

# Chartridge Combined School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110298
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	288624
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mary Summers

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr K Irvine
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Butler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 May 2001
<b>School address</b>	Cogdells Lane Chartridge Chesham HP5 2TW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01494 837498
<b>Fax number</b>	01494 837819

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school serves a rural community, with half the pupils coming from the village of Chartridge and half from further afield. Three quarters of the pupils are White British and the remainder represent a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A significant number of these are from Pakistani families. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils has risen considerably over the past few years. Children enter school with widely varying levels of attainment but at present, they are broadly in line with expectations for their age. This has changed since the last inspection when most children started school at levels which were above those expected nationally. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. A new headteacher started at the school in January 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Chartridge Combined School is a good school which enables pupils to achieve well and reach high standards. This is due to a number of features including decisive leadership, good teaching and effective levels of care and support for pupils.

Children receive a satisfactory start to their education in Reception. This area of the school is not as well organised as others, with the result that children make satisfactory rather than good progress. By the time they transfer to Year 1, the majority reach standards expected nationally in most areas of learning. Only a few exceed these levels. The curriculum covers all the necessary areas of learning, but is not planned carefully enough to ensure they build quickly on their existing skills, knowledge and understanding.

Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6. They reach consistently high standards in the national tests and assessments. Fewer reach the higher levels in the tests in Year 6 than might be expected, considering their prior attainment. The school has already identified that a lack of challenge for the most able pupils is hindering their progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language, receive good support from teachers and assistants, enabling them to take a full part in the curriculum.

Pupils take an active part in lessons and approach their tasks with diligence. They work very well in small groups, discussing activities and sharing ideas and opinions. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are polite, welcoming and show good levels of self confidence. These skills prepare them very well for the future.

Teachers work hard to create a pleasant atmosphere in their classrooms so that pupils enjoy their learning. They know what they want the pupils to learn, and plan and present lessons in an interesting and engaging manner. Many techniques including computer technology are used to engage pupils' interest and attention. Teachers have recently begun to check pupils' progress more rigorously but this has been too late in some cases to identify and address underachievement, especially amongst the most able pupils. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is well organised. Pupils receive a wide variety of experiences that enable them to reach high academic standards but also ensure they develop their creativity and imagination through art and music.

The headteacher has a clear vision for improvement, based upon an accurate analysis of performance gained over a relatively short space of time. The governing body provides a valuable resource to the school in terms of individual expertise. Improvement on areas identified at the last inspection has been satisfactory, but the initiatives implemented recently show that the school has a good capacity for improvement in the future. Parents and carers support the work of the school well, many giving willingly of their time to help with various school activities. The vast majority are extremely happy with the school's work. As one parent noted, 'Chartridge is a lovely school and my son has flourished in its caring and secure environment.'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Implement fully the new systems to track pupils' progress so that underachievement, particularly of the more able, can be quickly identified and addressed
- Plan the curriculum for Reception children more carefully to ensure they build rapidly upon their existing skills, knowledge and understanding

- Ensure that senior teachers and subject coordinators take an active role in monitoring the school's work and have a successful impact on improving provision and standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make satisfactory progress in Reception and transfer to Year 1 at levels which are broadly in line with those expected nationally. They do best in mathematical development where they quickly learn to count, manipulate numbers and recognise shapes. Progress is slower in writing with few children gaining a good phonic knowledge and attempting to write simple words and sentences.

Their rate of progress increases in Years 1 and 2 due to good teaching and pupils reach standards which are significantly above those expected nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. They continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6, gaining high standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. This is borne out by their results in national tests which are much higher than their counterparts in schools across the country. The test information also shows that the most able pupils are capable of even greater progress and this is an issue which has been identified by senior staff as a priority for improvement.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well being, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are good. Attendance is good and pupils enjoy coming to school. They take an active role in supporting their school and the wider community. Older pupils look after the library and undertake a range of helpful duties all around the school, such as supporting younger children with sports activities during a lunchtime club. The school council has begun to make an impact on the decision making process in the school.

Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils have a mature understanding of right and wrong and the impact of their words and actions on others. They are polite, welcoming to visitors and very proud of their school. Pupils respect the views of others and value lifestyles and cultures different from their own. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They know what to do if any bullying occurs but confirm that this is extremely rare. Their good levels of literacy, numeracy and high levels of confidence contribute well to their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers enjoy warm and supportive relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils feel ready to learn and confident to ask for help if needed. Classroom assistants play a large part in the good levels of support offered to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. This is because they are well briefed by teachers and have a good knowledge of the needs of the pupils with whom they work. Teachers set clear expectations for behaviour within a pleasant, informal learning atmosphere.

Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or groups, to discuss their work and arrive at conclusions. This helps those with English as an additional language, develop their

confidence and fluency. In recent months, teachers have been encouraged to assess pupils' progress more rigorously but this information is not yet being used well enough to identify pupils who are underachieving, so that appropriate steps can be taken to help them take the next steps in their learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good overall. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and computer skills in other subjects as teachers work hard to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs and interests. Physical education is a strong feature with pupils participating in two hours of activities every week as well as a wide range of clubs outside school such as golf and judo. Art, design and technology and music also have high profiles and add to the broad and enjoyable range of experiences offered. Visits, including the annual Year 6 residential journey to the Isle of Wight, and visitors to the school add further to pupils' enjoyment and motivation.

The curriculum is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Children receive a reasonable balance of experiences to enable them to develop all areas of their learning appropriately. Curriculum plans are satisfactory but focus on activities rather than learning outcomes for the children. This means that activities led by adults meet children's different needs effectively, but those selected by children often lack focus and challenge.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff have good knowledge of pupils' needs and all pupils are valued and included. Good systems are in place to identify pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

They receive good support in lessons. Staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and this contributes to their security and readiness to learn. Academic guidance is satisfactory but until recently has not been rigorous enough to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. The school benefits from good links with outside providers, for example the local police and medical services, who contribute well to pupils' growing understanding of how to keep safe and healthy.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Parents and staff are very supportive of the new headteacher. He has evaluated provision remarkably quickly and has an accurate view of where improvement is needed. He has high ambitions for the school and is supported well in these by an enthusiastic and well informed governing body. Together, headteacher, governors and staff are working to create a challenging yet realistic plan to drive improvement forward.

Despite the current building works, the school runs very smoothly, providing a positive setting for teaching and learning. There are secure procedures for vetting all adults who work with children. Resources are well spent, with the best interests of the pupils at heart. Governors are

very conscious of the need to monitor value for money because of the tight budget position over recent years.

Senior teachers and subject coordinators have recently begun to take more responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning but many of these procedures are new and have not yet impacted on standards or achievement. This was a key issue for improvement identified at the last inspection and progress on it has been slow until fairly recently. Nonetheless, they are now approaching their tasks with enthusiasm and commitment.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

23 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chartridge Combined School, Chesham, HP5 2TW

Thank you all so much for your very warm welcome and for sharing with us your views about the school. The other inspector and I really enjoyed our time with you, visiting classrooms to watch lessons, looking at your work and chatting with you around the school. Everything we saw and heard convinced us that you go to a good school.

These are the things we thought were especially good.

- You all work very hard and achieve really well - the standards you reach in national tests and assessments are much higher than in most schools.
- Most of you attend school regularly and are hardly ever late so you don't miss important parts of your education.
- You are growing up as confident, polite, extremely well-behaved young people who enjoy learning and know how to keep safe and healthy.
- Teachers and other adults take good care of you and give you help if required.
- Teachers organise exciting activities for you to enjoy, including visits to interesting places and lots of clubs at lunchtime and after school.

These are the things we think need to be improved to make your school even better.

- Your progress should be checked more carefully to make sure you are given sufficiently challenging work in lessons.
- The activities for children in Reception need to be better organised to make sure they make enough progress over the year.

I know you will continue to work hard and support your teachers and other adults so that they can help you do your very best at school.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers

Lead inspector