



# Astley CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 116864  
**LEA** Worcestershire  
**Inspection number** 279924  
**Inspection dates** 3 October 2005 to 3 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Christopher Kessell RISP

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Astley
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Stourport-on-Severn
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Worcestershire DY13 0RH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01299 822002
<b>Number on roll</b>	73	<b>Fax number</b>	01299 822002
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gill Griffiths

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Astley Church of England Primary School is smaller than average. Children's attainment when they start school is typical of pupils of this age. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average. The majority of pupils come from outside the local area.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Astley Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Pupils make better progress in mathematics and science than they do in English. This is the result of weaknesses in the pupils' writing. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

Pupils are proud of their school and are enthusiastic about their learning. Their personal development is good. The school works well with parents, who have positive views about their children's education and are very supportive. Pupils are very well cared for. The youngest children settle into school quickly and good emphasis is placed on the development of their personal and social skills. The children make satisfactory progress overall and by the time they reach Year 1, are at the expected levels for their age.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is good. Inspection evidence would support her views of the school. However, she is trying to do too much by herself in her drive to improve the school. Governors and other staff are not sufficiently involved in the management of the school. The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection and has the capacity to make further improvements. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Grade: 3

### What the school should do to improve further

- continue to raise standards in pupils' writing and develop the skills of writing in other subjects
- make better use of assessment information to provide pupils with work that matches their needs more accurately
- raise teachers' expectations of what pupils, particularly the more able pupils, are capable of achieving.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children's attainment when they join the reception class is at the expected level. Because some year groups are small, there are occasional variations in their average attainment on entry. For example, the attainment of children who joined the school in 2001 was above average. Children enjoy learning, relate positively to each other and respond well to instructions. They talk confidently about the activities they take part in. Nearly all children make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points and reach the expected goals for learning by the end of the reception year.

Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average. This has been the trend since the last inspection other than in 2004 when standards were above average. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the rest of the school but there are variations between subjects. The National Curriculum test results in 2005 show that standards in mathematics and science were above average. However, because of weaknesses in the pupils' writing, standards in English were average. A number of new initiatives to improve writing have been introduced recently but it is too early to judge their impact.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make at least the same progress as their classmates. When teaching assistants support them in lessons, their progress is often good because of the high quality support that they receive. Higher attaining pupils could make better progress and exceed their targets if they were provided with more challenging work.

Grade: 3

## **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade: 2**

The personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are very well behaved. They form very good relationships with each other and members of staff. They talk about being part of a 'big family'. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. Older pupils, for example, sensibly and safely prepared their classroom for a school assembly. Members of the school council contribute to the smooth running of the school such as in the organisation of playground activities and in fund-raising events. There are classroom helpers in all classrooms and older pupils take pleasure in looking after the younger ones.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average. Although many have to travel some distance to get to school, most pupils are punctual. Pupils feel safe, secure and well looked after. They are confident that they can go to their teachers if they have any concerns or worries.

Pupils have a good understanding about the need to keep fit and healthy. A daily exercise activity is provided during the morning break and fresh fruit is available for the older pupils to purchase. About half of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 take up this option. One Year 4 boy explained that he was eating an apple because it was good for him even though he 'hated apples'. Activities such as fund-raising, and organising stalls at the annual summer fete, provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their self-confidence.

Grade: 2

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are keen to learn. They have a good understanding of the activities they undertake because teachers' introductions are clear and the learning intentions of each lesson are explained thoroughly. Pupils talk confidently about their work. The skills of speaking and listening are promoted well and pupils are given good opportunities to discuss and debate issues with each other and answer questions. Pupils work well on their own and with each other. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, shared laptops sensibly, taking turns to input their work. Behaviour in lessons is always good.

Although many lessons are good, there are weaknesses in teaching which limit the progress of some pupils. Not enough use is made of assessment information to ensure that activities are accurately matched to pupils' ability. This is particularly the case for some of the more able pupils, who are not always challenged as well as they could be. Some pupils say that they find their work too easy. Teaching assistants provide good support particularly for less able pupils and those identified with learning difficulties.

Pupils are encouraged to check their own work and match this against National Curriculum levels. Most pupils are able to explain accurately this process and many have already started to reflect on what they understand well and what they are less confident with. This activity has only been introduced this term and it is too early to judge its impact on raising standards.

Grade: 3

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum. All pupils have full access to all that they need to enjoy learning and prepare them for the next phase of learning. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are given appropriate emphasis. The provision for, and standards in, ICT have improved since the last inspection. Not enough has been done to promote the skills of writing across a wider range of subjects. There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' well-being by successfully ensuring that they are made aware of safety issues and the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum is enriched well by activities such as inter-school sports, swimming provision and outdoor pursuits through residential visits. Extra-curricular sporting activities are very popular. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their trips and project weeks such as those related to 'India' and the 'Arts'. Although there are many strengths to the curriculum, inspection evidence does not support the school's view that the curriculum is good.

Grade: 3

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The school provides high levels of care. The guidance and support offered to pupils to ensure their personal well-being are good. Pupils work and play in a safe environment and value the responsibilities that they are given in and out of the classroom. Effective support is also provided for pupils who need specific help or have personal issues. Suitable child protection arrangements are in place. Parents are confident that their children are safe and well cared for and inspection evidence supports this view.

Although all staff are successful in ensuring the pupils are well cared for, the school is not providing sufficient support to enable pupils to make any better than satisfactory progress. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their achievements and are effectively involved in identifying areas that they think they need to improve. For example, they comment on their achievements in the annual report that goes to parents. Parents are invited to contribute to the setting of their child's targets and a number take up this opportunity.

Grade: 3

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and her self-evaluation of the school is accurate. The school is moving in the right direction and school improvement planning is correctly targeted at raising standards, particularly in writing, and improving the quality of education. The involvement of other staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating the school's work is not as effective. This is a weakness in management. The school's evaluation of teaching and its impact on learning as satisfactory is accurate. However, in reality there is too rosy a view of the quality of teaching within the school. Until teachers raise their expectations and ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged, pupils' progress will remain only satisfactory.

A significant proportion of governors are new to their role and inexperienced. Nevertheless, governors have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but acknowledge that they need to develop their role in monitoring and evaluating what happens in the school and in supporting the headteacher. A timetable for monitoring aspects of the school is now in place and the 'Governor of the Month' scheme ensures that all governors have a higher profile in the school. Governance is satisfactory overall.

Good practices have enabled the school to recover from a deficit budget a few years ago. Spending has been closely related to the school's priorities and good emphasis is placed on ensuring value for money. Strong links with the local and wider community, such as those with other schools, have benefited the school, particularly in helping to overcome the difficulties associated with an isolated location. The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Grade: 3

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 October 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed watching you learn and talking to you about your work. We particularly enjoyed talking to the school council.

What we like most about your school

you are well behaved and very friendly

your teachers and other staff look after you well and make sure that you are safe in lessons;  
you are keen to learn and work well with each other

those of you who find your work difficult are given good help by the teaching assistants

you all know how important it is to eat healthily and take exercise.

What we have asked your school to do now

improve your writing and give you more opportunities to write in other subjects

make sure that you all have the right sort of work

give harder work to those of you who find activities easy.

Yours sincerely

Chris Kessell Lead Inspector