

Kirtlington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123187
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	314531
Inspection dates	24 - 25 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Mrs Mary Sinclair

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 on roll	
School	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rosie Lewis
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona Crook
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Heyford Road Kirtlington OX5 3HL
Telephone number	01869 350210
Fax number	01869 351961

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. Most pupils are White British and none is learning English as a second language. The majority of pupils come from an area of social advantage and very few have free school meals. Few pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. The school and pre-school jointly run a Partnership Foundation Stage Unit. Work to extend and improve the buildings is underway.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kirtlington Primary is a good and improving school. The headteacher has given the school a new direction and generated a momentum for improvement. She has established a strong sense of teamwork. Governors work hard to support the headteacher and all levels of management pull together to promote school improvement. This has led to successful initiatives including the promotion of a consistent approach to behaviour management and the development of pupils' thinking skills. The success of such initiatives confirms the school's good capacity to improve.

Adults provide good role models for pupils. This promotes good relationships throughout the school. In turn, this has contributed to a strong sense of community in which bullying and racist incidents are very rare. Pupils are happy and feel safe. The school does a great deal to raise pupils' aspirations and to develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils thrive in a climate of high expectation and challenge. As one parent said, this is helping pupils 'to become caring, socially well adjusted and well motivated children'. Academic guidance through marking is good at Key Stage 2 but does not receive sufficient emphasis at Key Stage 1.

Standards have improved and are now well above average. Pupils are making good progress. Effective provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their learning. Pupils achieve well as they progress through the school, so that by the end of Year 6 standards in English and mathematics are well above average. The school has developed a rigorous system for tracking pupils' progress. This has enabled staff to target additional support more effectively to promote learning and to adjust the curriculum to achieve a closer match to pupils' needs. The good teaching challenges and engages pupils and promotes enjoyment of learning. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning but their expectations for the presentation of pupils' work are not high enough.

Effectiveness of the foundation stage

Grade: 2

The school works in partnership with a pre-school to provide a seamless transition from the Nursery to the Reception class. This helps children to settle quickly. The teacher and pre-school supervisors have a clear and shared understanding of how young children learn. They keep a close check on how well children are progressing in all areas of learning. The curriculum provides a good balance of adult led activities and those initiated by children. Exciting and relevant activities in the outdoor area stimulated all children to learn. 'Cinderella's kitchen' provided good opportunities for imaginative role-play appealing to both girls and boys.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop high quality marking in Key Stage 1 to extend pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and how they might improve.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' work so that it reflects the quality of its content.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, mostly achieve well. Standards are above average and pupils make good progress throughout the school. The majority of children enter the Reception class with skills and understanding above those expected for their age. They make good progress and most have good skills, knowledge and understanding when they start in Year 1. Provisional test results for 2007 show that standards were higher than in 2006 at the end of Years 2 and 6 and are above average. Standards were higher in reading and writing than in mathematics at the end of Year 2. Year 6 pupils made very good progress and surpassed their challenging targets. They attained exceptionally high standards in English and mathematics and good standards in science. The school's good tracking procedures and analysis of data have enabled staff to pinpoint the learning needs of each pupil. This robust approach has been used successfully to identify where support is needed. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is maintaining above average standards and that pupils are continuing to make good progress, particularly at Key Stage 2.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's emphasis upon helping pupils to develop positive values has promoted their self-awareness and their understanding of the needs of others. They understand how to keep safe and know that an adult will help them if they are worried or upset. A consistent, positive approach to behaviour management ensures that pupils know what is expected of them. This has contributed to good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Whilst pupils work hard to achieve good standards, they do not always show the same level of care in the presentation of their written work. They arrive punctually and their attendance is good. They accept responsibilities readily and value opportunities to influence school development through the school council. Pupils gain a good knowledge of healthy lifestyles through growing their own vegetables on the school allotment. They compost waste and are involved in recycling projects. These activities have helped the school to achieve healthy school status and to gain an eco school silver award. Pupils contribute well to the school community through being 'buddies' to ensure that all are included. They have participated in fundraising to rebuild a school in Kenya.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school places strong emphasis upon identifying what the children should learn and how they will know, when they have done so. Planning is thorough and all teachers identify appropriate objectives and success criteria to build on pupils' prior learning. Teachers have high expectations. They take account of pupils' varying ages and abilities and usually provide work that gives the right amount of challenge and support. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to model new concepts. They use questioning well to assess pupils' understanding and to make pupils think. All pupils enjoy their lessons, particularly when they are actively involved. The older pupils demonstrate good thinking skills. They readily engage in problem solving and investigative work. This contributes to their good progress. Pupils' good progress in literacy and numeracy and effective use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills is helping to prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and includes French for Key Stage 2 pupils. Recent modifications to the curriculum place much emphasis upon the development of problem solving and thinking skills in different subjects, particularly for the older pupils. Catch-up programmes help to match the curriculum more closely to pupils' needs. These initiatives help pupils to make good progress. Pupils also benefit from good opportunities to use their ICT skills to support learning in different subjects. The school development plan identifies the need for further developments that link subjects and skills together, to provide a more creative curriculum. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sport and music. Residential visits contribute to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies to promote the well-being of pupils. Midday supervisors have received training to support pupils' social development. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are monitored closely. Teachers use assessment procedures well to track pupils' academic progress. This helps them to see where their teaching is effective and where pupils need additional support. Marking provides good academic guidance for Key Stage 2 pupils but Key Stage 1 pupils do not receive enough written guidance to show them how to improve their work. Target setting in English and mathematics helps pupils to develop responsibility for their own learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership and she is highly regarded by staff, parents and governors. Self-evaluation is accurate and has led to a range of initiatives to bring about improvement. These include an effective system to track progress, enabling the school to set challenging but realistic targets for individual pupils. The school also has strengthened its communication with parents. The large majority now feel that the school listens to them and takes account of their views.

The school is developing the role of teachers and curriculum managers. Detailed plans set out a clear strategy for improvement. Through performance management, the headteacher is placing higher expectations on her teaching staff and holding them to account for the gains pupils make in their learning. She is devolving more responsibility to subject leaders to identify areas for development in the subjects for which they are responsible, through scrutinising pupils' work and monitoring lessons.

Governors are committed and offer satisfactory support to the school. Some bring experience and expertise; others are new to their role and are finding out for themselves how well the school is performing. The chair of governors meets the headteacher frequently and provides challenge and support.

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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 effectiveness in the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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
How well 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

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 interest of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	3
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

Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

5 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirtlington Church of England Primary School, Kirtlington, OX5 3HL

This letter is to tell you about the recent inspection of your school and to thank those of you who gave up your time to talk to me. I enjoyed visiting your school and seeing you working hard in lessons.

You enjoy your lessons and find them interesting. Some of you said that you like a challenge! Your school is giving you a good education and your headteacher has plans to make it even better.

Over the last year or two, your headteacher has made many changes to give you opportunities to do well in lessons. They have been successful and you are now making good progress in English, mathematics and science. Your teachers know that you are keen to learn and want to know how to make your work even better. When your teachers are marking Key Stage 1 children's books, I have asked them to write down what they need to do to get better. I have also asked your teachers to do all they can to help all of you to present your work really well.

I hope that your school continues to improve and helps you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Sinclair
Lead Inspector

