



Guyhirn CofE VC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110806
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 288783
Inspection dates 9–10 November 2006
Reporting inspector Godfrey Bancroft

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Guyhirn, Wisbech
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cambridgeshire PE13 4ED
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01945450247
Number on roll (school)	72	Fax number	01945 450771
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev Colin Hurst
		Headteacher	Mrs Justine Sands
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	9–10 November 2006	288783

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average sized primary school. The community served by the school faces considerable economic and social challenges. Attainment on entry is below national expectations. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are very low. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is well above average. A significant number of pupils join and leave the school at other than the usual times.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, which knows itself well and is improving rapidly. Improvements over the last two years are because of the range of effective measures introduced by the headteacher. The contribution made by the skilful and dedicated team of teachers and staff is also central to these improvements. It has resulted in much greater consistency in the work of the school and an improvement in standards. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 also achieve well and make good progress. Consequently, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. Many of the pupils who have learning difficulties make exceptional progress, benefiting greatly from the very good support they receive. All pupils are acquiring the skills that will serve them well in later life, particularly those of information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and pupils clearly enjoy their learning. The school has embraced all aspects of the national agenda for developing and protecting the whole child very effectively. Pupils are very well informed about the need to eat healthily and the importance of taking regular exercise. They behave very well and are very supporting and caring of each other. This stems from the excellent role models provided by staff. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are also outstanding. Again, this enables pupils to apply themselves well, because they feel safe and secure. Pupils' make an excellent contribution to their community. This is very evident in the care they show for the environment.

Throughout the school, teaching and learning are good, with more than one pupil describing their teachers as 'great'. Teachers consistently recognise and celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements. As a result pupils try their best and respond very well. Teachers skilfully ensure that the work they set is matched very carefully to pupils' learning needs. The school provides well for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills and the current focus on improving the quality of pupils' writing is undoubtedly paying dividends. Even so, the quality of pupils' speaking is not as good as it needs to be. For some pupils their ability to write for a range of purposes and audiences is not sufficiently well developed, whilst a few do not take enough care to present their work neatly. The curriculum is good and ICT is used very well to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils also enjoy a good range of additional activities that support their learning well.

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. Governors also fulfil their duties well. They are very supportive of the school and very well informed about what it does well and about what can be improved. Improvement since the last inspection is good and all the issues identified at that time have been addressed successfully. The school provides good value for money. Its capacity to maintain the current pattern of improvement is also good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Introduce ways to improve further the quality of pupils' speaking.

- Give pupils even more help to improve the quality and range of their writing.
- Provide additional guidance and support for those pupils who do not record their work neatly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is usually below national expectations. When they start school, many children's attainment in communication, language and literacy is well below that expected. While they are in the Reception Year, children make good progress, often starting in Year 1 with standards that are close to those expected for their age, other than in communication, language and literacy skills, which are below average.

The very small numbers of pupils in each year have the effect of creating some year-on-year variations in standards. Even so, pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to achieve well and make good progress. In recent years attainment, by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has been broadly average. Sometimes in the past, standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have been well below average. However, rapid improvements in the last two years mean that standards are now broadly average. This improvement has been achieved against a background of a significant number of pupils arriving or leaving the school at other than the usual times. Many of the pupils who have joined the school during Years 3 to 6 also have learning difficulties. However, many of these pupils make exceptional progress. Pupils also do well in ICT, music and physical education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Assemblies contribute well to this aspect of pupils' development and reflect the school's strong Christian ethos. The school continues to do all it can to alert parents to the importance of their children attending school regularly. During the last two years, attendance has improved and is now average. The very good support that staff provide is helping pupils to become increasingly confident learners. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils relish taking responsibility and fulfil tasks with efficiency and enthusiasm, such as managing the healthy snacks trolley and selling poppies for Remembrance Day. They are very caring and supportive towards each other. Pupils who are members of the 'Playground Squad' are fully trained to support their schoolmates who are experiencing personal difficulties. The school has been awarded 'Eco School' status, reflecting the care and understanding that pupils show for the environment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and pupils say that lessons are exciting and enjoyable. Teachers have high expectations of what they intend pupils to learn and how they will respond. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and set challenges that meet the full range of ages and abilities in each class very well. They are very good at keeping pupils informed about the progress they are making. The marking of work provides pupils with good advice about how to improve. Teachers are also very good at consulting pupils to ascertain how they are feeling about their learning and progress. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning very well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage curriculum is good, providing well for all areas of children's learning. A good range of additional activities including choir, cookery, country dance, gardening club and sports club enhance pupils' enjoyment of their learning well. ICT is used very well to support pupils' learning in many subjects. Pupils' progress is also aided by the good contribution made by a music specialist within the school and by visiting specialists for drama and physical education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are outstanding arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe and cared for very well. These arrangements meet the most recent government requirements fully. Pupils have great faith in their relationships with teachers and other adults. They are confident that they will receive very good support to resolve any difficulties they might face. This is typified by the support provided by a teaching assistant who is appointed as a pupil counsellor. Similarly, the support provided for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is very good. Arrangements to provide personal and academic guidance are excellent. The school's procedures to track pupils' progress over longer periods of time and to identify their subsequent learning needs are exemplary. There is a very effective council of pupils through which the school listens and responds very well to pupils' views.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The work of the headteacher has brought about significant improvements. She is passionate about the development of the school and is supported very well by a team of dedicated and very hard working teachers and

staff. The senior teacher and those who have additional responsibilities, such as subject leaders, fulfil their duties well. Arrangements to support staff in their professional development are also very good. The school's procedures to evaluate its performance and identify ways of bringing about improvements are very good. Governors and all members of staff play a full part in these procedures, helping to provide a sense of direction and purpose to which everyone subscribes wholeheartedly.

Governors and the headteacher are working very effectively to raise the profile of the school in the community. The success of this work, aided by good communication, is part of the reason why the school is held in high regard by parents and carers who think the school provides their children with a very good education.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	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	2
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2
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

10 November 2006

Dear Pupils,

Guyhirn Church of England Primary School, High Road, Guyhirn, Wisbech PE13 4ED

You may recall that I visited your school recently. This proved to be a great pleasure and I must thank you for making me welcome and for giving your time to talk to me. Undoubtedly your school is a good school. I was particularly impressed by -

- Your very good behaviour when you work and play together
- The kindness and help you all show towards each other
- The way in which you work hard in lessons
- Your enthusiasm to do jobs that help to make your school a better place
- The care and understanding you show for the environment.

All this is because your teachers and other staff are good at helping you to do your best and at making your learning enjoyable. This applies especially to the outstanding help they provide for those of you who find learning hard. The staff are also very good at taking care of you and making sure you are safe. They are able to do this because your headteacher and school governors are good at making sure that everything is in place for you to learn to the best of your ability. In the future they will be looking at ways of making your learning even better by -

- Introducing more ways to improve your speaking
- Helping you to make your writing better than ever
- Providing as much help as possible so that your work is presented neatly and tidily.

Finally, congratulations on achieving the 'Eco School' award. I hope you all continue to do well in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead Inspector