



Chesham Bois Church of England Combined School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110425
LEA Buckinghamshire LEA
Inspection number 278430
Inspection dates 4 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mike Thompson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bois Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Chesham Bois
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Amersham HP6 6DE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01494 726901
Number on roll	216	Fax number	01494 726042
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr A Knight
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr M A Brigden

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Chesham Bois is an average-sized primary school. Most of its pupils are of white British heritage. Their home circumstances are generally favourable, both socially and economically. Fewer pupils than is usual have special educational needs and the number eligible for free school meals is well below average. A new headteacher was appointed in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The school is improving and provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The pupils make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The purposeful leadership of the headteacher gives clear direction for the work of the school. The initiatives which he has implemented since his appointment in 2004 provide a good platform for future improvement. A committed staff team give him good support. Together, they have developed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have devised a clear plan for further improvement. The school has made reasonable progress since its last inspection in March 2000. It has a good capacity to improve in future years and provides satisfactory value for money. Most children enter school with good skills in almost all areas of learning, particularly language and mathematics. They make steady progress as they move through the school, and by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 standards are good in English, mathematics and science. The small number of pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of the guidance and extra help they are given. All the adults provide exceptional levels of care for the pupils. As a result relationships are excellent and pupils make outstanding progress in their personal and social development. They behave very well and work hard in lessons. However, the level of challenge for the more able pupils is not yet consistent in all classes. The school's own accurate evaluation recognises that systems for checking pupils' progress need to be improved. Pupils could then be given a clearer understanding of precisely what they need to do to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve the systems for checking pupils' progress so that clear targets can be set for them to meet.* Make sure that teachers always include activities that challenge and extend the more able pupils in their lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In the reception class there are good systems for checking on the progress of children. This means that the teacher knows exactly how well the children are getting on with their work and can effectively plan what they are to learn next. Teaching is good. As a result children make good progress. The move to Year 1 is effectively managed and children quickly settle in to their new class because the styles of teaching and learning complement each other well. In Years 1 to 6, most pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The best progress is made by the small proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. This is because their needs are carefully assessed, and they are given good quality help to meet the goals set out in their individual education plans. The more able pupils sometimes do not make enough progress because they are not always given challenges matched to their abilities. A strength of the school is the way in which pupils

make good use of their skills in reading, writing and information and communication technology to help them in their work. For instance, Year 6 pupils used computers really well to research a topic about mountains. Their good skills in skimming and scanning text enabled them to quickly locate the information they needed. Standards on entry to the reception class are good. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and at the end of Year 6 they achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science. Targets for the school's performance at the end of Year 6 are realistic and are based on careful consideration of individual pupils' achievements.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' high levels of attendance, very good behaviour and very good attitudes to learning show how well they enjoy school. The excellent relationships between all groups of pupils and between adults and pupils contribute strongly to the smooth running of the school community. Pupils have a good awareness of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle and to keep safe. Year 6 pupils are very clear about how their learning in school has changed their attitudes to healthy eating. The great majority of pupils are confident and have high self-esteem. The inspection fully supports the school's view that its provision in this aspect of its work is outstanding. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils show great respect for the feelings and beliefs of others, and have a very strong sense of right and wrong. The cultural development of pupils is very well underpinned by an excellent range of visits and visitors to school as well as links in subjects such as geography, history, music, art and religious education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The inspection confirms the school's view that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in the reception class and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Lessons are generally well planned and activities successfully interest pupils. Teachers use questions well to check on pupils' understanding. Good quality help from teaching support staff ensures that pupils with specific learning difficulties contribute well during lessons. Most pupils learn at a satisfactory rate. However, more able pupils are not always challenged enough. Discussions with groups of these pupils confirmed this, as they said that they sometimes find the work too easy. The arrangements for checking on pupils' rates of progress need to be improved. The school has recently introduced a computer-based system for monitoring how well pupils are doing. However, this system is not yet fully in place. Consequently, teachers are not able to get detailed information about specific aspects of pupils' learning. This would help them set clear targets for each pupil to achieve and accelerate the pace of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a wide range of activities which excite its pupils. Its curriculum for the youngest children is good and ensures that children are given a secure platform for future learning. A very good feature is the way in which the school links learning in different subjects. For example, a Year 6 lesson about life in Victorian times was used well as a stimulus for writing. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils have clear individual education plans which set out precisely what they need to achieve. Adults working with these pupils ensure that the plans are followed closely. The school organises an excellent range of out-of-class activities such as dance, art and various sports clubs. These attract many pupils and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and enjoyment. A rich and well planned programme of visits and visitors adds extra enjoyment and interest to pupils' learning. The school makes good provision for ensuring that its pupils keep healthy and safe. There is an effective personal, social and health education programme. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and understand that they have a useful contribution to make to the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is good at caring for its pupils. Child protection procedures are secure and rigorous. The guidance provided to help pupils improve their work is satisfactory. However, discussions with pupils showed that they do not always have a clear understanding of precisely what they need to do next to make their work even better. The school is a very orderly, calm and friendly community where the great majority of pupils are learning happily. The systems to deal with bullying should it occur are robust and pupils feel safe and confident. Checks on possible risks to pupils' safety are carried out regularly. The school effectively teaches the importance of healthy food and keeping fit. Parents are fully involved in the life of the school and in their children's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges the effectiveness of its leadership to be satisfactory overall, and inspectors agree. The headteacher's leadership is good. He knows the school very well and makes good use of information gathered through his regular monitoring to guide its development effectively. Inspectors agree with the views expressed by pupils and parents that he has transformed the school since his appointment in 2004. Attendance rates have improved and pupils are keen to come to school. The school's partnership with its parents is better and the accessibility and openness of all staff are greatly appreciated by parents. Staff work together very well as a team and there are excellent relationships between all members of the school community. Through these improvements, the headteacher has established a good platform for future

development. However, the impact of these improvements upon the quality of teaching and learning has yet to be seen. In addition, more able pupils are not always challenged enough and information from the assessment of pupils is not used well enough to help all pupils to make better progress. The headteacher has a good staff team, and deploys them effectively. The impact of this deployment particularly benefits pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers monitor their areas of responsibility and provide satisfactory leadership. There is a clear sense of shared purpose to ensure that pupils do well and are fully included in activities. There are satisfactory opportunities for staff training, closely linked to their individual responsibilities and the school's priorities set out in its clear improvement plan. Good use is made of the building and the grounds. Governance is good. Governors carefully monitor the work of the school and are good at holding it to account. They provide useful support for school initiatives and ensure that it meets its legal responsibilities.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	2	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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	Yes
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

Following our visit to your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are: * Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave really well and get on very well with each other * You listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and try very hard in your lessons * When you find work hard, your teachers take care to see that you are given the right sort of help * Your teachers work hard to organise lots of really interesting extra things for you to do * All of the adults in your school make sure that you are safe and are well looked after * Your headteacher has made a big difference to your school.

All of the people who help run your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this we think that the things to do next are: * Improve the ways that teachers check on how well you are doing * Make sure that the work given to you in class always makes you think hard.