

Old Sodbury Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109175
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	377888
Inspection dates	9 -10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew King
Headteacher	Bernice Webber
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2008
School address	Church Lane Old Sodbury Bristol BS37 6NB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Ten lessons or part lessons were observed, taught by three different teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, staff, the headteacher and an officer of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress, school policies including safeguarding documentation, and the school development plan. In addition, questionnaires from 52 parents and carers, 19 pupils and 10 staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of strategies to improve attainment in mathematics, reading and writing.
- The accuracy of teacher assessments and the use of assessment information to plan further steps in learning.
- The quality of provision for children in Reception and how well this prepares children for entry into Year 1.
- How effectively the governing body monitors the work of the school and measures the success of key decisions.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average primary school. Most pupils live locally and the large majority are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average as is the proportion that have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is also below average. There are three classes in the school where children are taught in mixed-age groups. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed-age Reception and Year 1 class. In 2009, the school gained Healthy School status.

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: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. It is an exceptional school which has made great gains in raising pupils' attainment and accelerating progress by ensuring there is far more good and better teaching and greatly improving the climate for learning since the previous inspection. One of the key strengths of the school is the exemplary pastoral care that it offers. By the time pupils leave in Year 6 they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school. Almost all parents and carers are supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children love coming to school. One parent reflected the views of many when saying, 'For such a small school, Old Sodbury provides endless opportunities for my child to thrive and develop.'

Children get a good start in the Reception class. The wide range of stimulating activities provided means that children make good progress and are well prepared for their work in Year 1. However, the outside area has not been well-enough developed to extend all areas of children's learning. The rate of progress increases strongly between Years 2 and 6. By the end of Year 6, attainment has risen considerably and has been above average overall for the last three years. This represents outstanding achievement from their starting points and nearly all pupils meet or exceed their challenging targets. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very good support both in class and in small group or individual tuition sessions which enables them to make excellent progress in their learning.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high. Their joy of school is palpable and is evident in the ever improving attendance rate, which is well-above average. Pupils' develop very well as articulate, courteous and considerate young people, extremely aware of how to lead safe and healthy lives. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school, relationships are exceptionally strong and this results in very happy learners. One pupil spoke for many when saying 'This is a great school... it is a privilege to be here.' All adults work together extremely well to ensure that all pupils, whatever their difficulties or disabilities, are able to take full advantage of all that the school has to offer.

Teaching is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to pupils' significant rates of progress. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, give clear

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explanations and plan their lessons very well. Teachers use assessment criteria skilfully to encourage learning, to analyse and improve performance, and to set challenging targets for individual pupils. The curriculum ensures that learning is very meaningful and great fun. It matches pupils' needs extremely well. Links between subjects are fully exploited to provide extensive opportunities for pupils to practise skills such as literacy and numeracy as well as those of research and enquiry.

The driving force behind the school's success is undoubtedly the gifted and dedicated headteacher. She leads the school with unflagging enthusiasm and determination and is very well supported by her deputy and all staff. The governing body supports the school well and plays a key role in promoting effective safeguarding and strong links with parents. Governors are increasingly becoming more influential in evaluating the work of the school and playing an active part in setting school priorities. There is a strong sense of teamwork and pride in what has already been achieved, coupled with a total absence of complacency. School self-evaluation is highly accurate. Most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey of excellence and this, together with the successful action leaders have taken to ensure impressive improvement since its satisfactory outcomes at the last inspection, means the capacity to improve further is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the outside learning areas for the Reception class so that they are used more effectively to support all areas of children's learning and, in particular, provide more high quality opportunities to extend children's physical development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of consistently excellent progress. Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below levels expected for their age. The pupils' work seen confirms that their attainment is above average by Year 6, and improving strongly. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with particularly low levels of prior attainment, achieve very well. Pupils' number problem-solving skills have improved markedly since the last inspection because of the careful attention given to extending pupils' skills in solving written number problems. The pupils make excellent progress in their writing and reading skills as a result of the positive actions taken to promote speaking and listening skills and knowledge of sounds and letters. This was seen clearly in a Reception class lesson when the pupils made good use of their knowledge of sounds to write simple sentences about their 'volcanoes recipes'.

Pupils greatly enjoy school, grow in confidence and develop very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils achieve highly because most teachers expect much of their pupils and explain complicated ideas well. In an outstanding science lesson, pupils, working

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in mixed-age groups, were learning at a blistering pace because of the teacher’s exceptionally high expectations of what she wanted them to learn and the challenging and fun tasks she set for them. The school is very conscious of the needs of all pupils and so there is very little difference in the progress made by the various groups of pupils. For example, the work is made interesting for boys and girls and the school works very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and to fully challenge those who enter the school with particularly high levels of attainment.

Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of right and wrong and a deep appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is impeccable. Pupils work cooperatively, having highly developed skills of listening, taking turns and giving and receiving positive criticism. They readily explain the value of adopting healthy lifestyles and the need for exercise, reflecting the Healthy Schools award which the school has gained. Pupils have an excellent understanding for their age of how to be safe in the community. They eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in the community and are well informed about other people’s needs. They relish responsibility and this is shown through the mature attitude of the school council and the pupils’ eager participation in imaginative and thought-provoking assemblies. Pupils develop excellent social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. This, together with above average standards in the key skills in English and mathematics and high attendance rate, means they are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and engagement with pupils and their learning is outstanding. Key to this success is:

- teachers have rightly focused on developing pupils’ writing and comprehension skills in English
- the careful attention that has been given to developing pupils’ problem-solving and investigation skills in mathematics
- the introduction of rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the progress of each pupil towards challenging targets.

Typically, lessons are fast paced and fun. Teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained, and activities provide very effective challenge so that pupils learn at a swift pace. Adults ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think and use more varied vocabulary in their answers. Effective use of talking partners, drama, role play and activities using letters and sounds (phonics) help pupils make rapid progress in their speaking and writing. Consequently, the quality of learning in all lessons is now at least good and in many it is outstanding. For instance, in an exceptional literacy lesson, all pupils made excellent progress in developing their writing skills and really enjoyed the exciting task of rewriting the Little Red Riding Hood story.

The school works very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment. Detailed plans to support these groups, coupled with thoughtful deployment of learning assistants and timely interventions, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

The carefully structured curriculum contributes strongly to pupils’ learning because the interests of pupils are very well met. The curriculum supports pupils’ personal development well through very effective personal, social and health education, and there is an excellent focus on using visits to widen pupils’ life experiences. In particular, the arts and music are very well promoted. Parents agree that children are looked after very well. Induction programmes are outstanding for those who arrive throughout the year and those starting in Reception. Child protection procedures are rigorous and the care for vulnerable pupils is outstanding. Excellent links with specialists help pupils with their learning, social skills and emotional development. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is especially strong and helps them to make excellent progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is widely acclaimed by staff, parents and governors as having been hugely instrumental in improving the school. She leads the way in driving ambition and has established a shared sense of purpose to raise the aspirations of pupils and teachers alike. She is supported most effectively by a talented and energetic team who are committed to ongoing improvement. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils’ progress is accelerating. The senior team check the school’s performance rigorously. They use their excellent coaching and mentoring skills to offer constructive advice and training and use their highly effective teachers very well to extend and share good practice. In this way, the quality of teaching and learning is rapidly improving. At the time of the inspection, there was no evidence of any discrimination and the school promotes equality for all pupils vigorously through this sophisticated monitoring and exemplary support. Outcomes for all groups of pupils, given their different starting points, are broadly similar, indicating that the school’s commitment to equal opportunities is translated into practice.

The effectiveness of the governing body is good. It fulfils all legal requirements, and all safeguarding arrangements were found to be effective at the time of the inspection. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school’s work. For instance, checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough. The governing body brings a wealth of relevant experience to its deliberations and is very supportive of the school. Governors are increasingly able to hold the school to account for its work and have been influential in helping senior managers secure school improvement.

In this highly inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are considered very specifically. The school works extremely well in partnership with external agencies and its partner schools to secure extra support for those pupils who need it. There is a total commitment to the promotion of community cohesion. The principle of human rights is used as a baseline against which all curriculum planning and school developments are audited and policies are written. There is excellent involvement with the local community and a clear recognition that although the school is situated in a predominantly mono-ethnic and single-faith community, every opportunity is taken to expand the pupils’ understanding of the wider world through residential visits, visiting speakers, creative activities and the outstanding curriculum offered.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and	1
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driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good provision for the Reception class enables children to achieve well and develop good independence. Children love coming to school and parents are very appreciative of the good start that their children receive. Staff have created a safe, attractive environment in which the needs of all children are well met. Teaching is good. Children make good progress because a team of well-qualified adults support the children skilfully by asking focused questions to develop their understanding. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those from which children can choose. Children are developing excellent social skills because they are making choices and fostering independence through working with others. All adults make observations of children and assess their learning so that next steps are sharply focused. By the end of the Reception Year, standards in most areas are securely at those expected for their age. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage provides good leadership to his team. He has a very secure understanding of the early years curriculum and constantly reviews his practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care and support. Staff make very good use of the facilities that they have but are hampered from extending learning in the outside area. This is because there are insufficient high quality outdoor resources for the children to improve their climbing, clambering and physical skills.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire was well-above average and the school clearly enjoys their confidence and support. A number of individual comments praised the extremely high quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the big improvements seen in the school over recent years. The very few individual criticisms were followed up during the visit. The views of the parents and carers interviewed informally at the beginning and end of the school day confirm the positive responses in the questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Old Sodbury Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 74 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	79	11	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	69	16	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	60	20	38	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	65	17	33	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	39	75	12	23	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	73	13	25	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	56	23	44	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	36	69	14	27	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	73	11	21	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	65	16	31	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	75	11	21	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	79	8	15	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	87	4	8	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Old Sodbury Church of England Primary School, Bristol
BS37 6NB**

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Old Sodbury Church of England Primary School is an outstanding school. It has many excellent features and we know you are very proud of it. Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You make outstanding progress in your lessons and results in national tests are higher than in most schools. Your results are getting better and better.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on well with your fellow pupils. Old Sodbury is a well-ordered school and you look after each other really well.
- You show great enjoyment in your learning and know a lot about the importance of staying healthy and keeping safe.
- Teaching is excellent and your teachers are very skilful and concerned to make sure that you do as well as you can.
- The care, support and guidance that the school offers you are outstanding and mean that everyone can do well.
- Your headteacher and other senior staff are excellent leaders and know exactly how to make Old Sodbury Church of England Primary School even better.

The one thing that we have asked your school to do now to make it even better is to provide good quality outdoor opportunities for the Reception class so that children can practice their climbing and clambering skills.

Thank you once again for making such a helpful contribution to the inspection. We really enjoyed watching you learn.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant
Lead inspector

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