

# By Brook Valley Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131656
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	341184
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Hugh Protherough

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	140
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Dutton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beverley Ball
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	The Street Yatton Keynell Chippenham SN14 7BA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01249 783006
<b>Fax number</b>	01249 783419
<b>Email address</b>	admin@bybrook.wilts.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They held informal conversations with parents at the start of the school day. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning and curriculum documentation, assessment folders and the documentation of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost two thirds of parents and carers returned questionnaires, a greater proportion than the national picture.

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

- whether the school has sufficient evidence to support its assessment that pupils' learning and progress are good, especially those of boys and more-able pupils in writing
- how leadership roles are defined, delegated and developed and the extent to which leaders can demonstrate improvement in teaching and raising attainment, especially in English
- the accuracy of teacher assessment and whether it offers helpful feedback to pupils that ensures good progress for all groups of learners
- the extent to which the school's revised curriculum has a positive impact on the range and depth of pupils' achievements and enables them to apply their skills of literacy, numeracy and new technologies across subjects.

## Information about the school

This small school serves a number of local villages. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British and other White origin. Other groups include mixed White and African and mixed White and Asian pupils. There are no pupils at the early stages of learning English. Few pupils are eligible for school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is made in the Reception class. Since the previous inspection the school has grown in size to five classes. Healthy School status was awarded in June 2008.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection and is well placed for the future. The capacity of leaders to drive improvement is reflected in the way previous weaknesses in the teaching of English have been successfully addressed as well as the improving challenge for more-able pupils. As a result of this, overall attainment in Year 6 has risen steadily for the past three years. The unvalidated results for 2009 show that pupils made good progress in English, mathematics and science with over half exceeding the levels expected of 11-year-olds.

The reason for these improvements lies in the successful teamwork of the headteacher, staff and governors. They are ambitious for the school and have high expectations of the pupils. The performance of individuals and groups is closely monitored and test and assessment data used effectively to track progress and set challenging, realistic targets. Staff at all levels respond positively and successfully to opportunities to develop as leaders and managers. The capacity to improve is good.

The cordial relationships between adults and pupils are a major strength of the school and underpin successful teaching and learning. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. They know their pupils well and are often helped in this by teaching assistants. These additional adults frequently make valuable contributions in lessons and to the learning and well-being of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, practice varies and there are occasional missed opportunities when teaching assistants are insufficiently engaged with pupils' learning.

During the inspection teachers were often observed questioning astutely and deepening pupils' understanding. They mark work thoroughly and give helpful feedback to pupils about their progress towards their targets. Whilst this good practice provides teachers with a great deal of information, it is not always put to good use in their planning. Although the purpose of each lesson is always carefully explained, the precise learning expected of individuals and groups is sometimes less clear.

Pupils are proud of their school and frequently make useful contributions to their local community. Governors and staff have devised an appropriate plan to expand pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the world beyond rural Wiltshire. Links with a school in Bristol and another in Uganda are useful first steps, but require further development.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sharpen the impact of day-to-day assessment on the pace of learning by ensuring that:
  - adults' observations are used more consistently to inform teachers' planning of the next steps in learning
  - pupils are always clear about the progress they should make in a lesson.

These features should be evident in 90% of lessons by April 2010.

- Improve the consistency of the work of teaching assistants so that by November 2009 they always:
  - engage with individuals and groups throughout the lesson
  - contribute detailed assessment information to the teacher.
- Develop further pupils' knowledge and awareness of the diverse nature of British society and the wider world by:
  - extending the scope of recent work with a local city school
  - increasing opportunities to discover more about other world communities and faiths.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most pupils enjoy school because they trust the adults who work there and respond positively to the good variety of learning experiences provided. All groups of pupils achieve good outcomes. In every class pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to work. They show commitment to the task in hand and work at a good pace. They respond well to teachers' questions, especially when they probe and deepen understanding. As a result progress has improved since the last inspection. The rising trend of results in Year 6 over the past three years has been sustained in the most recent unvalidated tests and almost two thirds of the current Year 6 are already working within and beyond the levels expected of 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils say they feel safe, secure and valued. Behaviour is of a consistently good standard and pupils offer a polite and courteous welcome to visitors. Observations of vulnerable pupils such as those with physical or social and emotional difficulties show they are well cared for and helped to develop independence and to play a full part in the life of the school.

Pupils have a good appreciation of what it means to live a healthy life. They enjoy physical education lessons, especially dance and swimming. The school's analysis

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shows that most take part in the good variety of after-school sports and exercise clubs provided at the school.

Pupils enjoy the responsibilities associated with their House parliaments and are regularly involved in suggesting and supporting improvements to the school such as the current focus on refurbishing the ‘chill-out zone’. There are good links with church and local communities such as senior citizens, but pupils’ understanding of the contribution they can make to the national and global communities is less developed.

Pupils are in the habit of regular attendance and punctuality. Their well-developed basic skills and strong personal qualities mean they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

The improvements identified in the last inspection report have been consolidated and developed further. The leadership team’s focus on the teaching of literacy, and in particular writing, has been successful. Consistent approaches across subjects to the teaching of handwriting, spelling and phonics ensure pupils get off to a good start in early literacy. Equally important, however, is the school’s recognition of the need for motivating activities and a curriculum that will encourage pupils, and especially boys, to want to write. Wise investment in staff training has given teachers confidence in encouraging writing through sensible links across the curriculum and by making the

<sup>1</sup> 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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most of pupils’ interests. The effective use of information and communication technology in a Year 2 lesson enabled pupils to make excellent use of word processing. During the lesson pupils developed an accurate ability to identify adjectives based around their current favourite story, and used their own good language skills to create adventurous text of their own. All pupils enjoyed the lesson and boys achieved as well as the girls. In Years 4 and 5 pupils combined their good knowledge of different characters and episodes from history with well-developed mathematical skills in constructing a time line spanning more than 2,000 years.

Teachers’ assessment and tracking of individuals has also improved. Pupils are very clear what their targets are in English and mathematics. Work is marked thoroughly and teachers’ comments tell pupils how to improve. Teachers question shrewdly, especially in Years 2, 3, 5 and 6 and this often deepens pupils’ understanding. However, teachers do not always make use of this information when planning subsequent lessons to set clearer, differentiated expectations for individuals and groups.

Teaching assistants frequently make important contributions in supporting learning, especially for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. At its best, the impact of this work is considerable, enabling pupils such as those with low self-esteem and poor concentration to work alongside their peers and enjoy success in meeting their targets. However, there are occasional missed opportunities. For instance, teaching assistants sometimes watch the parts of a lesson when the teacher is speaking to the whole class rather than working in a focused way with an individual or group.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Staff morale is high and leaders and managers at all levels are strongly committed to the work of the school and ensuring improvement and the best possible outcomes for pupils. This is because the management team, which includes two governors, has created effective approaches to running the school that offer everyone a stake in its development. The views of parents are canvassed regularly and used to inform the planning process. Governors are frequent visitors to school and, paired with the subject leaders, hold specific responsibilities for checking the quality of teaching and pupils’ progress. As a result, there is shared understanding of the priorities of the

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school’s improvement plan, commitment to the actions necessary for these to be realised and a growing track record of success. Recently appointed leaders such as the deputy headteacher have made a good start and are taking effective action to build a thorough oversight of their responsibilities, but there is still some way to go for them to be totally effective in their monitoring and evaluation roles.

There has been good investment in staff training to develop leadership at all levels. Conversations with subject leaders reveal a strong sense of accountability for what is happening in their particular areas of responsibility. The team that leads on English has excellent oversight of recent initiatives to improve the teaching of reading and writing and can identify with precision the impact of improved provision on the progress and achievements of each pupil in the school. The narrowing gap in the achievements of girls and boys in writing is a good example of how the school takes concerted action to promote equality of opportunity. There is similar success in the successful support and inclusion of several pupils with complex needs such as autism and physical disability.

The school adopts thorough approaches to all aspects of risk assessment and the safeguarding of pupils. The headteacher and staff work productively with other agencies such as health, police and education welfare to support the specific needs of individual pupils and their families.

The school is well regarded by parents and the immediate village community. Plans to promote community cohesion are appropriate and reflect a good understanding of the local context. However, early initiatives to develop pupils’ awareness beyond the school have as yet had only limited impact.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children entering the Reception class make a good start to school. Well-considered induction arrangements over the course of the summer term and a phased start to full-time attendance ensure that children are successfully accustomed to the world of school. As a result they have already forged close and trusting relationships with the staff and most arrive happily with their parents each morning. Many are already showing confidence in daily routines. They hang up their own coats and bags, self-register and settle swiftly to purposeful play. Friendships are developing well and children are starting to play imaginatively in pairs and sometimes larger groups.

Staff plan thoroughly and ensure a successful blend of activities covering each of the areas of learning in both indoor and outdoor classrooms. There is a good balance of activities that children choose for themselves and those that adults lead. There are thorough approaches to assessment with all adults contributing information to children’s individual learning diaries. Those for last year’s Reception children present a compelling illustration of the good level of overall achievement reached across the areas of learning by most children. The profile of the current cohort is more mixed. Whilst many meet and exceed the levels of skills, knowledge and understanding expected nationally of 4-year-olds, there are several children with specific learning difficulties with more complex needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and her team are building a good knowledge of the children in their care and ensure they feel safe and secure. They work effectively as a team, tracking individuals, identifying learning needs and ensuring that their interventions support good progress.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 are happy with their children’s experience of school. Inspectors agree with the many positive views expressed through questionnaires and in informal conversations during the inspection. A few parents raised concerns about past incidents of bullying and the management of unacceptable behaviour. However, conversations with pupils and analysis of their questionnaires indicate that bullying seldom happens and if it does it is dealt with



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swiftly and appropriately. A small minority of parents are anxious about the arrangement of mixed-age classes for this year. Inspectors' discussions with the headteacher and governors show that these decisions were based firmly on an evaluation of individual needs and remain under regular review.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at By Brook 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 140 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	62	30	35	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	67	27	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	33	38	43	50	5	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	37	42	49	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	48	40	47	0	0	2	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	41	48	38	44	2	2	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	40	45	52	2	2	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)	42	49	33	38	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	35	41	46	53	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	38	34	40	10	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	29	44	51	6	7	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	45	52	32	37	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	49	57	34	40	1	1	1	1

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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

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:	<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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.



19 September 2009

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of By Brook Church of England Primary School, Chippenham, SN14 7BA**

Thank you very much for your warm and friendly welcome during the recent inspection of your school. It was a pleasure to meet you all. Your questionnaires and the many conversations we had with you were extremely helpful.

You told us By Brook is a good school and we agree. From the moment we arrived we were impressed by your good behaviour. You are polite and courteous and work hard in lessons. You get on well with the staff and as result make good progress in your work. The school works very hard to make sure you are safe and well cared for and that you get the help you need to do well. You also have lots of opportunities to keep fit and stay healthy and it is good to see so many of you joining in these activities after school.

There are one or two things we want to happen that will make By Brook an even better school. We were really impressed by the fact that so many of you know your personal targets in literacy and numeracy. We want your teachers to help you reach these even faster by being clear in every lesson about the small steps you need to take that will help you achieve them. We feel also that teaching assistants can help with this as well.

You are all proud of your school and many of you know a lot about your local village and surrounding communities. Some of you told us a little about your links with Bristol and Uganda and we would like you all to discover more about places like this, in Britain and the wider world, and the people who live there.

With best wishes for the new school year.

Yours faithfully

Hugh Protherough  
Additional inspector

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