

# High Bickington Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113378
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	325805
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rowena Onions

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	47
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sally Anoyrkatis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Norton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	High Bickington Umberleigh EX37 9AY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01769 560324
<b>Fax number</b>	01769 560324

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

High Bickington is a very small three class school serving its local rural area. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and all have English as their first language. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. At the time of the inspection, those children attending part time in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) were only a very small number and were not in school on the day of the inspection so discussion of current attainment is inappropriate. However, although varying significantly from year to year, taking several years together, attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

High Bickington is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good aspects. Careful attention to the personal development of pupils, through the curriculum and the good level of individual care, ensures they develop well personally and feel safe and valued. They grow into responsive, energetic young people who are well aware of how to keep themselves healthy, safe and well, and who willingly take action to do so. They are a pleasure to talk to! They are very positive about their school, saying things like, 'It's such a small school but we do loads.' They work hard, behave well and join in enthusiastically with all that is planned for them. Pupils are keen contributors to the school and village community. They have for example, written to the parish council to request more litter bins in the village.

Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily over their time in school. Children in the Reception Year make a sound start in gaining early skills that underpin the satisfactory progress they make in Key Stage 1 in mathematics and their good progress in reading. However, because they lack sufficient opportunity to write independently, their progress in writing is inadequate and standards in this area by Year 2 are below average. Because pupils are well taught in Years 3 to 6, their achievement accelerates and is good overall. These pupils make good progress in reading, writing and science and satisfactory progress in mathematics. In 2008, Year 6 standards were broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. All through the school, lower attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress because their needs are carefully analysed and extra help is given to them when required.

Staff take time to ensure pupils are enthusiastic to learn. Good enrichment of the curriculum through the use of visits, visitors, clubs and theme weeks, extends the pupils' knowledge and experience well. It is through this significant extra effort that the school largely overcomes the restrictions of a school site which has no hall, very limited storage space and only a tiny playground. The overall curriculum is, however, satisfactory rather than good because children in the EYFS do not have sufficient opportunity to develop independence or to learn out of doors and because the Key Stage 1 curriculum for writing is not promoting adequate progress.

The headteacher shows dedicated and determined leadership. He has led a number of successful improvements in the school and has a clear vision for how he wants the school to develop further. This vision is shared both by the governors and other staff, all of whom are very supportive. The school also enjoys the full support and good opinion of the parents. There is, however, a lack of a clear structure for the sharing of the leadership and management roles in the school. This has meant that the headteacher has had an overly heavy role and has not been able to check the impact of the school's work as much as he would like or as is necessary. As a result, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching in different classes which leads to teaching being satisfactory overall. The school is a place where, as a governor said, 'Everyone works to help the children succeed.' This, together with the track record of successful improvement initiatives, means that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Data, records and external monitoring show that satisfactory provision, including satisfactory teaching, is enabling children to make satisfactory progress over the Reception Year. Over

recent years, the children have entered Year 1 with largely average attainment, although they show less secure attainment in their social development. This is in part linked with the lack of a secure outdoor area, which restricts the children's opportunity to make independent choices with less direct input from adults. Satisfactory leadership of the provision has begun to seek ways in which the children can be given these opportunities and there are now opportunities for more independent work in the classroom. There are also plans in place to extend outdoor learning, but these are not yet being enacted. Children's safety is taken very seriously and the school has appropriate systems in place to ensure this.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in writing.
- Put in place a leadership and management structure that shares roles and responsibilities more effectively between headteacher, staff and governors.
- Develop the opportunities for children in the Reception class to work independently and out of doors.

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

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Although achievement is satisfactory overall, there are groups of pupils who are making good progress, linked to the good teaching they receive. This is particularly true for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and for lower attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, throughout the school. Pupils of all ages make good progress in reading. Progress in mathematics is, however, only satisfactory, in part because there is insufficient emphasis given to teaching pupils how to record their mathematics work. Inadequate progress in writing in Key Stage 1 means that, although very tightly structured and good teaching of writing is helping pupils to make good progress in Key Stage 2, achievement over the whole school is only satisfactory.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are learning to be good citizens. They support each other well with older pupils taking care of younger ones. Through the school council, pupils contribute to the development of the school. Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good overall. However, although they have good knowledge of their own cultural traditions, pupils are unable to talk with the same confidence about the variety of cultural traditions in the United Kingdom. Pupils know the role of healthy eating and taking exercise in keeping well and most take action based on this knowledge. Their ability to work together co-operatively and supportively, alongside the secure development of skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, is preparing pupils in a satisfactory way for their future lives. Pupils' enthusiasm for school and all it offers is a significant strength that has good impact on their ability to learn. Although overall attendance is affected by factors like holidays taken in term-time and is average, the great majority of pupils attend regularly .

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

There is variability in the quality of teaching between classes that makes teaching satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2, pupils are challenged to meet teachers' high expectations. This is reflected in the pacy way in which lessons are conducted so that pupils complete a good quantity of work. However, in some lessons for the younger pupils, they are kept sitting for too long and maximum use is not made of the time available. Additionally, these pupils spend too much time completing prepared worksheets, restricting the opportunities to develop independence. Relationships are strong throughout the school and this means that lessons are conducted in an atmosphere conducive to learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are sensitively supported so that they have a self-belief that assists them to learn well. Well-trained teaching assistants often play a full part and promote learning well in lessons, enabling pupils to have valuable extra assistance. On occasions though, they are not well deployed and this results in their skills not being fully used. The use of assessment to promote progress is developing. Pupils are clear about what they are learning in a lesson, but the school is correct in identifying the need to help them understand how to assess their own work at the end of the lesson.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

There are aspects of the curriculum that are good. Provision to promote pupils' personal development is effective. Enthusiasm for sport is enhanced by the use of a wide range of facilities beyond the school site. There is an increasing emphasis on the planning of work that links subjects together. This means that pupils can practise skills learned in one subject across others, giving more meaning to their learning. Although the curriculum helps pupils to gain a good sense of the school and local community, strategies to assist them to have a greater knowledge of the wider British and world communities is only just beginning to develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The individual way in which pupils are supported personally is a key strength of the school that is appreciated by pupils and parents alike. Adults ensure pupils' personal well-being and safety on a day-to-day basis are good. Pupils who have additional learning needs or are new to the school are supported very well. Good partnerships with other agencies help promote this. The school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress and appropriately challenging targets are set. Pupils know their targets and are increasingly aware of how to use them to help improve their work. However, in some classes, marking is not as helpful as it might be in helping pupils to understand how to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher has a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. He has developed appropriate systems for tracking pupils' progress and the evaluation of teaching. Where these have been put in place in Key Stage 2, school self-evaluation is accurate and realistic. As a result, successful developments and improvements are evident. For example, the move to specialist teaching in English and mathematics has promoted good progress. Similar tracking for younger pupils is not yet as well developed or utilised, so the school has not been as aware of, or responsive to, dips in progress, such as that in writing in Key Stage 1. This has caused the school's overall evaluation of itself to be a little over generous. It has also meant that governors have not been able to keep as close a check on progress towards improvements. Although other staff play a role in leading aspects of the school, their responsibilities are not as well defined or as far reaching as they could be. The governors were aware of the headteacher's heavy load and are already planning to look at the underlying management structure of the school to amend this. The school has made good use of the community to support pupils' learning. Plans are in place to further develop the satisfactory provision for community cohesion by enhancing pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## 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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of High Bickington Church of England Primary School, High Bickington, EX37 9AY

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for your warm and friendly welcome when we came to inspect your school. Your school is a satisfactory one at the moment but everyone, particularly your headteacher, is working hard to help you make even better progress. We were impressed by your enthusiasm for school and really enjoyed talking to you about what you do and what you like. We were pleased to see that you know how to keep fit by getting lots of exercise and eating healthily. We think you behave well and try hard in class.

This is what we liked most about your school.

- The good progress you make in learning to read.
- The way you are helped and encouraged to become really nice young people.
- The way you get on well with your teachers.
- The adults in the school take good care of you so that you feel safe and well looked after.
- The efforts teachers make to make sure that you have lots of experiences even though your school building makes this difficult.

To make things even better, this is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure that everybody makes good progress in learning to write.
- Share some of the jobs that the headteacher is doing with some of the other staff.
- Give children in Reception more opportunity to learn to work and play without an adult and out of doors.

We are very glad that you like your school and think you are right to do so. We think that you could help your teachers to make your school even better by continuing to work really hard.

Yours faithfully

Rowena Onions Lead inspector