



Chackmore Church of England School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110410
LEA Buckinghamshire LEA
Inspection number 278426
Inspection dates 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005
Reporting inspector Barbara Atcheson AI

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

Type of school	First	School address	Main Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Chackmore
Age range of pupils	5 to 9		Buckingham, Buckinghamshire MK18 5JE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01280812291
Number on roll	58	Fax number	01280812291
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Paul Bell
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs S Hughes

Age group 5 to 9	Inspection dates 3 October 2005 - 4 October 2005	Inspection number 278426
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over a period of two days.

Description of the school

Chackmore Church of England School is a first school on the rural edge of Buckingham. It is the partner school to St James, Akeley. There is one headteacher but each school has a separate budget and a separate governing body until 2006 when it is proposed that the two will merge to become a full primary school. This year's foundation stage is based at St James in readiness for the transition. Chackmore currently has 59 pupils in Years 1-4. In the catchment area most of the housing is privately owned. Attainment of children on entry is in line with similar schools and above average. No children have free school meals. The school is a member of the PE specialist group linked to Buckingham School and belongs to the Royal Latin Specialist Science group of schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school's judgement that its effectiveness is good is too modest. This is a very effective school. It has a good track record of high standards underpinned by outstanding care and excellent provision for the pupils' all round development. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent and includes examples of outstanding practice. However, the quality of marking lacks consistency and does not always tell the pupils how to improve their work. Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and senior staff provide a clear sense of direction for the work of the school and evaluate its performance with rigour. The views of parents and pupils are sought regularly and incorporated in the careful plans that outline the programme for school improvement. The strength of school leadership and the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation are reflected in the significant improvement in the school's fortunes in recent years. The decline that was apparent at the last inspection has been halted. The quality of teaching has improved and standards have risen. All of the issues from the last report have been successfully addressed. This is a school which knows its strengths and weaknesses and that, combined with the vision and drive of its senior management, makes it well placed for further improvement. The school offers good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

* Ensure marking increases pupils' knowledge of their own learning and what they can do to improve* Enrich the curriculum by increasing the links made between subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Since the last inspection there has been substantial improvement in pupils' achievements and the standards they attain in the national tests. When they enter school in Year 1 most pupils have exceeded the goals expected of five year olds. They continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that by the time they take the national tests for seven year olds their results in these subjects are well above average and compare favourably with the results of similar schools. Pupils of all abilities are doing very well. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged and achieve highly. Pupils with learning disabilities are very well supported and make very good progress towards their targets. This pattern of successful achievement continues in Years 3 and 4. By the time they leave school the vast majority of pupils are thoroughly prepared for the next stage of education. A significant number of more able pupils are already working at the levels expected of the average eleven-year-old. The provisional results for the national tests of 2005 suggest, at first glance, a slight dip in the overall results achieved in Year 2. As a result of the well organized, detailed tracking of individual pupil performance the school is able to provide convincing evidence that explains this. An increase in the proportion of pupils with special needs who took the tests in 2005 has led to a slight fall in the overall figures for the year

group. However, the detailed assessment information on each child provided by the school shows clearly that all had made at least good progress from their different starting points in Year 1.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development is outstanding and supports the high achievement of all pupils. Pupils really enjoy their lessons. Teachers encourage them to take an active part in their learning which they say is 'exciting'. They are so enthusiastic that they 'work so hard they can hardly walk by the time it is Friday'. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are confident, mature and responsible, showing respect and appreciation for others and the environment. Attendance is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have a well developed sense of community through the responsibilities they are given in school council. The exhilarating atmosphere of the Harvest Festival, shared with villagers and family typifies the leading part that the school and its pupils play in the wider community. Pupils say that through assembly they 'learn to respect others and not to tease those who are different'. Pupils' personal development is very good and is the core of the life of the school. They are very aware of the need to be healthy and to stay safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The improved teaching that has developed since the last inspection has had a significant impact on the pupils' attitudes and approaches to learning. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent in nearly all respects and is exemplary in significant areas. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Teachers make learning exciting so that pupils become totally absorbed in their learning and take an active part in lessons. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach. Assessment and tracking procedures are rigorous and underpin the thorough way in which pupils' individual learning needs are met. Out of the six lessons observed, the three outstanding lessons moved at a scintillating pace, had a high degree of challenge and encouraged pupils to think creatively. Gifted and talented pupils are fully extended as they strive to reach the high degree of accuracy demanded by their teachers. Those needing extra support are also well taught and make very good progress, often as a result of the effective use of teaching assistants who make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning. Although all teachers mark the pupils' work regularly, their approaches are inconsistent. Teachers' notes and comments do not always give the pupils a clear idea of how to improve their work or extend their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is good. Provision for physical education, music and drama is much better now that the school has regained full use of its hall. The curriculum is appropriately varied to meet the needs of all pupils and is reviewed regularly to reflect the changing profile of the school. There are one or two examples of teachers reinforcing pupils' learning by establishing links between the subjects of the National Curriculum. For instance, a Year 2 topic on farming linked science and geography in a helpful way. Generally, however links between subjects are under-developed and this is an area for improvement that would further enrich the curriculum still further. A wide range of clubs and extra curricular activities have a positive influence on the pupils' learning. A well planned programme of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum and adds enjoyment to pupils' learning. There is an effective personal, health and social education programme which successfully promotes positive attitudes, helps pupils to understand that they belong to a community and ensures that pupils keep healthy and stay safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The well-organised care and welfare of the pupils is an outstanding feature of the school's provision. The school has a strong commitment to knowing and supporting all pupils. As a result pupils develop a confidence that is evident throughout the school. Arrangements for child protection ensure that all adults are aware of the needs of vulnerable children. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and special measures are taken to care for any vulnerable pupils. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle through science, assemblies and a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The previous inspection raised a number of significant issues for the school to address. These have been fully dealt with. The drive and resolve of the headteacher and her staff team have improved teaching and raised standards successfully. The headteacher is an excellent role model for staff and pupils and the success enjoyed by the school demonstrates that she has successfully communicated her vision and aspirations to the entire school community. The appointment of two part-time assistant headteachers, who themselves are excellent practitioners, has strengthened the leadership and management considerably in readiness for the school's proposed amalgamation with its partner school in 2006. There is a strong thrust towards continuous improvement. A good example is the way in which the rigorous tracking system checks how pupils are learning and alerts teachers to the need to accelerate or support the learning of those in need so that all achieve their full potential. Monitoring and evaluation is well developed and used throughout the school. Everyone, including parents, pupils and

governors feel involved and valued in the decision making process. The school improvement plan is understood by everyone and forms the basis for whole school performance management. This is a key factor in the high quality of teaching and standards found in the school. Governors are well informed. They evaluate their own effectiveness and play a full part in the strategic development of the school. They are actively and productively involved in the life of the school and ensure that all legal requirements are met.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I should like to thank you all for being so kind, polite and helpful on my recent visit. You will be pleased to know that I found that you have an excellent school. You clearly enjoy being at school and your behaviour is excellent. You are very friendly towards each other and your teachers. You all work hard because lessons are exciting and as a result you are all doing very well. You also have a very good school council who organise interesting events. Your teachers care very well for you and help you to be safe and healthy.

There are a couple of things that the school needs to do to improve. The teachers need to mark your work so that you can understand more about your own learning and what you can do to make it better. They can also make what you learn even more interesting by making links between subjects. For example you could learn about RE through art and history, and through literacy. Your headteacher, Mrs Hughes, runs the school very well. She knows each one of you and listens to how you think the school could be better. She works hard to make the changes happen.

Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to a very good school. I really enjoyed your Harvest Festival. I heard every word of the songs that you sang so beautifully and I know that the people from the village and your families enjoyed it too. Thank you again for making me so welcome at your school.