

Hawkchurch Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113356
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357326
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Alexander Baxter

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Clare McKenney
Headteacher	Mr Cliff Seabrook
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector who visited 12 lessons and observed three teachers. The inspector also attended two assemblies, observed break and lunchtime activities, and held meetings with the chair of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents. The inspector looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities were evaluated. In addition, questionnaires completed by 13 parents and carers, 17 pupils and four staff were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following.

- How well does the school ensure that all the pupils within the widely differing, often very small, year groups develop their skills year on year in relation to their various needs, including those arriving other than at the normal time from other schools and/or backgrounds?
- How well are pupils enabled to develop their independent learning skills in support of their academic achievement as they move through the school?
- How well do leaders and managers, including the governing body, monitor and evaluate the work of the school to promote improvement?

Information about the school

This is a very small rural primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies across the year groups and is broadly average. These needs are related mostly to moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above that normally expected. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed-age class, with Years 1 and 2 pupils. At the time of the inspection children in their Reception Year were attending on a part-time basis. The school gained the Foundation Level International award from the British Council earlier this year.

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

Hawkchurch is a good little school which lies at the heart of the community it serves. As one parent wrote, 'My child benefits greatly from being in a small school.' The school's success lies in the fact that it ensures that pupils receive and benefit from very close individual attention. All members of staff promote excellent relationships with parents and make the very best use of their support, for example, in developing pupils' very positive attitudes to school and their reading skills.

The school also works extremely well with other schools and other members of the community to extend learning opportunities and to sustain excellent care, guidance and support for the pupils. In combination with good teaching and safeguarding procedures, this provision enables pupils to feel very safe and to make good progress overall. The school's Foundation Level International award from the British Council reflects its good commitment to wider community cohesion, but links with and pupils' awareness of more diverse British cultural communities are less well developed.

The headteacher promotes good teamwork in a highly supportive manner. He empowers staff and governors to utilise their considerable skills to make very valuable contributions to the running of the school. Consistently good quality staff role models, excellent relationships and a very inclusive ethos underpin the pupils' self-confidence, excellent behaviour and great enjoyment of school.

The good teaching and learning evident across the school stems from accurate assessments of the pupils' developing skills. The subsequently effective way that assessments are used to identify and tackle pupils' individual needs to inform good self-evaluation and to improve teachers' planning, also reflect good improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils' above average attainments and good achievement also represent significant improvement since the previous inspection and show the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement.

Good improvements in the facilities and in the range of learning opportunities offered to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that they make a good start in Reception. Nevertheless, adult support is not always on hand to support children when they are engaged in their own chosen activities. As pupils move through the school, or are admitted at various times from other schools, they benefit from a quality of education that is carefully matched to their individual needs. Occasionally, whole class teaching restricts the time and opportunity pupils have to learn by choosing lines of enquiry for themselves, including by using computers, and this constrains their independence. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and represent good achievement in relation to pupils' starting points.

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The exemplary work of staff in sustaining equal opportunity and in eliminating discrimination also enables pupils across the range of ability, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those new to the school, to achieve equally well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Over the next two terms:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - developing more opportunities for pupils to learn independently by deciding for themselves how to find things out, including by using computers
 - reducing the amount of whole class adult-led teaching
 - giving more adult support to children of reception age when they are undertaking learning activities chosen for themselves.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion, particularly of the national dimension, and so enrich the pupils' awareness of Britain's multicultural heritage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Visits to classrooms and observations of activities and learning in other parts of the school show that pupils achieve well and greatly enjoy their time in this school. Given very small year groups, the staff take every opportunity to gather a clear picture of each pupil's individual needs and ensure that all groups make good progress. Pupils follow consistently good staff role models and know that their ideas are valued equally by adults and their peers. Consequently, they express their views confidently during whole class, small group or the frequently encouraged paired discussions. As a result, their speaking and listening skills and understanding and use of words are developed particularly well. These were evident in Reception and Years 1 and 2, where pupils articulated a good understanding of colour, how to mix paints to create new colours and how to create patterns and sequences with coloured pegs. Across the school, good progress in mathematics and English is further promoted by the teachers' effective use of interactive whiteboards, selected texts, photographs and counting aids to raise pupils' interest levels and to develop their use of technical terms. This was seen, for example, in the interest and enthusiasm shown in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, when pupils were writing 'mini-sagas' and poems about creatures such as dragons and trolls. Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 is above average. This is reflected in their recorded work, but on occasion writing is inhibited by the pupils' lack of confidence in spelling and using punctuation. Above average skills are also evident in the pupils' oral responses in lessons and when questioned, and in school assessments. These above average standards by the end of Year 6 continue the picture evident in national assessments over the past four years.

Pupils say they feel very safe and secure and the very small classes mean that all are fully involved and included in the day-to-day life of the school. They have plenty of opportunities to undertake responsibility and to express their views, for example, as monitors, organising equipment at assembly time and by contributing to class discussions. However, the lack of a school council restricts opportunities for pupils to more specifically represent the views of others. Even so, all members of staff encourage and value the pupils' ideas and, because the pupils know and appreciate this, they work hard and

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contribute wholeheartedly to school and community life. Such positive relationships are another reason why pupils enjoy school so much, behave extremely well, attend regularly and adopt healthy and safe lifestyles. The pupils' commitment to their own learning and their willingness to support one another are notable features, which considerably enhance their progress. Pupils have a good understanding of diverse religious and cultural communities abroad, through links with a school in Spain, for example. Their understanding of Britain's multicultural society is not as secure. By the time they leave the school, the pupils' good personal and academic achievements prepare them well for the future.

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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

The excellent care, guidance and support and good provision provided by the teachers and their assistants is underpinned by their very good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils. This is gathered from their close communication with parents and from carefully completed assessments of the pupils' personal and academic learning. Consequently, staff ensure that all pupils, including more-able pupils, those new to the school, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit from suitably challenging targets and good support. Throughout the school, all adults put their expertise to good use by using questioning extremely well to promote the pupils' speaking and listening skills and reading skills. These elements more than compensate for the small

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number of pupils and peer interaction in some year groups. In the Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 class, for example, pupils eagerly shared their thoughts about what life was like for people during the Second World War.

The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activity, which includes local and residential visits and regular swimming sessions in the nearby town. The pupils' adoption of healthy living and their good progress in science, for example, are also enhanced by regular use of the school's extensive and well-equipped outdoor resources. A continuing focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening to improve their writing skills has been successful in extending their vocabulary. Current efforts to develop pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation are also having a beneficial effect throughout the school. At times though, pupils' do not have enough opportunity to set up their own lines of enquiry or to choose, for example, between using books or computers to find things out for themselves, and this limits their independent learning skills.

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?

Led supportively by the headteacher, members of staff and governors work well as a team to sustain a very inclusive community where all pupils achieve equally because they are valued and known as unique individuals. The way pupils new to the school are warmly welcomed and have their needs identified and supported also reflects the total freedom from discrimination enjoyed by all who work in the school. Leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the school to good effect, identify the right priorities for improvement, and ensure that target setting is used well to enhance pupils' progress. As a result, they drive improvement well. Strengthened provision in Reception, with much improved facilities and resources, and consequently higher standards since the last inspection, show this good improvement clearly. The governing body is well informed and consistent in supporting the headteacher in moving the school forward. Its contribution to the school's 50th anniversary celebrations earlier this year reflects, for example, its effective work in promoting the school's excellent links with parents and the village community. These very supportive links with the local community and good contact with international schools enable the school to promote community cohesion well. Pupils make lively and very willing contributions to several national charities such as Children in Need. The school also has links with more culturally diverse communities in Exeter, but accepts the need to further develop the national aspect of community cohesion. The headteacher and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met effectively. These include, for example, good safeguarding, child protection and risk assessment procedures and checks.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent links with parents help children to make a positive start to full-time schooling. Children's skills on entry to the school vary widely from year to year and mostly reflect those found nationally. The children benefit from a good curriculum that covers all the required areas of learning, with their social development and enjoyment of school being promoted particularly well. In response to good teaching and effective leadership and management, the children currently attending on a part-time basis are making good progress in relation to their differing starting points. Children learn and play well together and show a good understanding of what is expected of them because the staff provide excellent care to sustain their welfare. The staff know the children as unique individuals and match learning activities very closely to their needs, particularly in developing the children's speaking and listening and understanding. Generally, both indoors and outdoors, there is a suitable and improving balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. However, at times, adults are too focused on leading learning activities and do not spend enough time drawing new learning from the children's own choices and ideas. As a result, the benefits of children initiating learning for themselves, by building on their own interests, are constrained at times.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

All the parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire are happy with the school. Almost all of the responses expressed their agreement with all the questionnaire statements. A few parents and carers were interviewed informally in the playground and also expressed strong support of the school. Additional comments entered on questionnaires, typically such as, 'My children love going to school and they receive an excellent level of attention', reflect these very positive views. Only one disagreement was expressed about the way the school takes account of parents' or carers' suggestions and concerns. The findings of the inspection show that the school's excellent partnership with parents and carers is highly supportive of the pupils' achievement and enjoyment of school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hawkchurch CofE 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 inspector received 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 26 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	69	4	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	11	85	2	15	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	69	4	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	85	1	8	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	54	6	46	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)	5	38	8	62	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	62	5	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	46	5	38	1	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	54	6	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	85	2	15	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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"> ■ 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.



19 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hawkchurch Cof E School, Hawkchurch EX13 5XD

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and visiting your lessons. You were all extremely polite and helpful throughout the days. Special thanks go to those of you who showed me all the work stored on laptop computers and those who met with me to tell me about your school. They said that you greatly enjoy school, have lots of friends and have fun. I would like you to know that I found your school to be good and could sense that you and your parents quite rightly feel the same.

These are the other main things I found.

- You make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, reach above average levels of attainment in your subjects.
- You behave extremely well and enjoy your learning because teaching is good and you have an interesting range of activities.
- You feel very safe and cared for because everyone at the school looks after you extremely well.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team and have formed excellent partnerships with your parents and with other groups out of school to help you to succeed.

To help the school to improve I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do two things.

- They should give you more opportunities to learn by choosing activities and setting up lines of enquiry for yourselves, including by using computers.
- They should improve the way the school reaches out to other communities in Britain and develops your awareness of our multicultural heritage.

Each of you can play your part in making this school even better by continuing to give of your best and thinking for yourself how you can improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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