

Worlebury St Paul's CE VA First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109241
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	309939
Inspection dates	18 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	110

Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Scriven
Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Quick
Date of previous school inspection	2-4 February 2004
School address	Woodspring Avenue Worlebury BS22 9RH
Telephone number	01934 625923
Fax number	01934 417153

Age group	4-8
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The effectiveness of the school's procedures to track pupils' progress and how this information is used to determine actions taken to raise standards in writing and boys' attainment.
- The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation and monitoring procedures at all levels in determining areas for improvement and the success of actions taken to address these.
- The key elements that contribute to the strengths of pupils' personal development and well-being.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Most pupils attending this small first school are from the local area. Nearly all pupils are of White British descent and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Attainment on entry into Reception varies from year to year but normally meets expectations for four-year-olds although attainment in early writing skills is below that expected. When pupils move on to middle school at the end of Year 3, they are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many outstanding features. It provides a good education for its pupils in a stimulating learning environment, which fully reflects the Christian ethos of the school. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One comment reflected the opinions of many: 'Our children are happy and they enjoy their learning. As parents, we couldn't wish for a better start to school for our children.'

The school is constantly striving to improve the provision made for its pupils. Children in the Reception class receive a good start to their education because activities are matched well to their needs. In Years 1 to 3, standards in both reading and mathematics are significantly above average and achievement in these areas is very good. However, 2007 national tests, at the end of Year 2, showed a fall in writing standards to a little above average. Although this reflects the lower attainment in writing, particularly that of boys when they first enter the school, this weakness had not been identified soon enough by teachers because monitoring and tracking systems were not rigorous enough. In addition, higher attaining pupils were not doing as well as they could because they were not always sufficiently challenged in the tasks they were set. Lower attaining pupils make particularly good progress because of the quality of support they receive as a result of good monitoring. The school's improved tracking systems have now been in place for a year and mean that individual pupils' progress is monitored very carefully from the time they enter the school and problems are identified sooner. This enables teachers to take appropriate actions more swiftly. The involvement of pupils in assessing their level of understanding in lessons, as well as 'must', 'should' and 'could' targets are both factors that enable teachers to provide tasks better matched to pupils' individual abilities.

A tour around the school early in the day clearly illustrates the wide and vibrant curriculum provided by the school and the emphasis on providing a safe and caring learning environment. Learning themes embrace many disciplines and subjects. They ensure that pupils understand that they are growing up in a culturally diverse society. The school has ensured that themes, such as 'Super Heroes', 'Dinosaurs' and 'Mini-beasts' appeal to both boys and girl. An excellent programme for the personal, social and health education of the pupils contributes effectively to their outstanding personal development. The lively and exciting examples of pupils' work completed during last term show evidence of the way in which pupils' work is valued, and the care and concern that is displayed for them on a day-to-day basis. Pupils are nurtured and their development is carefully monitored from the time they enter the school.

When visiting each room, it was evident from the excellent behaviour, enthusiastic responses and excitement being generated – especially from the class where pupils were 'Star Trekking' and investigating the planets – that pupils greatly enjoy their education. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn. They use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, skilfully. These make explanations clearer and lessons more interesting. Classroom management and organisation is particularly strong and teachers plan an appropriate range of activities that enable all pupils to be purposefully employed even when not directly supervised. They respond to

questions thoughtfully and are encouraged to explore and share ideas with their 'buddy partners'. Older pupils say marking helps them to understand what they need to do to improve their work and targets are especially useful as they are set for each pupil individually.

Pupils are lively and responsive in class, and thoughtful and reflective in worship. They are considerate in their dealings with each other. The playground is a happy and harmonious area. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to stay safe and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They chat eagerly about the wide range of playground activities and the importance of having healthy food in their lunch boxes. They already recognise that they have a responsibility to others and proudly relate their involvement in a project last Christmas, which resulted in the school providing three pigs, five goats and a cow for a village in Tanzania. The school council – known as 'Our Children's Voice' is very active and pupils enthusiastically participated in the interviews to appoint a new teacher. They are very aware of contemporary environmental concerns. Their well developed skills in numeracy and literacy and in collaborative working provide a good preparation for future economic well-being.

The headteacher's leadership is strong and purposeful. Staff and governors know how well the school is doing, and their self-evaluation is accurate. There is a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further and a good capacity to bring these improvements about. The school uses data well to check its own performance and a robust monitoring system is in place to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders make a good contribution and their role has significantly improved since the previous inspection. There is a culture in the school in which teachers share good practice and discuss teaching and learning in an atmosphere of mutual support. The governors provide good support and challenge and are fully involved in the strategic development of the school. The sustaining school improvement plan and subject plans provide a good basis for ongoing improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Reception class make good progress and the majority join Year 1 having reached the standards appropriate for their age. However, a significant minority are still working towards the goals expected, particularly in their literacy and early writing skills. Teaching is lively and interesting. There is a good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. Visits and visitors, as well as lively, interesting themes, make the curriculum and learning relevant and exciting. The care and attention to children's welfare is good. More emphasis is being paid to the development of writing skills as a result of the rigorous monitoring undertaken, although it is too soon to see the result of the actions being taken. The attention paid to developing social skills at this early stage of the term is preparing children well for future learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for boys, across the school.
- Increase the challenge in lessons for higher attaining pupils.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
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/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

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.

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	2
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



19 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Worlebury St Paul's CE VA First School, Woodspring Avenue, Worlebury BS22 9RH

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. You certainly seem to be very happy and it was good to hear how you enjoy your work and all the extra activities in which you are involved. I think your school gives you a good education and is working hard to make it even better.

These are the things I liked best:

- You behave very well and are really keen and enthusiastic about your learning.
- You are all doing very well in reading and mathematics.
- You take very seriously the importance of eating healthily at school and taking physical exercise during playtime, as well as in PE lessons.
- Teachers make learning fun for you, and you know how to improve your work from marking and target setting.
- You have a varied curriculum and your learning themes are really exciting and interesting for you.
- The teachers and staff take excellent care of you while you are in school.
- Your headteacher and governors lead the school very well and are very keen to make it even better.

I think that a very few things could be even better:

- You do quite well in writing but boys in particular find this more difficult than girls and they need to do a little better.
- Those of you who find learning easier than others need to be given more challenging tasks by your teachers.

I am glad you enjoy your school and hope you will continue to work hard.

Very best wishes

Mrs Christine Huard
Lead inspector