



Hartwell Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121977
LEA Northamptonshire
Inspection number 281144
Inspection dates 19 June 2006 to 20 June 2006
Reporting inspector Doris Bell AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Hartwell
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Northampton, Northamptonshire NN7 2HL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01604 862880
Number on roll	202	Fax number	01604 864651
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Andy Robinson
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Jane Clancy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This primary school is smaller than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the children's attainment when they start school. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and all are fluent English speakers. The school had a new headteacher in September 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management ensure that this is an exceptionally effective school. Achievement is excellent because teaching is of the highest quality. Standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Provision, progress and standards are excellent in the Foundation Stage. There are relative weaknesses in reading and whole-school assessment procedures are somewhat cumbersome but the school is already working on improving both of these. Recognising that there is still room for further improvement, the school graded its effectiveness somewhat conservatively as good. It has addressed very well the few issues raised at the last inspection and demonstrates a very strong capacity to continue to improve. It provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further improve pupils' achievement in reading.
- Refine assessment procedures to make it is easier to obtain the required information from them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The pupils' outstanding achievement has resulted in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 being consistently high in English, mathematics and science over several years. Children get off to an excellent start in the Foundation Stage, most exceeding the standards expected for their age by the end of Reception. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2. Relatively speaking, however, English is the weakest of the three subjects in all age groups, and reading has been identified as the greatest area for development. The school has tried a new approach to teaching reading in one year group that has proved successful in raising achievement. It plans to extend this good practice to all year groups very soon.

Examples of high quality writing were observed in several year groups. They are the result of some very astute setting of targets and the close match of work to the pupils' different levels of capability. The school sets ambitious targets that it successfully meets or slightly exceeds. Pupils' progress is meticulously tracked and any gaps in learning are very effectively addressed as they occur. The school has very good strategies that enable all groups of pupils, from the least to the most able, and boys as well as girls, to do as well as they possibly can.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupil's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils thrive on the high levels of challenge and responsibility presented by their schoolwork. Right from Reception, they become confident, independent learners, with superb ability to work with or without adult

intervention. Their excellent skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and their outstanding social skills prepare them exceptionally well for the future. They feel safe and secure, they know how to keep themselves safe, and they are confident that any untoward incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively. Behaviour is usually outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They are very keen to learn and their attendance is good.

Pupils are very aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. This is demonstrated in their considerable sporting achievements, in the high participation rates in sports activities and in their healthy eating habits. Because adults value what they do and act on their suggestions, pupils take their responsibilities, such as being members of the school council, very seriously. They make a good contribution to the wider community through, for example, their work for charity. The school very successfully promotes a genuine sense of wonder in the world, and respect for others and the environment. The school pays very good attention to promoting anti-racist attitudes. Pupils gain a very good understanding of different cultures and of the importance of living in harmony with everyone.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Excellent teaching contributes in very great measure to the pupils' outstanding achievement. High quality planning, built securely on accurate assessments of pupils' prior learning, starts in the Foundation Stage. A particular strength in teaching, it very successfully ensures that work challenges all groups of pupils effectively. Links between subjects are very carefully planned, maximising the use of teaching time. Examples of this were observed in a Year 1 literacy lesson that extended pupils' scientific understanding, and in a Year 2 numeracy lesson that greatly extended pupils' geographical skills. Learning starts as soon as pupils enter their classroom in the morning and set to work on the well prepared tasks waiting for them on their tables. Teachers select resources and activities very carefully, mindful of the need to motivate every pupil to do as well as they can.

Teachers' marking is perceptive, helpful and closely related to pupils' targets, and pupils are very knowledgeable about what they need to do to improve. Well briefed teaching assistants are used to very good effect in most lessons. While they mostly support less able pupils, the school uses their particular expertise very effectively, for example, in ICT. The highly motivating activities planned and the support given in the session observed greatly extended the pupils' understanding of animation techniques. The pupils' excitement at finding out new things is very carefully fostered throughout the school and often results in their not wanting to stop work at breaks and lunchtimes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum provides all pupils, from the least to the most able, with a high level of challenge and a rich range of experiences, including the opportunity to learn French. The Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs of the youngest children very well, building their self-esteem and independence. The curriculum very strongly promotes creativity through the exceptionally well-considered links between subjects, the excellent provision for music and art, and special events such as the school carnival. This makes learning very exciting for the pupils. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is outstanding, as is the programme for personal development. A wide and very varied programme of residential visits, visitors, clubs, musical and sporting activities very successfully promotes pupils' personal development, health and well-being. A major strength of the curriculum is its flexibility in being able to respond at short notice to pupils' learning needs. This ensures the pupils' best possible progress at all times.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Excellent personal and academic care, guidance and support very successfully ensure pupils' health, safety, well-being and outstanding achievement. All procedures, including those for child protection, are thorough and comprehensive. Pupils are very well known as individuals. Their personal and academic progress is very effectively monitored and well focused targets help them to improve their learning, step by step. Excellent links with external agencies help to provide pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with high quality support in several areas of school life. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress, their views are highly valued, and they are very satisfied with the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Excellent leadership and management by the headteacher, key staff and governors have ensured that, for some time now, pupils have achieved exceptionally well and standards have remained exceptionally high. Although it grades itself somewhat conservatively in some areas, the school's evaluation of its work is accurate and extremely rigorous. The outcomes very successfully inform forward planning and keep everyone very closely focused on sustaining success. This was one of the headteacher's main priorities on taking up her post in September 2004. Her perceptive evaluation identified the need to improve reading further and to refine whole-school assessment procedures so that information about pupils' overall progress might be more easily obtained. The school is working on both of these. This attention to detail and the very successful way in which the school's leadership and management have addressed the issues raised in the last inspection give the school a very strong capacity to improve.

Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities very effectively. The strong focus on ensuring the best possible provision for the pupils is exemplified in the way staffing issues were handled this year. This ensured that, as far as possible, pupils' learning continued uninterrupted. Governors, staff, pupils and parents are all part of a highly successful team that helps to determine the school's priorities. These are clearly articulated in a well constructed school improvement plan and progress towards them is checked rigorously.

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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	1	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	2	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	2	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?	1	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	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

Hartwell Primary School School Lane Hartwell Northampton NN7 2HL

21 June 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making us so very welcome in your school. It was a delight to talk to you and to find out how well you are doing. You told us how much you enjoyed school because of the way the staff care for you and because of all the exciting things they give you to do. There are lots of very good things about your school. Here are some of the highlights:

- You work very hard and make excellent progress because your teachers do their very best to help each one of you learn as well as you possibly can.
- Your behaviour is usually excellent. You are kind, polite and very willing to help each other and your teachers in all sorts of ways.
- You have a very good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and of why it is important to keep fit and healthy.
- The headteacher and the governors run the school very well indeed. They listen carefully to what you and your parents think and try very hard to make the school better and better for you.
- Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to an excellent school and they work very hard to support it in every way possible.

We have asked your school to keep up its excellent work by helping you to do even better at reading, and by finding ways to make it easier and less time consuming for the headteacher when she is checking your overall progress.

We hope that you will continue to make the excellent progress that you are making now and that you will enjoy learning more and more as you grow up.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell Lead Inspector