

Ann Cam Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115683
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338638
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Reese
Headteacher	Mr C Ward
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations and governors' minutes, pupils' work and other assessment information. Inspectors scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 35 parents or carers.

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

- the impact of measures to improve writing, especially for the more able
- how effectively the school is tracking pupils' progress
- the impact of changes brought in by the new leadership team on provision and outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller-than-average-sized school. It has its Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Nursery and a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Most pupils on roll are from White British backgrounds. A few others speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These are for a variety of complex difficulties. The school has gained the Healthy School and Activemark awards.

The school governors took over responsibility for running the Nursery from September 2009. At the time of the inspection the acting headteacher had been in post just over a year.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Ann Cam Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is a satisfactory school. Its pupils make satisfactory progress to reach standards that are broadly average by the time they leave Year 6. Elements of its work are good or better, including outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which gives children a very strong start to their school careers. Parents are generally happy with the school, although they have concerns about large mixed-age classes. One couple, reflecting the positive views of many, said, 'Overall we feel that the school is all that you could want from a village primary school, where teachers and the acting head alike know the children and parents well.'

The acting headteacher has given the school direction and vision, and brought in changes that have been popular with pupils, teachers and parents alike. Security has been strengthened, closer links have been established with parents and the community, and robust systems put in place to track pupils' progress. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop. Several new initiatives have been put in place, such as measures to improve writing and to make the curriculum more creative, but it is too early to see the full impact of these. The school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement based on its track record.

Teaching is improving although its longer-term impact on learning and progress is satisfactory overall. There are good relationships between pupils and adults, and work proceeds at a rapid pace. Teachers convey clearly to pupils what they are going to learn. The school's mixed-age classes have a very wide ability range, and assessment is not always precise enough to ensure that all pupils are given work at the right level for them. This is evident in the fact that few pupils attain the higher levels in writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. More able pupils do not always have the opportunity to develop their ideas freely through writing at length. Changes to the curriculum mean that more of the learning is active, something that pupils say they enjoy. There is a good level of care for pupils, particularly for those with statements of special educational needs.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, aided by a recent survey of pupils by the school council, who followed up any who expressed doubts to see how they could improve matters. This led to them drawing up new rules for the way football is played. Pupils take plenty of exercise, benefiting from the school's own open-air swimming pool in summer, and signing up for sports clubs. They have good links with the local church and involve the village in events such as Maypole dancing and the school's firework display. They develop satisfactory basic skills in readiness for

secondary school.

The acting headteacher has devolved responsibilities effectively to other members of staff and is ably supported by the senior teacher in ensuring that the school runs smoothly. There is a greater understanding of how well pupils are doing as a result of improved tracking, and teachers are held accountable for their progress. Governors are involved in monitoring the work of the school, but are not in a position to challenge leaders as they ought because they have not studied the relevant data to show them how different groups of pupils are performing. The school reaches out well to its local community, but has more to do in helping pupils to appreciate the national and global dimensions of community cohesion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and achievement in writing across the school, especially for the more able, by:
 - creating more opportunities for pupils to write at length
 - using writing to develop interesting links between subjects.
- Improve the impact of teaching on learning by planning work which is at the right level for pupils of different abilities.
- Promote community cohesion by developing links with other pupils nationally and globally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children enter the Nursery with a wide range of skills and abilities that are often below those expected, especially in personal and emotional development and in communication and language. They make very rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of high quality provision, entering Year 1 with the proportion of children reaching or exceeding the Early Learning Goals similar to the national average. After that initial spurt, progress is satisfactory and pupils leave the school with average standards in English and mathematics. Recent changes are introducing more links between subjects in some classes, although there are variations in how effectively these are enabling pupils to develop their writing skills further.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and are keen to take a full part in lessons. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 enjoyed the visit from the fire brigade, exploring the fire engine and dressing up in the uniforms. They particularly relished using the pressure hose to clean the acting headteacher's car! Pupils with statements of special educational needs are fully included in learning and receive effective support to enable them to make good progress. Pupils say they like to be challenged in their work, as when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were finding out about the properties of quadrilaterals. A pupil said, 'If you don't do something that's a bit hard for you, you will never get better at it.'

The school council plays an important role in giving pupils a voice and bringing about changes. Councillors have assessed the extent to which pupils' packed lunches are

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

healthy, and made recommendations to improve them. One commented, 'We don't feel more important, but we have a job to do!' Pupils have an outstanding awareness about keeping healthy, appreciating the need for 'a healthy state of mind' as well as a healthy body. The older pupils look after the younger pupils well, which contributes to the school's friendly family atmosphere. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as they embrace the school's Christian values and get on well together. Good attendance indicates how much pupils enjoy school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching caters for all pupils, ensuring they can play a full part in lessons. This may involve the use of sign language for a child with a statement, or visual aids for pupils learning English as an additional language. Often lessons are lively and enjoyable, as when Year 1 and Year 2 pupils acted out the story of The Wishing Tree. They each played a different animal and had a turn at starring. Teaching assistants work well with individuals and groups who need additional support. All classes contain pupils of more than one year group, so the range of ability is very wide. Planning does not always

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

ensure the needs of all groups are met. More able pupils, in particular, sometimes find the work too easy and finish quickly. Marking is effective in showing pupils the next steps in learning, and most know their targets for improvement.

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution towards pupils' achievement, and a good contribution to their personal development and enjoyment of school. It is enriched well, with a good range of clubs that include boxer-fit and sewing, and educational visits to places of interest such as the Victorian town of Blist Hill at Ironbridge. Plans to make the curriculum more relevant to pupils, for example in studying local produce and the Malvern Hills, are at an early stage. There are currently not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good, enabling them to make good progress. There is particularly effective care for vulnerable pupils and those with statements. There are effective transition arrangements for Nursery pupils to enter Reception, and for pupils from Years 5 and 6 to visit local secondary schools. The school is developing its work with parents and carers to ensure that they are fully informed about how well their children are doing.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

A parent wrote, 'I am very pleased with the direction the school is heading under the new acting headteacher.' He is successfully communicating his ambition to improve the school. There has been considerable progress in developing the school's friendly ethos and in winning the support of parents and the community. Pupils are happy and feel safe and secure in school. However, the impact of leadership and management is less evident in raising standards and achievement, which have remained fairly static over several years. The acting headteacher has introduced more stringent systems for measuring progress and for identifying pupils at risk of falling behind. This has enabled staff to target particular pupils for additional support, and regular pupil progress meetings monitor how they are doing. An annual evaluation cycle sets out clearly how and when checks will be made on the school's work. Some of the recording of monitoring is not specific enough to set out exactly how things can be improved. The senior teacher's role has changed this term to become more strategic, which is supporting the acting headteacher well in planning for school improvement.

The school promotes equality satisfactorily, ensuring all pupils are included. However,

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

more able pupils are not always challenged as much as they could be to attain the higher levels in writing. Safeguarding procedures are all observed and meet requirements. Community cohesion is promoted well locally, with the school having a good understanding of its place at the heart of village life. There has been less progress in developing an understanding of the national and global aspects of community cohesion. The governors support the school well and visit regularly to monitor aspects of its work. They have not been able to challenge the school over aspects of its performance because they have not all had access to data that would show them how pupils did in their tests last year.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress in developing the skills that will help them in the future because of high quality provision that excites their curiosity. Adults take their ideas and plan activities for them that they know will interest them. They assess very carefully how each individual child is doing and record their progress in 'learning journeys' that go home each day so that parents know exactly how they are getting on. These books contain examples of work, photographs and notes that build up a very accurate account of each child's achievements.

Children settle quickly in the Nursery because of the high level of care they receive and because of the stimulating learning environment that engages them and helps them to develop sustained concentration on a range of tasks. Some children were experimenting with different ways of painting, including blowing through straws. Adults encourage children in their activities and model language very effectively to help children to

describe their experiences. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a whole is innovative and imaginative, and makes use of both the inside and outside areas very effectively.

Outstanding leadership and management have built a very strong team of adults who work together very well in supporting the children, and who have excellent relationships with parents as partners in their children's learning. They make children's welfare a high priority and constantly monitor the effectiveness of the provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents are mostly supportive of the school. They all agree that their children enjoy school and feel safe. They believe the acting headteacher is doing a good job. Some expressed concerns about the large size of mixed-age classes, and the school is taking steps to reduce these. A few felt their children could be making better progress. Inspectors found that while all pupils made satisfactory progress, some more able pupils could be challenged more.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ann Cam Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 106 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	60	14	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	43	19	54	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	49	15	43	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	49	16	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	46	18	51	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	57	15	43	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)	14	40	19	54	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	49	15	43	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	60	13	37	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	31	24	69	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	63	12	34	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	69	10	29	0	0	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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:	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. ■ 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.



5 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ann Cam Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,
Gloucestershire GL18 2BH

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We think your school is satisfactory. Here are some of its strengths:

- You have a very good understanding about how to stay safe.
- You take plenty of exercise and know all about making healthy choices.
- Your behaviour is good and the older children are kind to the younger ones.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a great start in their education.
- You attend school well.
- The school supports those of you who find learning difficult well.
- There are plenty of clubs and visits for you to enjoy.
- The acting headteacher has helped to make the school a happy place and all the staff are working together well to raise standards.

We think you could do better in writing and have asked your teachers to give you more time to write at length. We want you to have work to do that is just right for you and not too easy. We know you are interested in finding out about other cultures and traditions and have asked your school to do more to link you up with pupils in other parts of this country and in other countries in other parts of the world. You could write to them or send them emails to tell them about what life is like in Gloucestershire.

Thank you again for helping us. Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead Inspector

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