



# The Vine Inter-Church Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 134894  
**Local Authority** CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
**Inspection number** 294207  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** John Godwood

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	The Vines
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Upper Cambourne, Upper Cambourne
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Cambourne, Cambridgeshire CB3 6DY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01954 719630
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	229	<b>Fax number</b>	01954 719394
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Rev Peter Wood
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Debbie Higham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
4–11	17–18 January 2007	294207

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a new school in the growing community of Cambourne. It opened in September 2005 in temporary buildings. This was a year earlier than originally planned, in response to the needs of the expanding population. The school moved into the main part of its new building in September 2006, although it continues to use some temporary accommodation while the rest of the new building is completed.

Pupil numbers have grown faster than expected, from 88 in September 2005 to 229 currently. New pupils of all ages join the school regularly throughout the school year. The rate of pupil mobility is vastly higher than is usually found. Staff numbers are also continually growing: for example, half of the class teachers are new this school year.

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little below average. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is a little above average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is also slightly above average.

The school has many links with the local community. It has on site a Family Learning Centre which offers family support services.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Since its opening, the school has achieved a great deal. In addition to being very well organised, it has created a very strong, mature ethos that is welcoming and affirming to new pupils and their families. This is due to the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher and governing body. The vast majority of parents are very pleased with the school because staff are approachable and their children grow in self-confidence. One parent wrote, 'The culture of The Vine is a shining example of what primary education should be about.'

As a result of the school's ethos, pupils settle quickly and develop good attitudes to learning. Their personal development and well-being are good. They much enjoy school and behave well. They learn to stay safe and healthy, supported by the appetising meals from the school's own kitchen. Pupils are encouraged to develop initiative and they make an outstanding contribution to the community. A key school aim is to develop spiritual awareness: pupils learn effectively to 'ask big questions' and to 'do the right thing'.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. None of the pupils have been in the school for long and many for only a short time, most having transferred from other schools. This has an impact on their progress, which is satisfactory. Pupils reach broadly average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6, although in the 2006 tests, the proportion reaching higher levels was below average.

Because pupils' achievement is satisfactory, the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, although it has many good and some outstanding aspects. It gives satisfactory value for money. The school is developing rapidly and has good capacity to improve because of good leadership and management. The headteacher has a very clear vision and communicates this well; as a result, teachers work well together, enjoy teaching and are excited about the future. Planning and self-evaluation are good: all staff and governors are engaged in reflecting on what has gone well and what the next steps are. The school's plans already include the issues identified in this inspection. The role of curriculum leaders in planning and monitoring is at a very early stage.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Much teaching is good, but a result of the rapid growth in teaching staff is some variation in quality. The school is addressing this well through good staff development and teamwork. Teachers consistently create a positive learning atmosphere and give pupils good feedback. In a minority of lessons, however, there is not enough challenge for more able pupils.

The curriculum is good, with many additional activities. Pupils with learning difficulties receive well organised extra help and make good progress. Standards and provision in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and are developing well under a largely new team. Throughout the school, care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care is outstanding. The school regularly assesses pupils' attainment, but does not yet have a consistent method of tracking progress and using targets to guide pupils on their next steps.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all lessons include sufficient challenge for more able pupils.
- Implement a consistent process for tracking pupils' progress and engaging them in meeting targets.
- Develop the role of curriculum leaders in planning and monitoring.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. National Curriculum tests were taken in 2006 by just 5 pupils in Year 6 and 21 in Year 2; many of these had joined the school during the year. Results in both key stages were broadly average in English, mathematics and science, although the proportion of pupils gaining higher levels was below average.

Standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are also broadly average, and pupils' progress is satisfactory. Progress is affected by the fact that many pupils have been in the school only a short time. It is also difficult to measure as the school does not always receive good records of pupils' attainment in previous schools.

Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Those who speak English as an additional language progress as well as other pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff are good role models and pupils become increasingly self-assured and socially aware. Relationships are warm and behaviour management is effective. Pupils who are initially unsettled soon absorb the school's culture and routines. Pupils develop a good understanding of other cultures through, for example, The Cambourne Church's link with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school and community. For example, older pupils run clubs, and through The Vine Forum, many contribute to decisions about school catering or new play equipment. Pupils thus develop initiative and independence.

Pupils much enjoy school and attendance is good. They learn how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles. Many participate in additional sporting activities. Pupils' strong personal qualities, their desire to 'make a difference' and their sound basic skills equip them satisfactorily for life after school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Much of the teaching is good, but there is some variation in quality, partly because of variations in experience and length of time in the school. The school provides very good support for new teachers and good staff development, but teachers' practice is not yet entirely consistent.

Teachers typically create a positive atmosphere for learning, and as a result pupils behave well and enjoy learning. Lessons have a clear purpose and pupils know what they are trying to achieve. Most lessons engage pupils well through varied learning activities. There is some variation in teachers' skill in maintaining pupils' concentration. Occasionally, for example, teachers talk for too long and pupils lose interest. Teachers consistently provide good feedback through marking on what pupils have achieved and what to improve.

In the better lessons, pupils of all abilities are challenged to think and extend their understanding, but in some lessons more able pupils are not stretched enough. Teaching assistants generally provide good additional support for pupils with learning difficulties.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is imaginative and motivates pupils well. Teachers plan carefully and through teamwork make good use of their particular expertise. Appropriate emphasis is given to literacy, numeracy and computing. Pupils have specialist teaching in music and physical education, and in Years 3 to 6 learn Spanish, French or Dutch. Good links are made between subjects, particularly in events such as Healthy and Happy Week and Smart Learning Days. Personal development lessons contribute well to pupils' understanding of healthy and safe living.

Pupils who have learning or social difficulties receive very good support, as do those who speak English as an additional language. Additional challenges for gifted and talented pupils are at an early stage of development, but through links with the secondary school are available in mathematics and physical education. Learning is enriched by close links with the church and many visitors and visits, including residential trips for older children. There is a good range of activities outside the school day.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures for child protection and ensuring safety in school are rigorous. New pupils are helped very effectively to settle, make friends and learn school routines. Pupils trust the staff to deal with their concerns. Adults monitor pupils' welfare well and provide very good support for vulnerable pupils. Outstanding links with specialist agencies ensure that pupils receive additional support

when needed. Links with, and support for, families are a particular strength. This high quality care enables pupils to make good progress in their attitudes to learning.

Pupils' academic progress is tracked regularly but not in a consistent way that can be used by the whole school. The school is aware of this and is taking steps to address it. Pupils receive good feedback through marking but the use of targets to inform them of their next steps is not well developed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding, with strong support from the deputy headteacher and chair of governors. Together they articulate a clear vision for the school that creates a sense of common purpose and a buzz of excitement about the future. In building the school's special culture, they have made very good use of language, such as 'stars and signposts', which are used consistently in marking pupils' work and evaluating the progress of the school. The headteacher has the confidence of all those associated with the school.

New staff are successfully integrated into a mutually supportive team. Regular training enables teachers to develop their skills and learn from one another. Through good self-evaluation and planning, the school has an accurate understanding of what needs to be developed next. Teachers' work is monitored, but due to the school's continual growth, this has not yet settled into an established pattern. One of the school's priorities this year is to develop the roles of curriculum leaders in planning improvements and checking quality. The inclusion of pupils with a wide variety of additional learning needs is very well managed by the deputy headteacher.

The governing body provides strong support for the school's vision and the practicalities of staffing, buildings and finance. It is well organised and increasingly monitors aspects of the school's work. The practical challenges of a rapidly growing school are very well managed and, as a result, the school runs smoothly. The new buildings and attractive displays provide a stimulating learning environment.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
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	2
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

19 January 2007

Dear Children

The Vine Inter-Church Primary School, The Vines, Upper Cambourne, Cambourne, Cambridgeshire, CB3 6DY

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and for sharing your thoughts with us. Many of you told us that you enjoy school because the teachers are kind and there is lots to do. We could see that the adults care for you very well and help those of you new to the school to settle in quickly and concentrate on learning.

We were pleased to see that you behave well and are hardly ever away. Many of you are very helpful to others, for example as playleaders or in the Vine Forums. You learn how to be safe and healthy. In assemblies and in lessons you learn to ask big questions and to do the right thing. Through all these, you are growing up well as young people.

Many of your lessons are good. You work hard and enjoy most of them because you have plenty to do. Those of you who find learning hard get very good extra help. Teachers give you good guidance through stars and signposts when they mark your work. Those of you who learn more quickly are challenged well in some lessons, but we have asked the school to make sure that all lessons provide hard enough work for all of you.

You are all making progress and some of you are catching up after changing schools. The school checks your progress regularly and we are pleased that they are going to make more use of the results to help your learning by setting you targets for your next steps.

Mrs Higham and her staff have done a fantastic job in leading your new school and making it into such a happy place that welcomes new arrivals and helps everyone to enjoy learning. Many of your parents wrote to say how pleased they are. We have asked Mrs Higham to make sure that the teachers in charge of subjects regularly check how well things are going so that they can plan new things.

You are lucky to go to such an exciting new school where the staff enjoy teaching you and have big plans for the future. We are confident that the school will continue to improve. You can help by doing your best to be lead learners and super citizens.

Yours sincerely

John Godwood

Lead inspector