

Walsgrave Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103700
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	336134
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Kathy Hooper

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	406
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lois Whitehouse
Headteacher	Kim Docking
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons and 14 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff, and with a few parents and carers. Inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including meetings, teachers' planning, records of pupils' progress and their work, data on achievement and attendance, policies, planning and records, including those related to behaviour, safeguarding, and community cohesion. 70 parental and carer questionnaires were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- how supportive the teaching is for girls in mathematics and science
- whether the school is doing everything possible to ensure high attendance
- whether there are any differences in the teaching between key stages
- whether the literacy and creative development of the youngest children is improving.

Information about the school

Walsgrave is a larger-than-average primary school. The number on roll is bigger now than at the time of the previous inspection and the school is over-subscribed. There are more girls than boys, particularly in Years 1, 2 and 4. The school population is relatively stable. Nevertheless, there are growing numbers of pupils from minority ethnic families and increased transience. Minority ethnic pupils now comprise about a third of the roll. The main minority ethnic group is Indian, but there is an increasing number of pupils of Black African origin and from the Philippines. The number of pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition is just above average. There is an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is currently taking part in the 'Achievement for All', 'Every Child a Writer', and 'Reading Challenge' initiatives. It has achieved the Artsmark, Healthy Schools status and Sportsmark awards. It is working towards the Sustainable Schools award.

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

Walsgrave provides an outstanding quality of education. The school's Christian ethos shines through all activities. The curriculum is closely tailored to meet the particular needs of all pupils. The progress and welfare of each individual pupil is addressed and managed exceptionally well. Pupils are fascinated by learning and achieve well because they feel very safe and secure. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They respect and support each other very responsibly, understand right from wrong and have a keen interest in discussing issues. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Parents appreciate greatly the way their children thrive and develop. For example, one parent/carer commented 'It is amazing what the school has done.'

Teaching is good, ensuring that all groups of pupils make good progress and some do exceptionally well. Lessons are well structured, extending and reinforcing learning through a good range of activities that interest and enthuse pupils. Teachers' planning is well pitched because it builds on pupils' previous learning, based on half-termly cycles of detailed review and feedback. In mathematics, girls have performed less well than boys, but the school's efforts to raise girls' achievement have been effective already in Year 2, where they are now outperforming the boys. Opportunities are missed in a small minority of lessons to provide inspiring opportunities that stretch the most-able pupils. Teachers are knowledgeable and skilful in managing learning. Nevertheless, they do not always focus on promoting independence, initiative and higher-order thinking. Teachers' day-to-day assessments in the Nursery and Reception classes are not always fully focused on children's next steps in learning.

The curriculum is impressive and has been developed to meet the needs of Walsgrave's pupils. This occurs through the high quality of monitoring of individual pupils together with feedback from pupils. Pupils whose circumstances mean they need additional support have very successful, personalised provision.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding and there have been a myriad of initiatives to improve the quality of provision, based on very rigorous self-evaluation. Although priorities, such as girls' achievement in mathematics and provision for higher attaining pupils, are not totally embedded, there are strong indications of impact. Senior leaders are very clear about what actions to take and demonstrate that the school has excellent capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring girls achieve at least as well as boys in all year groups, particularly in mathematics
 - ensuring that higher-attaining pupils are challenged in all lessons
 - developing pupils’ independence, initiative, and higher-order thinking
 - using children’s next steps in learning consistently to focus in-class assessment in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Attainment on entry is broadly average and outcomes at the end of Year 6 are above average. Outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 2 are well above average. Pupils’ achievement in English is outstanding and their writing is exceptionally strong. Girls’ writing is better than that of boys. In contrast, girls have not achieved as well as boys in mathematics. This issue is being vigorously addressed. A slight downward trend in science has been promptly addressed and achievement has improved accordingly. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils were excited and challenged by planning a fair test involving cereals and milk. Every pupil was totally focused on the learning. They learned how to carry out an objective experiment and outstanding teaching helped them work productively in teams. Year 2 girls are now achieving better than boys in mathematics and, overall, pupils are exceeding the challenging targets set for the end of Year 6. Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress because learning is well structured and the curriculum is relevant and engaging. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language achieve slightly better than others due to the high quality of support they receive. A parent/carer, who moved her child from a school where she was one of the highest performers, was amazed by her child’s even better progress in Walsgrave, particularly in reading.

Pupils’ personal development is outstanding. They are confident and socially responsible and their behaviour is impressive. Older pupils support younger ones, for example, as ‘techno buddies’. Pupils are eager to learn, enjoy school, and know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. There is a very strong community spirit which reflects the school’s Christian values. Pupils are curious to learn about different cultures and ways of life. They have exceptional knowledge and appreciation of their local history and heritage and a well-developed awareness of world issues. Pupils’ attendance has improved significantly due to rigorous monitoring and prompt action on the part of senior leaders.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2

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Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well structured and pupils' natural curiosity and enthusiasm are fostered well. The best lessons promote a range of learning styles. They have lively openings, for instance quick-fire question and answer sessions that help to consolidate and explore knowledge. Jotters are used to make quick rough calculations, pupils work collaboratively in pairs or groups and well-selected resources, including new technologies, are well used to illustrate and confirm learning. On occasions, the brisk pace of lessons does not allow sufficient time for less-confident learners, often girls, to respond. Some science activities and thinking skills sessions promote independent thinking through investigation and some promote teamwork very effectively. Marking is very good. It generates a dialogue with pupils that confirms their strengths and helps them to improve their work. Assessment is good and particularly strong in literacy. The school strives constantly to improve provision and is currently running a pilot scheme in Years 1 and 5, comprising an hour-long progress review meeting for individual pupils and their parents and carers.

There are enormous strengths in the curriculum and it clearly reflects pupils' interests and the local identity. It has been recently reviewed to include a greater creative element and opportunities for pupils to plan their own learning. It provides a coherent structure for teaching and great strides have been made in integrating literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Themed days to promote cross-curricular links and high levels of support for a wide range of enrichment activities are particular strengths of the provision. Personalised programmes for pupils whose circumstances mean they need additional support are exceptionally effective in promoting the achievement of these pupils. Excellent mapping of learning activities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, based on a clear analysis of their progress and attainment, has also led

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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to the very efficient deployment of teaching assistants. Artsmark, Activemark, and Healthy Schools accreditation acknowledge the high quality of the curriculum.

Care, support and a commitment to pupils’ well-being are at the heart of the school’s provision. This is echoed in one parent/carer’s comment that ‘Any issues that ever arise are dealt with compassionately and professionally by all members of staff.’ The school works productively with pupils, their families and a range of agencies to promote learning. As a result, all pupils thrive, including those who face challenging circumstances. One parent/carer who was interviewed was extraordinarily complimentary about the support the family had received, stating that it had been ‘second to none’.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 outstanding leadership of the headteacher has enabled the school to drive forward a range of measures that have enhanced provision. Ably supported by her deputy, her clear vision and identification of priorities are effectively translated into practical action. For example, a focus on science and mathematics is beginning to show results in pupils’ achievement. The progress of individuals and groups of pupils is rigorously evaluated and used to set targets for teachers. As a result, teachers have a shared vision, a common sense of purpose and morale is high. A commitment to professional development has helped middle leaders to develop and support colleagues very effectively. Teachers, consistently, deliver well-structured lessons, but they do not always encourage pupils to explore and investigate for themselves. Staff, confidently, share data on pupils’ progress and reflect professionally on their practice. Their critical analysis of data and willingness to share good practice has led to the impressive improvement in literacy, and the emerging improvements in mathematics and science. It has also helped to ensure that attendance is now above average.

The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The school has vigorously audited provision and established first-rate links with local churches and other places of worship, local enterprises and through local and global charities. The school is a source of pride within its local community. There are excellent relationships with parents and carers, including classes and special sessions on parenting. Governors challenge and support the school through intelligent monitoring, detailed knowledge of the school, regular review and partnerships with teachers. Their evaluations are

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based on first-hand evidence, so they have a very clear understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. Safeguarding arrangements are exceedingly robust. Policies are exceptionally detailed and practice is rigorously monitored at all levels. The school’s excellent systems for monitoring individual progress review provision for pupils’ personal and academic needs comprehensively on a half termly basis. This ensures that equal opportunities are promoted well. Priorities are clearly founded on rigorous and objective evaluations of practice. Teachers’ professional development is very effectively used to drive improvements and makes excellent use of outside consultants as well as ‘home-grown’ expertise.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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

Although attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage dipped recently, due to a decline in the ability level of the intake, children in the Reception class this year are already reaching the Early Learning Goals. This is because the individual needs of children are met well. Interim assessments show massive improvements in linking sounds and letters. Children’s behaviour is exemplary. They make sensible choices about food and activities and children in the Reception class have good levels of independence. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes use computers unaided and develop language well to describe events. For example, when talking about the ‘Very Hungry Caterpillar’ and examining African snails, a child in the Reception class commented, ‘They crawl, slime with their legs’. Lower-attaining children relish their growing competence in writing, because of extra support. The children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language integrate well and rapidly develop good language and social skills. The children understand that they come to school to learn new things and the most-able explain what they are doing and why.

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There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children, within a rich environment for learning. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. Excellent analyses of outcomes have led to a clear focus on children’s literacy and creative development.

Monitoring is effectively used to target groups of children. ‘Learning journals’ provide excellent links with home and parents and carers. Discussion with parents and carers confirms that this helps to reinforce learning at home. Regular observations of children contribute to records of progress, but these are not always sufficiently focused on the individual targets, or ‘next steps’ in learning.

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

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many commented on the exceptional support their children receive, often in very difficult circumstances. They point to an excellent school where children enjoy learning and thrive. Comments such as, ‘My daughter has made excellent progress since starting the school. She is stretched and challenged and enjoys learning. The school has always been open and approachable’, sum up the tenor of their views. There were individual concerns about the timing of preparations for transfer and opportunities for inclusion of single working parents in activities, but overall, parents and carers were very happy and proud of their children’s achievements.

The inspectors agree with parents’ and carers’ views that this is an outstanding school. It promotes a strong Christian ethos, which focuses on achievement and enjoyment of learning, while supporting its pupils extremely well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walsgrave 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 406 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	69	22	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	73	19	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	37	53	32	46	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	60	26	37	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	69	22	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	39	56	28	40	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	57	28	40	2	3	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	51	29	41	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	38	54	30	43	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	46	34	49	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	53	29	41	3	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	61	24	34	1	1	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	46	66	22	31	2	3	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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



19 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Walsgrave Church of England Primary School, Coventry, CV2 2BA

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to let you know that we very much enjoyed meeting you and your teachers when we visited the school recently. We found that Walsgrave is a great place for you to be. We would like to thank all those children who talked to us about their experience of school. We were really impressed by your behaviour as well as your learning. You come across as very nice, confident children who care a lot for each other and your school. We found a number of strengths in your school.

- It is an outstanding school, with lots of interesting things to do during the day, and after school.
- Although you achieve exceptionally well in English, especially writing, you also achieve well in other subjects too.
- Your teachers make sure you learn well.
- Your teachers support you extremely well, even when the going gets tough.

I have asked your teachers to push you even further, especially the girls, and make sure they give you even more opportunities to solve problems independently and think things out for yourselves. I have asked the teachers of the very youngest children to give more consideration to 'next steps' in learning when assessing your progress in lessons.

You can help this by making sure that you ask lots of questions in class and try out different ways of doing things.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper
Lead inspector

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