

Horsley Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115685
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	379123
Inspection dates	31 January–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	John Eadie

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	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Rowan
Headteacher	Martin Fry
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Eadie

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited 15 lessons and observed five teachers. He spent more than half of the available time observing teaching and learning. He met informally with parents and carers at the start of an inspection day and had meetings with pupils, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's website in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies, particularly those relevant to keeping pupils safe, and data giving evidence of the progress that pupils are making. Questionnaires returned by 58 parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by 54 pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 10 staff.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The very large majority of the pupils are White British and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. Most of these have specific learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. More pupils than usual join after the normal starting point, in year groups right up to and including Year 6. Government floor standards were met in 2011. The school has met the requirements for the Bristol Standard for provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and has won the Artsmark Gold award.

The school provides accommodation for the village playgroup on one afternoon each week but this is managed privately and was not part of this inspection.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has improved well since its last inspection and the issues from then have been addressed very successfully.
- Pupils make good progress through the school and their attainment is significantly higher than average in English and mathematics by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Progress in reading is outstanding in all year groups. While progress is good overall in writing and mathematics, it is more variable in mathematics. Excellent short-term targets for next steps in learning are used in writing, which pupils say help them to improve their work, but there is nothing similar in mathematics.
- Pupils' good progress is due to consistently good teaching and an outstanding and engaging range of curriculum opportunities.
- Although teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular and helpful, it does not often refer to their short-term targets and pupils are not given time to respond to teachers' marking often enough.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the good provision.
- Pupils behave well and are caring, considerate and polite. They are kept safe and parents and carers recognise this saying such things as, 'My child feels safe and secure and this enables him to be an enquiring, independent learner.'
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, making particularly strenuous efforts to ensure pupils' awareness of a range of cultures.
- The headteacher provides clear direction for the school and is supported well by the deputy headteacher, all staff and members of the governing body in his determination to provide the best possible opportunities for the pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that pupils are set targets for their next steps in learning, closely matched to individual needs and abilities, that will enable pupils to know exactly what they need to learn next
 - using pupils' targets in lessons and marking, so that pupils can check on

the success of their own learning.

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by ensuring that, when marking pupils' work, teachers refer to pupils' targets to highlight the next steps in learning and allow pupils time to respond to comments.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire rightly regard their children as making good progress. Pupils' attainment is significantly higher than average in English and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6. Lessons are typified by pupils' enthusiastic learning and application. Much of this is due to the excellent range of learning opportunities and their relevance to pupils' own experiences. For instance, in an English lesson, pupils were enthused by a range of photographs for them to select when planning a flashback in their story. Similarly, when looking at the areas of rectangles, pupils were excited at the prospect of working out floor areas of houses from real plans. In such contexts, good and in some cases outstanding progress resulted.

The success of the school's provision for teaching phonics (linking sounds and letters) is seen in pupils' high attainment in reading at the end of Years 2 and 6 and through the school. This provision is particularly effective in the Reception class, where children were observed enthusiastically practising to blend sounds. Pupils read confidently and with understanding. The school has been successful in accelerating pupils' progress in writing although attainment in writing, while still above average, is still a little way behind that in reading. Work has also started to raise attainment in mathematics. Pupils through the school now have well-developed number skills, but they are not as confident as in writing at knowing how to improve their work. This is because the targets set for their next steps in learning are not precisely matched to their needs and abilities. Although good overall, pupils' progress in mathematics is variable.

Children join the school with levels of skills and knowledge generally in line with the expectations for their age, though they are weaker in some areas of communication and language and their calculation skills. This is a change from the last inspection, when children were described as having levels of skills and knowledge above those expected. They make good progress in the Reception class and join Year 1 with attainment that is a little above average.

Although girls did not perform as well as boys in the assessments in Year 6 last year, particularly in mathematics, this reflected the abilities of the pupils in that year group. No significant difference was noted in performance between boys and girls during the inspection. Disabled pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the careful provision made for them and the support in lessons, particularly from teaching assistants. The very small number of disabled pupils make particularly good progress as a result of the very close links the school has forged with a range of external agencies. Their expertise has been used well in planning for these pupils' learning and providing them with

appropriate resources.

Quality of teaching

There are a number of strengths in the quality of teaching which is consistently good with instances of outstanding practice. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire regard their children as being taught well. Pupils say that their lessons are interesting and involving and that they enjoy them. Much of the reason for this is that the planned curriculum is outstanding, with a number of memorable experiences built in. Parents and carers noted this, saying such things as, 'We are constantly impressed by the wealth of opportunities and experiences that children have at school, including trips, visits, topics etc, all designed to enrich their learning. Lessons are always made interesting and stimulating.'

Teachers are particularly good at advancing pupils' learning by skilful use of questioning, for instance by asking pupils what they think about a particular aspect of the lesson. This encouragement of dialogue enables pupils to put their thinking into words, which embeds and extends learning well. Lessons are planned to provide plenty of challenge. For example, in one mathematics lesson, there were activities planned at six ability levels, each designed well to stretch the pupils' understanding and meet their particular needs. Tasks for the more able are particularly challenging and are reflected in the high proportion of pupils working at above expected levels for their age.

Teaching makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a consistency in the application of the behaviour policy and a clear sense of right and wrong is inculcated. There are moments of awe and wonder stimulated by the activities provided and pupils are made keenly aware of their place in this world and their responsibilities towards it.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour observed during the inspection was consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils said that this was typical, although they also commented that learning is sometimes disrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour. The views of parents and carers were similar, with one expressing the comments of several in saying, 'The children are very caring, confident and polite.' Playtimes are happy events, with instances when pupils are left out being rare. Boys and girls and older and younger pupils play happily together, expending a great deal of energy. Just occasionally the play becomes a bit too boisterous, with pupils forgetting the needs of others, though there are good spaces to which those who feel the need for peace and quiet can escape.

Pupils say that they feel safe and all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children feel safe in school. A very few expressed concerns regarding bullying, but an equal number said that they had experienced minor incidents which had been dealt with 'effectively and efficiently'. Pupils said that they feel safe from all forms of bullying, and that the incidents that do occur are minor and, 'Teachers are very good at handling it promptly.'

Leadership and management

The headteacher is ably supported by all staff in his desire to move the school forward. All agreed in the staff questionnaire that they are involved in the development of the school. The governing body also offers able support and good levels of challenge, a notable recent development being the broadening of the remit of one of its committees to focus on standards. Staff said that provision for their continuing professional development is good, addressing well their particular needs and the changing needs of the pupils.

The curriculum is outstanding because of particular strength in the provision for the creative curriculum (recognised in the Artsmark Gold award) which enhances learning in other subjects. The high quality of artwork around the school is testament to the provision. Pupils, parents and carers, grandparents and members of the local community enjoy greatly many dramatic performances in the newly created space in the adjacent church. This space was developed as a result of the hard work of the headteacher and members of the governing body in negotiations with the church. Excellent provision has been made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Recognising the limited cultural diversity in the area, the school has made considerable efforts to widen pupils' understanding. For example, links have been established with schools in other countries, including India, and this plays a significant part in the planned curriculum. There are also good links with a school in a more culturally diverse area not far away, which have resulted in exchanges that have broadened pupils' awareness.

Equality of opportunity is high on the agenda, as evidenced in the inclusive nature of the school. The attitudes of leaders have had a positive impact on pupils; everyone makes strenuous efforts to ensure that all, whatever their differences, are included and made to feel valued in the school. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet requirements, and the safety of the pupils has a high priority.

The improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the environment for learning and the improvements in writing and latterly mathematics, alongside the very clear shared commitment to continued improvement, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.



2 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Horsley Church of England Primary School, Stroud GL6 0PU

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly to your school when I visited recently. I really enjoyed talking to many of you especially as you were so interesting and keen to tell me all about your school. I am not surprised that you are so happy at school - it is a good school.

These are the best things I found about your school.

- You are making good progress in all classes because you are being taught well. You reach high standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave in Year 6.
- The progress you make in reading is excellent.
- Your lessons are interesting and often exciting, because your headteacher and teachers have created a really interesting curriculum for you.
- You behave well and were very polite.
- You told me that you feel safe in school and that the occasional minor incidents of bullying are dealt with well.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have good plans to make your school even better – they want it to be outstanding!

There are two things I have suggested could be improved.

- You have super targets to help you know what you need to learn next in writing, but the ones you have in mathematics are not nearly as helpful. I have suggested that the school develops similar targets for you in mathematics and that teachers use these in lessons to help you see how to improve your work.
- Teachers do not always mention how well you are doing towards these targets when they mark your work or give you time to read and respond to their marking.

You can help by continuing to work hard and asking your teachers how you can improve your work.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie
Lead inspector

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