

Churchwood Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114470
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357552
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Counsell
Headteacher	Janice Gough
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Observations included 16 lessons taught by nine members of staff. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors looked at governors' minutes, curriculum plans and assessment documents. The questionnaires returned by 57 parents and carers, 82 pupils and 30 staff were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6 to determine whether the recent rising trend is on course to continue.
- The progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 to see how well they are building on their prior attainment.
- The progress and outcomes for children in the Nursery and Reception classes to explore the accuracy of the school's judgement that overall effectiveness in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding.

Information about the school

Churchwood is an average sized primary school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from minority ethnic groups and the overwhelming majority of pupils speak English as their first language. Half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is over twice the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a morning Nursery class run by the school within the adjacent children's centre and one Reception class. In addition, a Nursery class managed by the school in partnership with the children's centre provides care for around 23 children in the afternoon. The school has Healthy Schools and Active Mark awards. It is recognised for its provision outside normal lessons by the Quality in Study Support (QISS) accreditation. At the time of the inspection, a major refurbishment was underway, scheduled for completion in April 2011.

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

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, staff show a determined effort to ensure all pupils do as well as they can within a warm, supportive and stimulating environment. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their good behaviour owe much to the efforts of all staff to broaden their horizons, raise their self-esteem and motivate them to try their best. The success of the school's aim for 'children to discover the champion within themselves' is reflected in the innovative curriculum which provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to set their own goals, tackle challenging work and reflect on their own progress. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress through the school due to skilful teaching. Teachers use assessment information well to pinpoint the next steps in pupils' learning, and their lively approach and brisk pace during lessons sustain pupils' interest and attention. As a result, outstanding provision in the Nursery and Reception classes means that children are well prepared for subsequent work. A dip in the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 has been addressed successfully by raising the quality of teaching, although pupils' progress is sometimes constrained because the teaching in Years 1 and 2 does not fully capitalise on the independent skills children have as they leave the Reception class.

Staff give pupils' welfare high priority. In partnership with the children's centre and many outside agencies, the school provides outstanding support for pupils and their families. The vast majority of parents and carers are happy with all aspects of the school. The school provides a calm and secure environment that particularly benefits those pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties. It makes a significant contribution to cohesion within the local community. Topics such as 'Our Wonderful World' develop pupils' wider understanding, but planning to promote their understanding of cultural diversity with the United Kingdom is inconsistent.

Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, play an important part in securing continuous improvement through their in-depth evaluation of the school's work and highly focused planning. This precise analysis provides leaders with a clear picture of strengths and areas for development, which means they can intervene swiftly when pupils are not making at least the expected progress. Such insights, together with the school's track record, indicate a good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 by:

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- building systematically on pupils' positive attitudes and good learning skills that they acquire in the Nursery and Reception classes through providing more opportunities for independent learning in Years 1 and 2
- ensuring all lessons move at a brisk pace and provide a good balance of introductions and opportunities for pupils to work independently
- deploying the teaching assistants more effectively, particularly at the beginning of lessons
- planning to ensure that pupils' skills in calculating are developed through a continuous programme across the Reception and Year 1 classes.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of cultural diversity by:
 - ensuring that this is given a stronger emphasis in the school's promotion of community cohesion within the United Kingdom
 - providing first-hand experiences for pupils to engage with children from different communities and diverse backgrounds within the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils really enjoy school and achieve well in their academic work and in their personal development. They display good attitudes in class, where they are attentive, cooperative, interested and keen to do well.

On joining the Nursery, children's social and language development is below that typical of the age group, yet by the time they leave Year 6, their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. This represents good achievement. Staff are working hard to address gaps in pupils' learning and their attainment is increasing in all year groups. This was confirmed during the inspection in the lessons observed and in pupils' books. During a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils quickly learned how to multiply two-digit numbers, drawing on their secure grasp of basic multiplication facts. Year 5 pupils made excellent progress during a lesson on the use of calculators to find fractions and percentages. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are on course to reach at least average levels of attainment, with the proportion set to reach the higher levels being greater than in recent years.

Pupils' pride in their work is evident in their effort to present their cross-curricular topic work as attractively as possible. Above average standards in writing are evident in around a quarter of the Year 6 topic books. Some show considerable flair. For example, writing as Henry VIII, one pupil wrote, 'Later on, once I had chance to change into my finest attire for the evening, I made the kitchen skin and bone the rabbits we had caught earlier on in the day for one's royal feast.'

Pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6 is enhanced by their levels of independence. This is not so evident in Years 1 and 2. Some struggle to tackle straight-forward calculations without help, for example, they lack confidence in applying basic number facts when investigating number patterns.

Pupils say they feel safe in school; they have a good understanding of what constitutes healthy living and participate widely in physical activities, reflecting the school's awards. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. The sensitivity with which pupils help those who are partially sighted, for example, indicates a strong sense of responsibility. Pupils'

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cultural development is enhanced through art, music, drama and visits but they do not have a strong understanding of cultural diversity. Most pupils attend well, but figures are slightly depressed by parents and carers taking their holidays in term time and a small number of persistent absentees.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

How effective is the provision?

Pupils make good progress because the quality of teaching is generally good and often outstanding. Almost all lessons proceed at a brisk pace with a good variety of approaches that keep pupils engaged. Explanations are consistently clear so pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers use interactive whiteboards extensively and employ a variety of questioning techniques which help to ensure all pupils are attentive. They skilfully draw on pupils' existing understanding and extend their thinking. Pupils benefit from high-quality feedback from teachers' marking and they are routinely involved in reviewing their own work against clear success criteria. Well-qualified and experienced support staff make a significant contribution in most lessons. Occasionally, particularly in Years 1 and 2, teachers spend too long on whole-class introductions. This limits the time available for independent work and for teaching assistants to support individuals and groups.

Staff go to great lengths to provide curriculum activities that engage pupils, provide memorable experiences, and promote their learning and personal development. Working in partnership with a creative team, including teachers, artists, actors and musicians, they

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devise stimulating cross-curricular topics. During the recent whole-school study of the Tudors, for example, pupils practised, consolidated and enhanced their skills in using computers, in writing in different styles, in using a range of art media, and in evaluating the reliability of different historical sources. Pupils' independence and resilience are promoted very effectively, as they decide for themselves certain aspects of each topic that they wish to pursue. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and plans are in hand to enhance pupils' understanding of cultural diversity through contact with schools in contrasting areas.

The way staff adapt the curriculum in the light of pupils' individual learning needs and interests is indicative of the outstanding care, support and guidance they provide. For example, support staff run 'pre-learning' sessions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in advance of a new class topic, to help them get up to speed and increase their confidence. Support for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable is first class. The warm welcome provided by the breakfast and after-school clubs, the work of the 0 ♦ 7 learning manager, and a close relationship with the children's centre all contribute to the highly-quality care provided. Every effort is made to encourage parents and carers to ensure their children attend regularly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers at all levels provide the school with a strong and effective focus on continuous improvement. The headteacher and senior managers successfully embed ambition and rigorously monitor the quality of the school's work. The deputy headteacher and other senior staff provide excellent role models for their colleagues in their consistently outstanding teaching. Improvement on several fronts since the last inspection is due to the determination and efforts of leaders, governors and staff.

Members of the governing body understand clearly where the school's strong features lie. They challenge and probe thoroughly and monitor the school's work well. For example, during one year, ten governors each spent at least one day in school, visiting classes, looking at pupils' work and talking to subject leaders. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. There is no evidence of discrimination. On the contrary, all pupils are treated as individuals and their different needs are very carefully and accurately identified. All groups of pupils achieve well; for example, those entitled to free school meals do just as well as other pupils. The governing body pays close attention to safeguarding. It regularly monitors the security of the site and ensures that policies, such as risk assessments for outside visits, are implemented effectively.

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Strong links, such as those with other schools, the Hollington Learning Community, the adjacent church, and the local authority support teams, considerably enhance the school's provision. Partnerships with a wide range of outside bodies, such as the centrally funded Creative Partnerships organisation, enable the school to provide many stimulating and enjoyable experiences for pupils. This is recognised by a national award for supporting pupils' learning.

The school promotes community cohesion very well at a local level. Its influence stretches into the local community through support for parents and carers. The citizenship scheme, where pupils gain rewards for their contributions to school life, promotes a strong sense of belonging. There are some links with schools abroad but few with schools in contrasting areas within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning, particularly in social and language development. By the end of Reception, their attainment is at least average for their age, indicating excellent progress from their starting points. Children settle in quickly and soon gain confidence due to the well-organised induction process. Adults provide lots of opportunities for speaking and listening. They model language well and plan stimulating activities that develop and extend children's skills.

The extensive outdoor areas are used particularly well and children are just as likely to be found learning outside as they are in the classrooms. Surrounded by woodland, as the school name implies, children have extensive opportunities for outdoor learning, including their own 'forest school' within the school grounds.

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Learning is typified by children's excited but thoughtful responses to challenging questions which really make them think. Older children learn to link sounds and letters through a well-organised programme and this knowledge is increasingly evident in their early attempts at writing. Through a wide variety of practical activities, children develop good skills in counting and identifying shapes.

Children's progress is monitored meticulously. The response to any who show the slightest sign of falling behind is prompt and matched precisely to their needs. Above all, children show a remarkable enjoyment of their learning and are invariably absorbed in the various activities. They are ever eager to talk about their activities and share their ideas.

Excellent management ensures regular communication between all adults working in both the Nursery classes and the Reception staff. Children's individual 'learning journeys' provide a wealth of information for staff and include comments by parents and carers. Year 1 teachers observe children before they move up to help ensure a smooth transition.

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

The vast majority of parents and carers are happy with all aspects of the school. A few parents and carers feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection found that behaviour was promoted successfully. The very few individual pupils who find it difficult to control their behaviour are supported very well so that they can take a full part in lessons and their classmates are not disturbed. Pupils said that bullying was rare and was dealt with appropriately when it occurred. Contrary to the views expressed by a few parents and carers, the inspection found that the school is led and managed well, providing a strong sense of direction and a shared determination across the staff to raise standards.

Concerns about pupils' safety during the current building work, expressed by a very few parents, were explored thoroughly. The inspectors found that the school was following the advice of the local authority and the police about ensuring pupils' safety as they crossed the small lane between the main school and the temporary buildings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Churchwood Community 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 233 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	56	18	32	7	12	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	65	13	23	2	4	4	7
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	49	26	46	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	54	23	40	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	35	61	17	30	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	51	22	39	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	46	26	46	5	9	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)	22	39	23	40	6	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	44	28	49	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	33	22	39	5	9	10	18
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	35	28	49	3	5	4	7
The school is led and managed effectively	28	49	19	33	6	11	4	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	65	14	25	4	7	2	4

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ 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.



21 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Churchwood Community Primary School, St Leonard's-on Sea, TN38 9PB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We were pleased that you are really positive about Churchwood and enjoy your education. When we looked at your work we were impressed with how you take care to present it as neatly and attractively as possible. We wish to congratulate you on your positive attitudes and good behaviour. It was great to see how well you look after your friends who need extra help, such as your classmates who cannot see very well.

Churchwood provides you with a good quality of education. You told us how much you enjoy lessons and we saw that this is because teachers make learning interesting and fun. You are making good progress and reaching at least the expected levels by the end of Year 6. The adults take really good care of you and have your best interests at heart. It was clear that the school is run very well by the headteacher and the other senior staff. They have a good idea of what is working well and where improvements could be made.

We have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to improve two aspects of the school to make it even better. These are to help those of you in Years 1 and 2 to speed up the rate of progress you make and to provide more opportunities for you to find out about communities in different neighbourhoods from your own.

You can help by continuing to work hard and try your best.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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