

Charlton Horethorne Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123901
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380763
Inspection dates	9–10 May 2012
Lead inspector	Hazel Callaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Hall
Headteacher	Malcolm Sears
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Hazel Callaghan

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspector observed eight lessons taught by four teachers and a variety of other teaching. Meetings were held with staff and pupils as well as representatives of the governing body and a telephone conversation with a local headteacher with whom the school works in partnership. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a summary of the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, the school's monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress, and policies and documents in relationship to safeguarding. Questionnaires completed by 21 pupils, six staff and 27 parents and carers were scrutinised.

Information about the school

Charlton Horethorne is much smaller than the average primary school. All of its pupils come from families of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is small whereas the proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is above average at the level of school action. The number of children in each cohort is small. They are taught in three classes. Each morning children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in the youngest class, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are together, and Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in the eldest class. In the afternoon, all the Key Stage 2 pupils are usually taught together. A mothers and toddlers group managed by the school runs once a week from the school hall. The school works in partnership with a local primary school. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Charlton Horethorne Primary is a good school. Almost all aspects of its work, including pupils' attainment and progress, have improved significantly since their last inspection. This is due to the strong focus of the headteacher, staff and governors on moving the school forward. As one parent put it, 'This is a small school with a family atmosphere where the children, staff and parents all join in as one.' The school is not yet outstanding because of a few remaining inconsistencies in some aspects of the provision.
- From broadly average starting points, pupils achieve well to reach levels of attainment which are above average. There has been a sharp improvement in attainment, especially in Year 6, and pupils achieve equally well in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is good across the school and pupils in all age groups make good progress in their learning. Although the majority of pupils recognise they are making good progress, some are not sure how well they are doing. Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are now more effectively identified. However, because evaluation of the needs of a few pupils with more complex difficulties was not sufficiently accurate in the past, provision to meet their needs is not yet as fully affective as it could be.
- Pupils really enjoy coming to school. They say their lessons are fun and they thrive on the challenges they are given. Their extremely positive attitudes to work contribute strongly to their good achievement. Behaviour is excellent and inappropriate behaviour or bullying of any kind is very rare.
- The headteacher communicates his ambition for the school well and he has been effective in improving teaching and the school's performance. The stimulating curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. All areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection have been addressed and this positive track record underpins the school's capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teaching is consistently as good as on the best occasions so all pupils make at least good progress by:
 - sharing the good practice within the school with new members of staff so that strategies are consistently applied and embedded
 - developing the systems of support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so their needs are fully met and all progress consistently well.
- Develop whole-school systems that enable all pupils to recognise how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve, such as regular opportunities to evaluate their own and each other's work so they identify what they need to do to make their work better.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good because well-organised teaching effectively encourages pupils to be enthusiastic learners with the result that they make good progress in lessons. Children start in Reception with a range of knowledge and skills that is similar to that expected for their age. In the past, children have made satisfactory progress from their different starting points. However, inspection evidence shows this year children's progress is accelerating, especially in reading, and in their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make. Children enjoy working with the teaching assistant on adult-led tasks, such as exploring the properties of two-dimensional shapes, as well as following their self-chosen activities. They are growing in confidence in their own abilities, as was seen in the improvements they made to their constructed tractor.

This enjoyment in their learning was also evident in older pupils, for example the delight in which two girls in the middle class described their challenge of making moving roundabouts as part of the Key Stage 2 theme park. Pupils in this Year 3 and Year 4 class use their prior learning well, not just in design and technology, but also in science to make predictions about the effect cold and darkness would have on their seeds' growth. Older pupils also respond well to challenge. Those in Year 5 and 6, all boys, worked with high levels of concentration as they tried to write in the style of Laurie Lee after reading *Cider with Rosie*, showing a real awareness of the type of vocabulary he would use in comparison to that of Thomas Hardy, whom they had also studied. Pupils enjoy reading, and a strong focus on the development of effective reading skills, along with the effective teaching of letters and their sounds, enables pupils to make good progress, with the result that many reach above average levels in both Year 2 and Year 6.

The gap between the attainment and progress of disabled pupils and those with

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special educational needs, and that of other pupils, is closing because of the predominantly good levels of support they receive so they too are well involved and enjoy their activities. Parents and carers also feel that their children make good progress. The comments of these parents were typical of many: 'We are so happy with our children's progress and the extra care they receive' and 'We are delighted with the progress our son has made, both academically and personally.'

Quality of teaching

Inspection evidence shows that teaching is good, and this is recognised by the parents and carers and the pupils. Good lessons observed in all classes were characterised by the teachers' high expectations, and for the pupils' good levels of concentration, and their good progress and behaviour. Teachers plan their lessons well and match activities effectively to the range of abilities and ages of pupils in the class. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, were given clear instructions on what they had to achieve in their writing, and they started confidently because of the clear examples they had already explored. Teachers monitor pupils' work well and provide additional support when needed in order to extend their learning. The quality of marking is good. Targets for the next steps in learning are well understood by the pupils and they feel teachers are good at helping them to understand new work. However, some pupils are still unsure about how well they are doing and how to improve. Opportunities which stimulate pupils' self-evaluation and the analysis of their work in terms of success criteria which itemise what should be included in their work if it is to be of a higher quality are not used sufficiently consistently.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved recently and children are making better progress than in the past, especially in their reading and language skills. As this improved progress is fairly new, not all aspects of their learning have had time to respond to the good teaching of both the class teacher and the teaching assistant. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully engaged in the lessons and are well supported in class and in withdrawal sessions. In the past, pupils' needs have not always been correctly identified and this has slowed down the appropriate use of support. The identification of pupils' needs is much more accurate and plans are now being initiated with the aim that all pupils will have the correct levels of support to ensure consistently good progress.

The curriculum is well planned and provides an effective progression of pupils' skills and knowledge. Many memorable events delight pupils and stimulate their good interest. Opportunities for pupils to use their good communication skills are well planned. They routinely use and extend their reading and writing skills within other work. Pupils in the middle class, for example, explored the language that would best describe their hero knight and his arch enemy to good effect. The promotion of pupils' mathematical skills is also effective with opportunities to extend their knowledge in real-life problems and investigations, such as the creation of their theme park. There is good emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Time is given for pupils to reflect on their ideas, to work together cooperatively, to enjoy new experiences and meet new people. They are fully

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involved in communications with a nursery school in Sri Lanka that was affected by the tsunami and have sent handmade soft toys and games to the children, who in return, have sent their drawings and photos. Pupils enjoy the many joint activities with other schools such as a multi-skills day that took place at the local secondary school during the inspection. Inspection evidence supports the parents' and carers' and pupils' belief that teaching is good and that teachers promote pupils' learning well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The vast majority of pupils behave extremely well in their lessons and going about the school. Inspection evidence confirms that this is what behaviour is usually like. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to a safe, positive learning environment by their excellent attitudes to work. They show care for one another and are friendly and polite. They enjoy their activities and want to do well. They show extremely good levels of concentration and attention in lessons. They show respect for each other's work and effort. Lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils say behaviour is good and bullying of any kind is very rare, especially any physical, emotional or cyber-bullying. Any name-calling is to do with minor arguments or to frustration and is never more serious than 'You're a show off!' Parents and carers believe that behaviour is at least good and few had any concerns. One parent's comments reflected what was observed during the inspection: 'The older children are encouraged to help and take care of the younger ones. They often play together, girls and boys of all ages, with the older ones stopping play and passing the ball to the younger ones so they can have a chance.'

Pupils say they feel very safe at school and discussed possible dangers in a very mature manner. They have a good understanding of the dangers of internet safety and have a good awareness of possible dangers around them. Attendance is above the national average. Persistent absence is extremely rare.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and the members of the governing body consistently communicate high expectations and ambition for the school, its staff and for pupils. The commitment of the staff is high and, through carefully guided professional development, there is a strong sense of teamwork that includes all members. On taking up post, the focus of the headteacher was to ensure that Charlton Horethorne was not only a happy school but an academically successful school as well. His expectations that pupils' achievement should rise have led to a successful focus on more effective teaching strategies through rigorous performance management. All aspects of the school's work have been improved since the previous inspection and the school shows clearly its capacity for further improvement. As one parent wrote in response to the questionnaire, 'We are both very happy with the school and, since the recent staff appointments and the current head, we feel the school has made great progress. We also feel that the prospects for the future are great.' Partnerships with parents and carers are strong.

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The curriculum is good because it provides for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very successfully. It meets their needs, interests and aptitudes well. Staff ensure there is no discrimination and effectively promote pupils' equal opportunities to achieve well by planning activities that effectively ensure all make overall good progress in their academic and personal development. Partnerships with local schools are particularly good. Staff expertise has been shared and those new in post have been well supported so that high expectations have been generated throughout the school. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust and effective. They meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern. All parents and carers who responded said their children are safe at school and well looked after.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

11 May 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Charlton Horethorne Church of England Primary School, Sherborne DT9 4NL



Thank you for making me feel so welcome and answering my questions when I visited you recently. You and your parents and carers are rightly proud of your school and I found that it is a good school.

Here are some of the things I found out about you and your school.

- You make a good start to your learning in the Reception class.
- You all make good progress to reach standards that are now above most pupils nationally in English and mathematics.
- You want to do well and you try hard. We could see that most of you really enjoy your work, and relish the challenges that the teachers give you.
- You behave extremely well. You concentrate in class and look after each other well at playtimes.
- You feel very safe in school and have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves and others safe.
- You are taught well and all your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting.
- The school is led well, and the governors and all the staff work really hard to make your school a successful and happy community.
- The curriculum is great fun and you have lots interesting activities to help you learn.

Even though yours is a good school, I have asked your teachers and the governing body to do a few things to help you to make consistently good progress.

- For teachers to share their good ideas and the kinds of strategies that help you work really well.
- To help you evaluate your own work more frequently so you can see how you can make it even better.

Thank you again for your warm welcome. I wish you well for the future and I hope you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely
Hazel Callaghan

LeadInspector

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