

Charter Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126292
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360038
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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 of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicholas Golledge
Headteacher	Sarah Flack
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons or parts of lessons and observed 11 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and some Year 6 pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils' work in literacy and mathematics, curricular planning, assessment and tracking information for each year group and the school's procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. Inspectors also considered 100 questionnaires that were received from parents and carers as well as those returned by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of strategies to improve attainment, particularly in writing, across the school.
- How well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those in the Charter Rose Centre, make progress in comparison to their peers.
- The effectiveness of the school's assessment systems and how well information is used to set targets which challenge and support the school and pupils appropriately.
- The success of strategies used by the school to ensure pupils consistently know and understand how to improve their work.
- The rigour of monitoring undertaken by senior leaders, particularly in identifying and acting on weaknesses in teaching and learning, in order to raise attainment.

Information about the school

Charter is an average-size primary school. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils in the mainstream school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is high, as is the percentage who have a statement of special educational needs. The main areas of need are autism, specific and moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia and speech language and communication. In addition, the Charter Rose Centre provides specialist help for 15 pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder. These pupils are integrated into some whole-school activities depending on their level of need. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class and a joint Reception and Year 1 class.

The school has a number of awards including Healthy School Status and the Silver Artsmark. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher all took up their positions just under two years ago.

There is an after-school club, a pre-school and a newly-opened children's centre on site, none of which are managed by the governing body.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It provides a sound education for its pupils and is improving rapidly. As a result of the hard work of the senior leadership team over the last two years, areas of weakness have been correctly identified and steps taken to address them. As a consequence, such actions are having a positive impact and show their drive and ambition for the school and the commitment of the whole staff to improvement. One teacher summed this up by saying, 'We're really all working together as a team now.' The school's self-evaluation is accurate and rightly identifies where further improvement is needed. This, combined with much improved teaching and academic outcomes for pupils, the rigorous monitoring of the work of the school and the embedded ambition for improvement, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Progress has improved over the last two years and is now satisfactory. As a result, attainment is broadly average and improving. The school has successfully implemented a range of strategies to improve attainment in mathematics. The introduction of numeracy passports, enabling pupils to 'travel round the world' after mastering various basic skills, makes learning interesting and exciting for pupils. Good opportunities to consolidate these skills by applying them to problem solving or investigations re-enforces their learning effectively. Actions taken to improve attainment in writing are also proving to be effective. This was most evident in Years 5 and 6 where pupils are making particularly good progress. Across the school writing content has improved considerably with pupils using a wide range of interesting vocabulary and imagery. However, spelling and, to a lesser extent, punctuation are still weaknesses. The school has introduced new schemes for teaching these and although they are starting to have an impact they are not yet fully embedded. ♦

Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior leadership team means that areas of weakness have been appropriately identified and actions taken to bring about improvement. Lesson observations are thorough and monitoring records show clearly how teaching and learning have improved over the eighteen months. This was confirmed by the inspection. Teaching and learning across Reception and Years 5 and 6 are consistently good, but this is not the case across the whole school where the quality is more variable. As a result, progress made by pupils in lessons is sometimes patchy.

Senior leaders have recently reviewed and adapted school assessment systems to enable teachers to more easily and quickly identify any pupils whose learning is giving rise for concern. This means that additional support is provided where necessary before concerns become major problems. Targets set are appropriate and well matched to the needs of the pupils. Marking and day-to-day assessment are satisfactory. They are good in Years 5 and 6. Here, marking tells pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work and pupils are encouraged to respond to teachers' comments to show they understand.

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However, this good marking is not consistent across the school. Comments made are occasionally unclear and not always made in child-friendly language which means pupils do not always realise what they need to do to move forward.

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and respond enthusiastically in lessons. They feel safe and confident that teachers will help them should any incidents occur which worry them. They make a good contribution to the school, local and international communities through participation in a range of events and through their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. The curriculum is lively and interesting and pupils benefit from a good range of visits and visitors. The school cares well for its pupils and provides good support for them.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, particularly in writing, by ensuring all new strategies, particularly those for spelling and punctuation, are embedded and carefully monitored for impact.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to being more consistently good by
 - ensuring pupils are challenged appropriately
 - ensuring all teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve
 - making sure pupils have access to resources which will motivate them and promote their interest in the tasks set.
- Ensure the school's marking policy is consistently applied so that all pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils say they enjoy school and they generally listen well in lessons. They work well together in small groups or pairs sharing ideas or solving problems. This was particularly evident in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. They were analysing a poem by Rudyard Kipling and eagerly tackling the challenge of deciphering some unusual vocabulary. Pupils have a good understanding of what living a healthy lifestyle entails and this is reflected in the Healthy School Status. They participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities. They are thoughtful and reflective, have a strong sense of right and wrong and look after each other well.

Pupils' writing throughout the school has greatly improved, particularly that in Years 5 and 6. This is because pupils are encouraged to discuss and plan rigorously and are very interested in tasks given to them. A challenge to re-write the three witches spell from Macbeth provided some highly original and blood-curdling results! Progress in mathematics, too, shows marked improvement, and pupils are confident in applying the knowledge and skills they have gained. Pupils make good progress when tasks are interesting and well explained. However, this is not always the case. In a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, pupils only made satisfactory progress in creating a script for a strip cartoon. This was because some had rather limited knowledge of the features of

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comic strip writing and examples of comics were not made available to them. As a result, pupils were not particularly excited or motivated by the task and progress made was rather laboured. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Those who attend the Charter Rose Centre make good progress in their learning and personal development against their very specific targets, particularly when they are taught in the centre. Pupils are competent at using information and communication technology (ICT). This, together with their rapidly improving academic progress and personal development, ensures they are prepared appropriately for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In all lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory and much was better. In most classes, tasks are interesting and pupils have appropriate opportunities to share ideas with each other or in small groups. This sustains their interest and increases the pace of their work. Pupils are beginning to develop independence through opportunities to check and assess their own work. Since the previous inspection, assessment systems have been much improved and there is more information available as to how much progress pupils are making. Most teachers are using this information effectively to ensure that pupils are adequately challenged in lessons and in setting targets for improvement over time. However, in a few lessons teachers do not have high enough

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expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Teaching assistants are generally well deployed and provide good support for the pupils with whom they are working.

The curriculum is broad and enhanced by a wide range of activities which motivate and interest the pupils. However, as yet, pupils have limited opportunities to suggest themes or activities they would like to pursue. Pupils have ample opportunities to consolidate their basic skills across the curriculum, particularly in English. There are particular strengths in art, and displays are exciting and vibrant and celebrate pupils' achievements well, fully justifying the Silver Artsmark award. The school has established a number of partnerships and links which considerably enhance pupils' experiences. Provision for pupils in the Charter Rose Centre is good. Opportunities for pupils to extend their skills, by integrating them into school activities, are carefully selected according to their level of need and monitored closely to ensure that they are able to cope. Out-of-school clubs are supported very well. These embrace a wide range of topics from cooking to choir as well as a variety of sports.

The care and support for pupils are good. A wide range of links with outside agencies ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties and those facing challenging circumstances receive good support. Pupils joining the school are welcomed and transition into and out of the school is effectively managed to make it as smooth as possible.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

A climate has been created where everyone is committed to improvement. The headteacher is a key strength and, supported by senior leaders and staff, has a very clear vision for the school. This is well focused on improving standards and accelerating pupils' progress. The governing body is informed about the school and understand what it needs to do to improve. At the time of the inspection, governors had ensured that all safeguarding procedures were robust. Staff are trained well in child protection procedures and all adults are fully checked and vetted before they work in school. The school works hard with parents and carers to ensure they are involved in their children's education and take account of their views. For example, an extra parents' consultation evening has been added this year in response to parents' concerns that they received insufficient information about the progress their children were making. Regular newsletters and workshops provide parents and carers with good information. The school ensures that pupils, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, or their ability, are valued and free from discrimination. Equality of opportunity for all pupils is promoted effectively. For example,

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gifted and talented pupils benefit from extension days at the local secondary school. The school has a good understanding of, and participation in, the local, national and international community. Plans to ensure that any gaps in pupils' understanding of the range of cultural, ethnic and cultural diversity in Britain today are well advanced.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are low in relation to those expected for their ages, especially in literacy and mathematical development. Although children enter Year 1 at slightly below expected levels they have made good progress in all areas of learning. Children in both the Reception class and joint Reception and Year 1 class make good progress because the provision is exciting and appeals to their interests. The mystery of 'What's in the suitcase?' meant children's attention was riveted from the time it was found. Outdoor provision reflects the high quality of that inside and children from both classes have free access to it. While children were experimenting with rolling small cars down ramps inside to discover which went furthest, they could experiment on a larger scale outside using drainpipes! 'Learning Journeys' provide good records of children's achievements with observations in all areas of the curriculum and enhanced by photographic evidence. Although next steps are usually identified these do not always identify the strategies to be used to move children on in their learning

Children's welfare and safety are of optimum importance and the care and guidance provided for children are outstanding. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent support and are integrated highly successfully into the learning environment.

The reason for the good progress is effective leadership and management. The leader has analysed and evaluated practice and used the results to identify key areas for

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improvement. This shows a very good knowledge of the needs of young children and identifies how things can be made even better. Her skill in developing the roles of teaching assistants and colleagues means that there is a consistent approach to behaviour management and to effectively promoting children's learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers are pleased with all that the school has to offer, and this was reflected in the comments they made. They are very confident that their children enjoy school and are safe and well cared for. They also express confidence in the leadership and management of the school. Most are happy overall with the experiences their children are receiving. There are a few reservations, mainly concerning communication about their children's progress and how much progress their children are making. A very small minority question whether parents' and carers' ideas or suggestions are acted upon. The school has recognised such concerns and arranged for an additional parents' consultation evening to be held this term. The inspection found that pupils are making satisfactory progress. ♦ Some parents are concerned that poor behaviour is not managed appropriately. Inspectors found that, although there are some pupils who have challenging behaviour, this is managed well and does not disrupt lessons.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Charter Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	50	46	46	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	43	43	49	49	7	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	21	66	66	11	11	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	26	62	62	7	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	29	63	63	6	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	29	59	59	8	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	22	70	70	5	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	18	68	68	7	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	26	62	62	7	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	17	71	71	9	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	17	68	68	12	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	22	69	69	5	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	33	58	58	5	5	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charter Primary School, Chippenham SN15 3EA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You were really polite and friendly and helped us to learn a lot about what you do and what you enjoy. Your school gives you a satisfactory education and is getting better.

What we found about your school

- It is a friendly and happy place in which to work and play.
- You enjoy coming to school and behave well.
- Children in Reception get a good start to their education.
- You achieve the standards you should in English, mathematics and science.
- You show a good understanding of how to live healthily and how to stay safe.
- You benefit from a wide range of after-school clubs as well as some interesting visits and visitors.
- Your headteacher and teachers are working hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now

- We would like to see you do better with your writing. You can help by particularly working on your spelling and punctuation skills.
- We have asked the teachers to try and set you tasks which really interest and excite you. We want them to give you really demanding tasks to complete and have high expectations of how well you can do. I am sure you will rise to the challenge!
- We have asked teachers to mark your work and make comments that you can understand easily so that you really know what you must do to improve your work. If you don't understand what your teacher's comments means don't be afraid to ask.

My very best wishes for the future I hope you continue to enjoy your schooling at Charter Primary.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard

Lead inspector

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