

Cheriton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115874
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312086
Inspection date	12 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr I Gilchrist
Headteacher	Miss T Sullivan
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2004
School address	Cheriton Alresford SO24 0QA
Telephone number	01962 771278
Fax number	01962 771278

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, and investigated the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with gifts and talents, how well boys make progress compared to the girls, and how well subject co-ordinators, and other managers, monitor and evaluate the impact of their work. The inspector gathered evidence from an analysis of information and data about pupils' achievement provided by the school, observations of parts of lessons, parents' questionnaires and discussions with the headteacher, other managers, the chair of governors and pupils. The inspector did not investigate other aspects of the school's work in detail, but found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These judgements have been included in the report.

Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school takes pupils from the local village and surrounding rural area. There are well below the expected number of pupils entitled to free school meals. Primarily of White British heritage, there are well below the average number of minority ethnic pupils. The overall number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well above average. Most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties. The school has a recently appointed headteacher. It is nationally recognised through awards such as the Activemark and ICT Chartermark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education for its pupils, combining high academic standards and achievement with the excellent personal development of pupils. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and thrive in a learning environment of bright displays of their work, particularly art, and consistently high levels of teaching. One parent commented that the school has, 'a very welcoming and communal feel, with a friendly and exciting approach to children's education', whilst another wrote that the school provides, 'the best start a child could get'.

Whilst entry levels into Reception vary year on year, the pupils generally have the expected levels of skills and knowledge for their age. On entry into Year 1, most have met or exceeded their early learning goals. Standards, by the end of Year 2 in 2007 were well above average, and pupils made excellent progress. Consistently high levels of teaching help to ensure that pupils, including those with gifts and talents, continue to achieve extremely well. By the end of Year 6, in 2007, the pupils attained outstanding standards in English, science, and particularly, mathematics. High attaining pupils do very well across the school. Data show that, although there are occasional differences between the standards and achievement of boys and girls, these are not significant, and reflect the impact of small numbers in each year group. The high levels of basic skills helps ensure that pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Underpinning these high academic standards is the positive attitude of pupils. They say they feel respected, that adults value their views, and consequently want to do well. There are positive relationships within the school, including between pupils. They commented on how pupils help and look after each other. In lessons, pupils share resources well and work effectively in pairs and small groups. Whilst pupils enjoy the physical exercise opportunities they have, particularly praising the very good variety of clubs on offer, their understanding of healthy eating requires further development. They make an excellent contribution to the community, serving as willing members of their school council or house system. Their understanding of the global community is extremely well developed through their active link with a Kenyan school. Pupils not only learnt about water shortages, but raised funds for a fresh water supply for the school.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. In lessons, questioning is used very effectively to challenge pupils who are consistently asked to explain their answers. In mathematics, this is particularly effective in ensuring that pupils show their reasoning behind a calculation. Pace is increased and pupils motivated by some very good use of the interactive whiteboards. Teachers further challenge pupils by setting tasks that require investigation and problem solving. Pupils co-operated well in a science lesson, discussing their ideas and views when investigating whether certain materials like sugar and flour would dissolve in water. Pupils know their lesson learning objectives. However, there are missed opportunities to further refine these objectives and identify more clearly the challenges for different ability groups within the class.

As the high standards demonstrate, the curriculum meets the numeracy and literacy needs of the pupils extremely well. However, not being complacent, the school has identified the need for further development of links between subjects, using themes such as World Book Day. Pupils enjoyed this experience and felt that they could use their knowledge from one subject to help them understand aspects in another. The school also uses the locality very well. For example, in history, pupils research events surrounding the English Civil War. Their learning

comes alive when they are able to visit the local battlefield. The good curriculum is enhanced very well by visits, such as to art galleries, a mosque and a residential centre.

The care, support and guidance for pupils are outstanding. Pupils feel safe and secure. The very good arrangements for the high numbers of pupils with specific or moderate learning difficulties, reflects the school's commitment. These pupils achieve in line with others, gaining standards that are well above expected levels. This results from careful tracking and regular reviews of their needs by the special needs co-ordinator, and some well-targeted support from the learning assistants. The school has made good improvements to the quality of teachers' marking since the last inspection. It is regular, pupils say quickly delivered, and is supportive. There is a need for the next steps in learning, or next challenge to be made more consistently clear to pupils. Pupils know their learning targets, and use them well to improve their work.

The new headteacher is already having a very positive impact, and has quickly set a very clear vision for the school, based around further improvement. Already, writing targets have been more closely defined, enabling pupils to have a clearer understanding of the next steps. Moreover, the environment has been developed to include more displays of pupils' work but also of helpful guidance for pupils about learning techniques. Leadership is good because monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher and senior managers are embedded, and have contributed to the maintenance of high levels of teaching, and some good whole-school development planning. However, leadership is not outstanding because the monitoring and evaluation role of other managers requires further development to enable them to gain the necessary overview of their area of responsibility, which would then inform their development planning. Governors visit regularly, are involved heavily in school development plans and have an excellent approach to their role as critical friends to the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children achieve well as a result of consistently good teaching. Relationships are very positive and the children settle well to their work. The children's personal development is excellent, and their positive attitudes to work contribute well to the good progress that they make. They reacted very positively to the challenge presented to them about how to move a variety of sticks from one place to another. Using a good range of descriptive words about size and weight, they worked well together, sharing the wheelbarrow and other resources. On occasions, especially in the external area, teachers do not make sufficiently clear to the children what it is that they are expected to learn. Communication with parents is very effective from an early stage, and Reception, as with other year groups, sends home regular curriculum information. Whilst leadership and management in the Foundation Stage is already good, there is insufficient recording of action plans and quantifiable success criteria, against which progress can be judged.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the monitoring and evaluation roles of subject leaders.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cheriton Primary School, Alresford, SO24 0QA

Thank you very much for welcoming me into your school during my recent visit. You were eager to tell me about the school, and I listened carefully to what you told me. I believe your school is outstanding, which means that it does many things very well indeed. I list some of these things below.

- Your hard work, together with the very high quality of teaching that you receive, helps ensure that the standard of your work in English, mathematics and science is well above that expected of pupils of your age.
- You develop extremely well as young people. You are polite, care well for each other, and are prepared to listen to each other without interruption.
- I particularly liked the way you are involved with the school in Africa. You are learning a lot about life elsewhere in the world. Good luck with raising the money for their school hall.
- You told me that the school gives you many very good things to do. You said you liked the 'fun' lessons, and that the work challenges you. You also spoke excitedly about the visits and visitors. I could see you listen to them when you told me what the police and fire people told you about how to keep safe.
- I also like the way you and your teachers are using your learning targets to help you improve your work. You could help your teachers by telling them when you find the work too easy or too hard.

Your headteacher and her staff want the school to become even better. I have asked them to look at how teachers with responsibility for subjects can learn more about your work and what you are learning.

Thank you again for your help.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector