

Charlton Mackrell CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123746
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	359505
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Neech HMI

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	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Celia Mycock
Headteacher	Gilly Kempton
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2007
School address	Bonfire Lane Somerton TA11 7BN
Telephone number	01458 223329
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Seven lesson observations were completed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors carried out a learning walk focusing on behaviour in lessons and at playtime. The lead inspector held meetings with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, a group of pupils and parents and carers. The lead inspector met with the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at performance data, the school development plan, governor minutes, pupils' work and school policies. The questionnaire responses from 45 parents, 34 pupils and eight staff were analysed.

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

- The way in which the school is closing the gap between the attainment of pupils and national expectations in English and mathematics.
- The effective use of tracking systems by leaders and managers to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- The impact of teaching, marking and assessment to support pupils' learning and progress.
- The opportunities provided by the curriculum so that pupils achieve as well as they can.

Information about the school

Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School is smaller than average and serves the village of Charlton Mackrell and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils believed to be entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The overall percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Pupils are taught in three classes, all of which contain more than one year group. There is an independently run pre-school setting on the school site. School numbers are rising as a result of the closure of a neighbouring school.

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

Charlton Mackrell is a good school and is rightly proud of the outstanding care, guidance and support afforded to pupils. Pupils talk about feeling extremely safe in school and are correct in saying that behaviour at all times is outstanding. Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. Standards are above average and from their starting points on entry into school, this represents good progress. The school is effectively led, and parents appreciate the variety of opportunities provided for their children. One parent summed up the views of many by saying, 'I am amazed at what the school achieves.'

The school has a good capacity to accelerate improvement across all aspects of its work due to:

- the strong teamwork of the staff
- the good teaching
- the strong pastoral care
- the outstanding aspects of a good curriculum resulting in pupils' enthusiasm for learning
- the effective self evaluation procedures, which have ensured the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weakness
- the outstanding partnership with parents and carers.

Charlton Mackrell is much respected in the local community because the school provides its pupils with a range of opportunities to achieve, particularly through music and sport. Over half of the pupils play in the school orchestra. Parents and carers are proud of their children's successes in regional music competitions. There are effective links with other organisations and professionals leading to wide-ranging sporting and arts opportunities. Pupils contribute to village events, such as country dancing at the village fair. They help with stalls by selling produce grown in the school garden. Consequently they make good use of their enterprise skills in marketing fruit and vegetables to the public.

Parents and carers are very appreciative of the support their children receive. The partnerships that exist between home and school are excellent. Parents and carers report that as a result of staff knowing their children well, interventions are timely and effective. Parents of younger children particularly like the daily contact with staff. Those of older pupils are very complimentary about the quality of information they receive on their children's progress and the way in which they are prepared for the next step in their education. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because of the good relationships that exist with staff. High expectations of behaviour underpin the effective lessons, so that teaching is good. The school tracks the progress of pupils efficiently, so that by the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2 they have achieved well. Older pupils know their targets and, at

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its best, teachers' marking helps them to improve their work. However, this is not consistently the case across the school, so that not all pupils are clear about how well they are doing. The assessment of pupils' progress to generate ongoing small steps in learning activities is not consistently embedded in all lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In English and mathematics lessons teachers should make more consistent use of sharply focused, age appropriate, assessment and marking, referring to pupil targets, so that pupils understand both how well they are already doing and the next steps required to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Since the last inspection the school has maintained above average performance in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2. School data show that the skills, knowledge and understanding with which the youngest children begin school are in line with the expected levels. Children in Reception make good progress in their first year at school. School data show that pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. However, from their starting points, some youngsters do not always achieve the standards they are capable of in reading and writing at the end of Year 2. The gap in the performance of pupils as compared to that of pupils nationally is less in mathematics. As pupils move into Key Stage 2, their progress accelerates, so by the time they reach the end of Year 6 they achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Higher achieving pupils perform well in English and mathematics as compared to their national counterparts.

An initiative that encourages pupils to talk about their writing is having a positive impact on narrowing the gap between the performance of boys and girls in English. All pupils are learning to draw story maps to assist the writing process. Boys, particularly, enjoy drawing story maps, which help them to plan their work. As a result, they can explain the sequence of events in their story and read their writing with pride. Pupils can use persuasive language in letters written to characters in familiar stories, such as advising Toad in Toad of Toad Hall to give up his motor car. One pupil wrote, 'Secondly, you have killed all of your family and most of the village. So, if I were you I'd give up your motor car.'

Pupils are enthusiastic about the responsibility given to them, such as when older pupils mentor younger pupils. Older pupils train as playground leaders and this leads to very harmonious playtimes. The school listens to the views of pupils, for example when they reviewed the behaviour policy. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy life and this is reflected in the high take-up of sporting activities, confidence and excellent relationships.

Pupils reflect on moral, spiritual, social and cultural issues through all aspects of their learning. Visits to Wells Cathedral enhance pupils' spiritual growth. The strong links with the church help pupils to consider their own place in society. During a whole school visit to the church pupils were asked to think about what it is like to be me and the uniqueness of each individual. In this way pupils show an understanding of people's differences and everyone gets along very well together. Every year pupils play a part in the village

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pantomime and it is through work with organisations and other professionals that pupils have a good understanding of their own and wider communities.

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	1
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 positive atmosphere created in each class means that pupils contribute confidently in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and as a result pupils concentrate well and produce work of a good quality. Teachers' good subject knowledge is used to inspire pupils to achieve well, such as in a music session for the school orchestra. The teacher's expertise led to a high quality performance from pupils as they played their instruments with impressive sensitivity and musical appreciation. Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking. During a French lesson the teacher provided the pupils with a range of visual clues as well as questions in French to encourage pupils to answer. As a result everyone was keen to participate. The teacher skilfully linked learning a new language to pupils' knowledge of different customs and religious festivals at Easter. Consequently, pupils' made good progress in their awareness of different cultures. However, while staff expertise in the use of assessment for older pupils is effective, this has not yet cascaded down to the two other classes.

The good curriculum is enhanced by some outstanding aspects such as provision for sport, music and extra-curricular activities. Collaboration with other schools and organisations means that the school can offer a wide range of activities. Older pupils go on a residential

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visit with opportunities for a variety of outdoor activities. Their visits out, for example, enhance science, and there are regular visitors to school such as the police, artists and authors. Parents and carers are pleased that their children swim regularly. Younger children are provided with opportunities for clubs such as bird watching and multi-sports. However, occasionally, the English and mathematics curriculum is less well matched to the needs of pupils in Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection the provision for learning outside has been improved so that forest school activities are built into the curriculum. The blessing of the new Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor space by the Bishop of Bath and Wells provided all pupils with an opportunity for spiritual reflection.

The school's excellent care, guidance and support for individuals mean that pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable make the most of the opportunities it offers. The school responds to pupils' needs through the allocation of extra adults to support those youngsters with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they learn to play cooperatively with others. Another excellent example is how well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities look forward to moving to a secondary school with confidence. The school provides very well for the induction of new families, such as those from the neighbouring closing school. New parents report that the 'welcome tea' involving the whole school community, including governors, had an extremely positive impact on how quickly their children made new friends. Established parents report how their children enjoy school and consequently attendance is good.

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 have promoted a culture of equal opportunity very successfully. They have focused on effective partnerships and provide a range of outstanding enrichment opportunities, while maintaining above average standards in English and mathematics. In this way they have demonstrated an ambitious drive to ensure all individuals have an equal chance to demonstrate their talents and achieve as well as they can. Consequently, from a curriculum covering a range of social and cultural experiences, youngsters from different families get on extremely well with one another, and so community cohesion is good.

The school reviews progress data to set challenging targets, and is confident pupils will continue to achieve well. Staff morale is high. A strength in the small staff team is the continual dialogue, relating to pupils' ongoing progress. This dialogue means that parents and carers are exceptionally well informed about their children's progress across all

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aspects of learning and well-being. Actions are taken to support those in danger of not making the progress they should. The school uses areas of strength well.

The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school. Governors are well informed regarding progress on school priorities, through headteacher reports. They recognise the issues relating to balancing the headteacher's teaching commitment with more planned opportunities for observations of teaching and learning. Consequently, they have recently put plans in place to support release time for the headteacher and teaching staff to carry out an enhanced programme of lesson observations and share good practice. In this way they have shown a clear understanding of deploying resources effectively to focus on school improvement. Roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding and child protection are good because staff and governors are well trained.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in Reception are taught in a mixed-aged class with Year 1 pupils. There is an effective partnership with the pre-school setting on the same site, so that children are very familiar with the expectations when they start school. The careful induction, good relationships and well-organised routines enable children to feel safe. As a result, youngsters in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 get on well together. Children enjoy a variety of learning tasks provided for them and make good progress. They are able to select their own activities inside and outdoors. During the inspection a group of children set up their own doctor's surgery, each deciding on their role. Patients waited to be seen and the doctor asked, 'What's the problem?' Relationships are very good and children ask each other politely if they can join the game.

Children demonstrate a sound understanding of number and can count reliably to 20. Their knowledge of how letter sounds are put together to make words is developing well.

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Children can use this skill in their attempts at writing, and more-able children can spell simple words independently. Adults plan activities that are fun and these engage the children well. For example, everyone enthusiastically sang a song to learn about letters and sounds. Adults support small groups of children well, such as those on a hunt for objects beginning with letter sounds.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led, and as a result staff are skilled in making observations of children's learning. Progress is shared with parents, and records kept for each child. The school has a good understanding of the strengths, such as the partnership with parents and carers, and the areas for improvement. There are plans in place to extend observations and the range of evidence relating to progress and next steps in children's learning.

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

The proportion of questionnaire responses returned was nearly two thirds, and of these an overwhelmingly majority of parents and carers were very happy with all aspects of their children's education. A very small minority commented on site security relating to boundary gates being left open. At the time of the inspection there were notices on the gates asking for them to be shut.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Charlton Mackrell 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 74 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	84	7	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	73	11	24	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	49	22	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	60	16	36	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	73	10	22	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	64	13	29	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	73	10	22	1	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)	28	62	9	20	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	62	15	33	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	44	20	44	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	44	22	49	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	49	21	47	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	80	7	16	1	2	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	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.



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School, Charlton Mackrell TA11 7BN

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school on our recent visit. Your excellent behaviour and the way adults care for you mean that your learning and progress are good. You told us that you feel very safe in school. Your parents and carers are particularly pleased with your school orchestra and your sporting achievements, which are both excellent. Your views helped us make our judgements. Your school gives you a good education. This letter is to tell you what we found.

- You have very positive attitudes to learning.
- The good curriculum is enriched with outstanding opportunities in music and sport.
- Those of you with special educational needs are well looked after.
- The headteacher, staff and governors make sure that those of you who are new to the school are made very welcome and so you quickly settle in.
- The interesting lessons mean teaching is good and you enjoy school.
- The older pupils care for the younger pupils well so everyone is friendly.
- The partnership the school has with your parents and carers is excellent.

I have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to assess and mark your work in English and mathematics lessons in a different way so that you understand how well you are doing towards your targets. I have also asked your teachers to help you with the next steps in your learning so that you can improve your work. I am confident that you will do all you can by continuing to work hard on making your work in English and mathematics even better.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech

Her Majesty's Inspector

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