance is good. Pupils are happy to share any concerns they have with staff. The school council makes a positive contribution to early citizenship skills and pupils take pride in the range of responsibilities they are given, for instance acting as 'playground buddies'. The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are good, although the academic tracking of pupils' progress is inconsistent. This means that for some pupils, particularly higher attainers, targets are not sufficiently challenging.

There is good capacity to improve because the school self-evaluation is thorough and subject leaders understand the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects well. Governors provide very effective support and challenge to the school. They visit the school on a regular basis, which provides them with a very good understanding both of what the school does well, and areas for development. Community cohesion is strong. The school contributes greatly to the local community and successfully helps the pupils to understand their responsibilities in the wider global context, particularly through the school's international links.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children have an excellent start to their learning in the Reception class. They start with skills and abilities that are higher than those expected for their age. Links with parents and carers and with the local pre-school providers are strong. As a result, children settle quickly and make outstanding progress, reaching standards well above national expectations by the end of the

Reception year. The curriculum appeals to children's interests and they enjoy fun indoor and outdoor activities, confidently working and playing together. Activities observed were based around the theme of castles both within and outside the classroom and the role play castle enabled children to re-enact stories they had been told. The strength of teaching can be seen in the excellent progress that children make in their personal, social and emotional development, where their behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. An excellent balance exists between adult-led and child-initiated activities and this develops children's independence very well. The Early Years Foundation Stage is extremely well led and the review of planning is ensuring that all areas of learning are appropriately and imaginatively covered.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of the higher attaining pupils.
- Make sure that targets are more challenging, so that all pupils understand how they might improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils enter Year 1 reaching levels that are much higher than expected for their age because of the excellent start the children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They maintain good progress, reaching standards that continue to be well above average when they leave Year 2, though slightly lower in their writing skills. There was a dip in performance in the 2008 national assessments due to an internal administrative error, but the school has now rectified this. Year 6 results, year-on-year are above average and most groups achieve well and make very good progress in English, mathematics and science. The school has worked successfully to raise standards, particularly in ICT. It has excellent systems for supporting slower learners with individual help and booster sessions.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, and they have excellent attitudes towards each other and adults. As one parent said 'The behaviour of the pupils is a credit to the staff'. Pupils' attendance is good, and reflects their positive attitudes. At break times and lunchtimes they play safely and well together and take pride in being chosen as 'playground buddies'. Pupils stated that they feel very secure from bullying because of the good supervision. They thoroughly enjoy lessons, and many attend the thriving Friday Clubs and other school activities, which cater for all aptitudes. The school has the 'Activemark' award and healthy lifestyle choices are very good with an extensive range of opportunities for physical activities. The school council flourishes and pupils learn how to effect changes through class representatives, and offer sensible recommendations for improvement such as the creation of a quiet garden in the school grounds. They also help raise money for charities such as 'A cow for Africa'. Many subjects also help prepare pupils extremely well for adult life, including role play in the Pizza House in Reception and applying ICT skills across the curriculum in the older age groups.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school has strong links with the local church, which pupils visit for Christian festival assemblies. Pupils reflect on assembly stories of all faiths about how people behave in particular circumstances, and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. They know how the school expects them to behave, and the

consequence of breaking rules. Participation in social and cultural events, such as music festivals and the celebration of the Chinese New Year, gives them a wider cultural awareness. Pupils' self-esteem is high, helped by the sensitive celebration assemblies, such as 'Star of the week', which also praises achievements gained outside school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils commented during the inspection on how much they enjoyed their learning; 'school is exciting and fun' was the comment of one school council representative. Lessons are characterised by clear objectives, shared effectively with pupils, and a range of activities, ensuring pace, and helping pupils remain on task. Pupils are keen to learn, show good levels of perseverance, and apply their knowledge well. The good use of modern technology such as interactive whiteboards to interest and motivate pupils, and the quality of display in many of the classrooms, help to create a very positive learning environment. Although teachers know their pupils well, this knowledge is not always used consistently to plan for the different abilities in the group, particularly for those who are more able. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported by both teachers and support staff and consequently make excellent progress. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to solve problems by themselves, such as a Year 6 science lesson on autogyros, or to carry out research in small groups, as in an excellent Year 5 geography lesson on the Amazonian rainforest. This helps develop their independence and thinking skills. Although the school has individual targets for every pupil, which enables it to track their progress, these targets are not consistently shared with pupils to help them improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides a high-quality, broad and balanced curriculum, which has been enriched by the introduction of French in Years 3 to 6 and by moves to develop cross-curricular links. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well developed in lessons, as are pupils' ICT skills. Increasing opportunities are being provided for pupils to extend their writing skills in different subjects. The creative aspects of the curriculum, such as music and art, are given excellent prominence. The choir has represented the school at the Albert Hall and the Henley Festival. There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils, such as sports, chess, choir, arts and crafts, as well as links with other schools and a Year 6 residential field visit to Wales. During the inspection, a presentation by a visiting group, 'The Arboretum Comes to School', inspired pupils of all ages to gain a greater understanding of sustaining our environment, supporting the work the school has done in achieving its Eco Award. Parental support in school is good. Parents use their own expertise to talk about their jobs in assemblies, such as chiropody or police work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe from bullying, and, through lessons they have an excellent awareness of risk, such as internet safety. Safeguarding procedures are secure. Vulnerable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good levels of pastoral care, and sensitive guidance and

support in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants. The academic progress of this group of pupils is tracked and targeted well. This process is inconsistent for higher-ability pupils, some of whom do not make as much progress as they should due to insufficient challenge. As a result, the number of Year 6 pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science, while well above the national average, is not as high as it could be. The quality of marking is very good, and pupils are becoming increasingly confident in assessing where they are in their learning and what they need to do to improve. In some cases, for example, they have begun to undertake some assessment and review of each other's work, which helps them improve their own efforts. The care, guidance and support for children in Reception are outstanding. Good and improving links with local pre-school providers ensure a smooth transition for children when they enter school for the first time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

'The primary school has exceeded our expectations', is a sentiment shared by many parents and carers. The headteacher provides a clear vision for the school, involves staff in decision-making and has encouraged them to work effectively in teams across year groups. She is well supported by her senior team, and staff contribute well to the development of the school improvement plan. The school knows its strengths and identifies accurately weaknesses and areas for development. Whole-school self-evaluation and evaluation of subject areas is generally robust and thorough, and action is being taken as a result. For example, staff are addressing weaknesses in writing. The school has good systems to monitor and support teaching through its performance management processes. However, these systems were not used effectively to prevent the problems which arose from the administration of the previous year's national assessments in Year 2.

Governors fulfil their duties very well and have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They provide an excellent level of challenge and support and are highly effective in supporting the school. They link with curriculum teams in the drive for supporting improvement and are involved in strategic planning. Community cohesion is strong, and with its links to the church, the school is an integral part of the local community. Links with a school in Zimbabwe help pupils develop an appreciation of the wider global community.

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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?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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	1

¹Grade 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

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
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

16 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kidmore End Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Nr Reading, RG4 9AU

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and joining you in your lessons and were very pleased to see how much you liked school. This is what we found out.

Kidmore End is a good school with some excellent opportunities. Your behaviour and attitudes are outstanding, you are enthusiastic in class and you are learning well because your teachers have high expectations of you. Teachers are good at explaining things and they prepare interesting activities for you.

The staff look after you very well so that you enjoy school and feel safe. The school provides many exciting things for you to do outside lessons. We were particularly pleased to see the school orchestra, and hear about your excellent choir and the range of activities in which you participate. The headteacher and other adults work very hard to help you do as well as you can.

We think there are some things that would help your school become even better. We have asked the school to make certain that all teachers tell you what your targets are and help you work towards achieving them. We have also asked teachers to ensure that those of you with higher attainment do even better.

We wish you luck in the future.

Yours faithfully

Trevor Davies

Lead Inspector