

Charlbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123000
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	292553
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2007
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Tessa Barras
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Holt
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2001
School address	Crawborough Charlbury Chipping Norton OX7 3TX
Telephone number	01608 810354
Fax number	01608 819050

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school admits pupils from a wide variety of social backgrounds. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is below average. The school has seen significant changes in leadership over the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Charlbury is an improving school whose overall effectiveness is currently satisfactory. The good leadership and management of the new headteacher have halted a period of decline and turned pupils' achievement round, so that it is now satisfactory and improving. The changes in the school are summed up by one parent, who wrote, 'it is clear that progress has been made and standards at the school, as well as the attitude of the school towards the parent body, have improved considerably under the new head and the chair of governors'.

Achievement is satisfactory overall. This has been achieved by improving the systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These have been used well to design programmes of support for individual pupils. This has led to some pupils making good progress during lessons because teachers now have higher expectations of how much they can achieve. Standards are now average overall. They are higher than those of previous years and are rising, but they could still be higher. Pupils in the present Year 6 are meeting their targets and a number are likely to exceed them. Children are given a sound start to their education in the Foundation Stage. They make satisfactory progress, and most reach the goals expected of children by the time they transfer to Year 1.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The amount of good teaching is increasing but it is still not enough. In the better lessons, teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of all groups of pupils and progress is good. A weakness in otherwise competent teaching is that work is not as well tailored to the abilities of different groups so that pupils can learn at their own level. This slows progress.

This is a school in which each child matters. All pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is satisfactory overall, with strengths in their day-to-day pastoral care. However, the systems for setting individual targets for pupils to achieve are not as well developed in mathematics as they are in English.

The curriculum is satisfactory, and is enriched through a wide range of out of class activities. It provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education and makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and well being which is of good quality. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills at problem solving and investigative work.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. This is because the educational direction provided has not yet ensured that the pupils make consistently good progress in all classes. The school has correctly identified a number of priorities for development. However, some senior managers are not yet influential enough in raising the quality of teaching and learning to ensure greater consistency in pupils' progress. The new chair of governors and new governing body provides good support to the school in helping it improve further. They are determined to sustain the recent improvements by holding the school to account for its performance.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, especially in mathematics, by ensuring that teaching consistently challenges all pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Develop the role of all leaders and governors in improving teaching and learning and raising achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children typically start school with skills and abilities that are just above those normally expected of four year olds. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and most reach the goals expected of them by the time they move into Year 1.

Standards are average in English, mathematics and science at age 7 and 11 years. Pupils are making the best progress in English. Last year, standards in English were significantly below average by the end of Year 6. This was due to a number of higher attaining pupils failing to reach the higher level 5. This has been well addressed and very recent data shows that higher attaining pupils are making good progress in English in all classes. Pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to their class mates. The school recognises that it needs to continue working hard to raise standards further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, and are enthusiastic learners particularly when lessons are of high quality. The rate of attendance is good and is further evidence that pupils are happy and enjoy being at school.

Pupils have good relationships with teachers and other adults. Behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils feel safe. They say that any bullying is now effectively dealt with by the adults. The school council takes its responsibilities seriously and pupils are confident that their views are listened to.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respect the feelings of others and have a good awareness of the religious and spiritual beliefs of different groups of pupils within the school and of people in wider society. Older pupils delight in being responsible for serving food to younger children at the lunchtime 'family service'. Pupils have a good awareness of the benefits of choosing healthy food and enjoy the good range of opportunities for physical activities including the daily Early Bird exercises. This has been recognized through the 'Healthy Schools' accreditation and the recent 'Activemark' award. An Eco group has been formed and pupils are looking at ways of improving energy conservation and recycling. They have also been given a small area of woodland in nearby Cornbury Park which they visit regularly to find out more about the local ecology and how they can care for it. Their improving skills in English and mathematics prepare them appropriately for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The causes of past underachievement have been closely examined by the school and effective action taken to remedy them. The impact of this is seen in examples of good teaching observed during the inspection. For example, an interactive whiteboard was used well during a Year 5 literacy lesson where pupils watched film trailers before designing their own posters using images and literacy devices such as puns and alliteration. Activities such as these are pitched at the right level to match pupils' abilities and inspire them to work hard. However, on other occasions the activities are not as well matched to the needs of particular groups and there are fewer opportunities to work independently. Pupils enjoy these lessons less. Questioning is usually thorough and opportunities to discuss in pairs are used well to develop and consolidate pupils' understanding of new ideas; although on some occasions it does not fully include all pupils nor extend their thinking sufficiently. There are missed opportunities to develop language and vocabulary in the Foundation Stage when children are working at activities they have chosen for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There have been considerable improvements to the quality of planning so that activities meet the learning needs of all pupils; although it is better developed in literacy than mathematics. Links are made between subjects to make learning more interesting and purposeful, drawing on pupils' different skills, particularly in literacy and information and communication technology. The school is working to increase the opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to investigative work and problem solving. The quality and range of the planned activities in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, although the activities selected by the children are not always sufficiently well planned to promote their language and vocabulary.

The curriculum provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education and makes a positive contribution to their personal development. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. Visitors, visits and other activities help capture the interest of pupils such as visits to outdoor residential centres and French lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6. A good range of after school clubs, including sporting, artistic and cultural experiences enhance pupils' learning and add much to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The satisfactory care, guidance and support contribute to pupils' personal and academic development. There are very clear procedures for health and safety which are fully adhered to. Policies and procedures to protect pupils are made clear to all staff and are carefully implemented. Pupils with learning difficulties are now identified at an early stage so they can be helped to meet their learning targets. Assessment and target setting is used well to help pupils understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work in English. However, this is not as effective in other subjects such as mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides good leadership and has built a positive relationship with parents. Clear systems for appraising the school's work have identified key priorities for development in partnership with the local authority. These are manageable and well directed where they are needed most. The school is right that senior managers need to be more rigorous and have a greater influence on the quality of teaching and learning across the school to ensure greater consistency in pupils' progress. Governance is satisfactory. The chair of governors has a very good knowledge and understanding of the issues facing the school and provides good leadership for the new governing body. The recent work of the governors shows they are now much more involved in the strategic management of the school, including addressing a deficit budget. Given the recent improvements to leadership, the pupils' achievement, behaviour and enjoyment of learning and the accurate self-evaluation, there is satisfactory capacity to secure further improvement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

21 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charlbury Primary School, Chipping Norton, OX7 3TX

Following our visit to your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. There are lots of things that we like about it. Some of them are:

- your school is friendly and welcoming; you behave well and get on very well with each other;
- you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and learn a lot in lessons;
- the school council represents your views very well and you all help the school to run smoothly;
- the school is good at organising lots of extra things for you to do;
- all of the adults in your school make sure that you are well looked after.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education, and we could see that it is getting better all the time. Your teachers often check on the progress you make in English and mathematics and give you special help if they find you are falling behind. This has helped most of you to make the progress expected of you and many of you to do even better. We have asked your teachers to go on doing this so that more of you can make good progress and to ensure that your work is always interesting and challenging. Your headteacher, teachers and governors are also going to find ways of checking on how well the school is doing and of making sure that everyone is as successful as possible.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and to meet the targets set for you. I'm sure that you are ready for this challenge!

Yours truly,

John Earish Lead Inspector