

Chartham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118357
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	379603
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Valerie Elvidge
Headteacher	Dean Jones
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 January 2009
School address	Shalmsford Street Chartham Canterbury CT4 7QN
Telephone number	01227 738225
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. In total, 27 lessons/part lessons were observed. Thirteen teachers were seen teaching, along with teaching assistants. Meetings were held with the staff and members of the governing body. Parents' and carers' views were evaluated based on the 93 questionnaires received. Discussions were held with pupils in addition to analysis of their questionnaires. Staff returned 24 questionnaires. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the improvement plans, policies, samples of pupils' work and assessment information. Child protection information was scrutinised.

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

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing, especially for those who are most able.
- The impact of leadership initiatives to help pupils to do better.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage to raise attainment further in the school as a whole.
- The impact of leaders' self-evaluation and actions to improve teaching, learning and behaviour and the link with the school's capacity to improve.

Information about the school

Chartham is a larger-than-average primary school. Almost all pupils come from the area immediately surrounding the school. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Reception classes. Thereafter, some classes have a mix of two age-groups. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few pupils are from Asian or Black African heritages. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average.

The headteacher joined the school in January 2011. In the last year, a high proportion of new teachers have joined the school. The school has a breakfast and after-school club that is managed by the governing body. There is an onsite Nursery, which was not part of this inspection. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status.

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

Chartham is a satisfactory school that is improving quickly. As one governor explained, 'A strong senior leadership team is working together. Its vision and enthusiasm are up-beat.' The inspection findings endorse that view. In particular, the work of the new headteacher is driving improvements quickly and effectively; he is supported well by the senior leadership team.

The partnership with parents and carers has strengthened considerably in recent times. Responses from parents and carers demonstrate their confidence in the school. The words of one parent sum up the views of many when commenting, 'The school is much more relaxed, informative and supportive with an even friendlier atmosphere than before. Nothing is ever too much trouble for the teachers or their assistants who give up much of their own time.'

Pupils agree that this is a happy school, where they are safe. Good safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils are protected. Pupils reach average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 and achieve satisfactorily. The school's 'Energy Zone' helps pupils to eat healthily. The 'Green Team' encourages pupils to grow and cook fresh vegetables and fruits. There is an extensive range and high take-up of sports. The school deserves the Healthy Schools award.

In early 2011, when the headteacher joined the school, a review of the school identified that there was much to do. Following the last inspection, a significant amount of teaching and learning had become inadequate. The quality of pupils' behaviour had also deteriorated, due to a very small number of pupils with complex needs having challenging behaviour and their needs not being met fully. As a result, that led to high levels of exclusion. That reflected inadequate provision, especially for pupils with complex behavioural difficulties. Inspectors are pleased to confirm that firm action has been taken to resolve all of those issues and the quality of provision has improved. Teaching and learning are now securely satisfactory and pupils' behaviour is good.

The quality of care, guidance and support given to pupils is found to be good overall and is especially evident in the action taken to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is working to close the gap between the achievement of different groups in a concerted and effective way, although there is still more to do to ensure that the most-able do even better.

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Leaders' self-evaluation is good. Very clear plans are in place to address areas of weakness. All leaders share the same vision. Everyone is working to improve the quality of teaching and learning to become good in the future. Already, a focused emphasis on improving reading, writing and mathematics is underway, although there is still more to do to lift achievement from satisfactory to good, especially in writing and mathematics. The Early Years Foundation Stage is already good because it gives children a strong start to school. Attendance is good. Taking all of the developments made in the last year, the school shows a good capacity to sustain improvement.

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?

- Improve pupils' progress and achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that it is good by December 2012, through:
 - making sure that all lessons are challenging for the most-able learners
 - providing more time for pupils to write at length and edit and improve their written work
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills for real-life problem solving and to explain the different ways that problems can be calculated.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, so that it is at least good by May 2012, through:
 - making sure that planning identifies specific targets for different ability groups
 - ensuring that teachers' marking provides pupils with clear and consistent guidance about how to improve and reach their targets
 - making sure that pupils do not spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to teachers, so as to increase time for independent learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy school. They play together well and are friendly, polite and courteous, showing good manners. They respond quickly to teachers' expectations and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Pupils run a tuck shop which supports Fair Trade and take an active part in the community. They do well in their moral and social development and enjoy learning about different religions and cultures, but the quality of their understanding about the diverse world around them is no better than satisfactory; this is also the case for their spiritual development.

As pupils move through the school, they learn the skills needed for the future in a steady way. In mathematics, data shows satisfactory progress as pupils are catching up with past areas of underachievement well, although the lessons seen indicated that

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some more-able pupils are not being challenged enough to ensure that they make good progress. For example, in Years 1 and 2, work on shape showed too much reinforcement of learning when counting the sides of different flat shapes, whereas the additional challenge of exploring shapes in three dimensions was missing. In Years 3 and 4, all pupils made at least steady progress when explaining how addition calculations can be reversed so as to become subtraction calculations, but the most-able did not have a sufficiently challenging extension activity. In several lessons, opportunities were not seized upon to help pupils think hard and then explain how to solve problems using different calculations and techniques.

Pupils read for a wide range of different purposes; the range of new books and improved reading areas are making reading more enjoyable. There is a concerted focus on improving handwriting. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their ideas for writing well, such as in the good Year 5 and 6 lessons about the story of *Oliver Twist*, which helped pupils to explore the characters’ feelings and personality before writing. Work in books shows that pupils are now learning how to edit and improve their writing, but this is not done consistently well. Added to that, the targets given to pupils about how they might improve are not precise enough.

Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress over time, but the work in the last year has been good. That is a result of improved leadership, better identification of needs and focused support.

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	3
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	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage pupils’ behaviour well and have very positive relationships with pupils. They use a wide range of resources and are beginning to make interesting links between subjects. There is, however, inconsistency in the quality of the way that they organise work for different ability groups. The level of challenge comes more often from teachers’ confidence and the amount of risk that they want to take, rather than through specific planning. Sometimes, pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to teachers, which limits the time available for independent and group learning. More-able pupils commented to inspectors that some of the work is easy. As one said, ‘In area and volume we need to do harder calculations’, while another asked for more difficult algebra. Inspectors found that the use of real-life problem solving is not consistently well developed. There are, however, pockets of good practices, such as seen in Years 5 and 6, when pupils acted as shopkeepers and customers to help them to work out 50% off the items on sale.

Very occasionally, teaching and learning are outstanding and this is when the challenge, especially through questioning, helps pupils to explain their thinking and problem-solving strategies very effectively. However, pupils are not explaining their thinking, especially in mathematics, consistently well. Nonetheless, questioning is sometimes good, for example, in Year 1 when pupils had to explain about why two shoes weighed the same, although they looked very different. The quality of marking is sometimes good and this helps pupils to know how to improve their skills, but the quality is variable overall.

Changes to the curriculum, including the new ‘writing groups’, are helping to provide additional challenges for the most-able, although there is more to do to embed these initiatives. The time allocated to writing is often too limited because of the way that daily timetables are organised.

The quality of care ensures that the school has a welcoming ethos. Recent changes have provided an after-school club and this, together with the breakfast club, means that pupils benefit from good care throughout the day. Changes to procedures at the beginning of the school day have had a huge impact on the calm start of the day. Increasing involvement with parents and carers has resulted in pupils’ individual needs being met better. Staff have been trained to understand the needs of those with very specific behaviour difficulties, such as autistic spectrum conditions, and this is having a positive impact on the support and guidance provided. In the last 18 months, exclusions have fallen from 30 to only one in recent times. Emotional health is supported well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels have been working effectively to ensure that equal opportunities are developed securely. Any form of discrimination is tackled robustly, either through immediate action, or longer-term development planning. As a result, the achievement of pupils is accelerating well. Because leaders have eradicated inadequate teaching, the inclusion of pupils is now satisfactory. As a result of much-improved assessment procedures and very clear vision, specific groups of pupils are subject to individual support and targeted external help. That is beginning to ensure that they have access to the help that they need to reach their full potential. For example, those who are working at a very high level (Level 6) work with GCSE specialist teachers in mathematics. Even so, there is still more to do to ensure that daily work in school is sufficiently challenging. Leaders at all levels are now focused on the needs of the most-able pupils.

Since the last inspection, the governing body has been restructured, with more meetings and clearer roles. That, when linked with its increased understanding about data and more focused evaluations of the work of the daily life of the school, is helping it to be more effective. For example, it asks challenging questions and plays a strategic part in planning improvements. The governing body's expectations have been raised. A particular strength is its recent analysis of writing in the school, which clearly identifies that pupils need to write more frequently. Members of the governing body take an active part in the daily life of the school.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. Training is well developed and there is a secure link between daily systems and the curriculum. As a result, staff and pupils know about how to promote safety and how to get help if this is needed. Consequently, as case study evidence shows, all pupils, including the most-able, are well protected. Risk assessments are generally good, but some policies and procedures need updating and this is a factor in why this element of the school's work is not yet outstanding.

The school is focused securely on promoting community cohesion. The good links with parents and carers are having a positive impact on this. An audit has been carried out, so that clear development plans are in place to raise awareness of life in the United Kingdom and beyond. Particular strengths include the garden project with parents and carers, the local community, and an agricultural college. Pupils are curious about the world and some good work includes projects on human rights linked to work about Soweto. However, overall, pupils' multicultural awareness is currently no better than satisfactory.

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Leaders ensure that children settle in quickly and gain good personal and social skills which enable children to be ready for more-formal learning. Children’s attainment when they join the Reception classes is at the expected level overall, although children’s skills in language and communication are not as strong as other areas of the curriculum. Leaders and staff have created a stimulating learning environment, which enables children to explore things for themselves and to engage in formal learning activities with adults. Investigation and questioning are high profile. That helps young children to think for themselves and extend their speaking skills. For example, the dark and science areas help children to think in creative and scientific ways and these areas promote cooperation and more advanced play activities.

As a result of good teaching and learning, by the end of the Reception Year, children have made good progress, so that an increasing proportion reach the levels expected for their age, while increasing proportions attain higher levels. That bodes well for the future in the school’s drive to raise attainment to be above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. For example, children were observed enjoying counting in many different activities. Also, they delighted in making mini-books, but these lacked that extra intervention to raise skills to an even higher level of attainment. There is a lack of dressing-up clothes and such things as musical instruments to aid further creativity and language development.

There are good systems and procedures in place for welfare and being safe, which include very clear risk assessments. Children are helped to make healthy choices in

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eating and they enjoy physical challenges. Nonetheless, that is not yet outstanding, as activities are not always challenging enough for the most-able. For example, those who are ready for riding bicycles are still doing too much on tricycles. Opportunities are missed sometimes to seize the moment to extend children’s learning and development in their writing skills further.

Leaders have a very secure knowledge of how children learn. They take an active part in local authority moderations in other schools. Suitable development plans are in place to improve the writing and the outdoor learning areas. Leadership is not yet outstanding, as there is still more to do to sharpen up self-evaluation, so that data about attainment levels feed seamlessly into improvement planning.

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

An above-average proportion of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. There were many comments which showed immense regard for the work of the new headteacher and the staff. One said ‘The school has really encouraged my child’s individuality’, while another commented, ‘The headmaster is very keen to have feedback from parents and always has time for us.’ Inspectors confirm that achievement is satisfactory and accelerating well. A few parents and carers feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour to ensure that their children are well prepared for the future. Inspectors confirm that there has been a major turn-around in improving the management of pupils’ behaviour because of good relationships, high expectations and effective support for those who need additional help. In the school as a whole, behaviour is good. Inspectors found that pupils are suitably prepared for their future lives.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chartham 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 93 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 286 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	67	28	30	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	66	30	32	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	35	38	51	55	6	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	39	45	48	9	10	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	32	34	53	57	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	34	37	46	49	8	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	46	40	43	2	2	1	1
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)	31	33	44	47	12	13	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	34	37	46	49	9	10	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	25	51	55	12	13	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	25	57	61	4	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	34	37	46	49	5	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	48	52	41	44	2	2	1	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chartham Primary School, Canterbury CT4 7QN

Thank you so much for talking to us about your school and giving us guided tours. We have found that you go to a satisfactory school. Like you, we agree that the school is a happy and caring place for you to be. You agree also that you feel safe. Well done for behaving well and trying hard to be fit and healthy; please keep this up! Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good or even better. You try hard and are keen to do well. Currently, you make steady progress in your learning, but this is improving well because the adults are working hard to help you to do even better. You benefit from having good care and support. The close links with your parents and carers aid this.

Your new headteacher is working very hard to improve the school and all of the teachers and governing body are keen to help him. With this in mind, we have asked them to do the following important things.

- Improve your learning and achievement, particularly in mathematics and writing. We think also that those of you who find learning easy need more challenging things to do, and you agree.
- Make more lessons good or even better, especially making sure that you do not have to sit listening to your teachers for too long and by ensuring that you know exactly how to improve your learning quickly.

You can help a great deal by working on the suggestions that teachers give you to improve your work and by asking if you are not sure what to do or if work is too hard or too easy. Please continue to keep up your good attendance.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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