



North Cerney Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115640
Local Authority Gloucestershire
Inspection number 290286
Inspection date 25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Clive Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	North Cerney
School category	Voluntary aided		Cirencester
Age range of pupils	4-11		GL7 7BZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01285 831310
Number on roll (school)	39	Fax number	01285 831310
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Simon Gale
		Headteacher	Bridget Goodrich
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average and pupils are taught in two classes with three or more age groups in each class. This is a very small school with widely varying cohorts from year to year and very high pupil mobility, so comparisons with other schools and with national results must be treated with caution. The school also has a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school rightly judges that it provides its pupils with a good standard of education. Parents agree, one of whom describes the school as 'an excellent primary school where I know my children will achieve their best'. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and have very positive views of the school, one older pupil saying, 'It's a good school; because it's small I guess we know everyone; it's like one big happy family.' Children achieve well in the Reception/Infant class and continue to do well as they move through the school. By Year 6, standards are average and overall achievement is good. Pupils achieve particularly well in English but the school is aware that progress in mathematics and science is not quite as good and needs to be improved.

Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan very well and this leads to interesting and effective lessons. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. As a result, pupils behave outstandingly well, really enjoy school and are eager to learn. They develop their independence from an early age and have a clear understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle which they use in making choices about exercising and eating. The good curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils benefit from a wide range of interesting experiences. Care and guidance are outstanding. Parents are overwhelming in their praise of the school and pupils praise their teachers for the very good support that they provide. Assessment systems are very rigorous and teachers have a very good understanding of where pupils are and the progress they are making as a result.

Leadership and management are good and the headteacher's leadership is outstanding. Her understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is excellent. However, new subject leaders currently have only a satisfactory insight into the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects and the school is aware of the need to strengthen their monitoring of standards throughout the school. Improvements needed since the last inspection have been tackled successfully. Very good links with local organisations are used very well to extend the range of curricular opportunities and promote pupils' well-being. Developments are managed very efficiently and the school is well placed to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics and science to match those achieved in English.
- Further develop the skills of subject leaders in management and the monitoring of teaching.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the school is typically below average, although it varies significantly from year to year because of the very small year groups and the varying number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in each year. By the time

they reach Year 6, pupils reach average standards. Children make good progress in the Reception Year and this continues through Key Stages 1 and 2. The information the school maintains demonstrates clearly that individual pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, often having started in different schools. This reflects teachers' high expectations and the very good response from the pupils. The school sets and meets challenging targets. More able pupils achieve higher levels in the core subjects and pupils with special educational needs make better than expected progress. The richness of the curriculum ensures that all pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Parents appreciate the welcoming family atmosphere of the school and say that their children really enjoy coming to school. Pupils agree and say their school is really good. As a result of the school's rigorous systems, attendance is good, as is punctuality. A strong moral code is implicit within the school's ethos and this is reflected in pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour; they are polite and respectful and willingly take on responsibilities. Pupils of all ages are used to working together and older pupils act responsibly as mentors to younger children. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall although the school realizes its provision for multicultural awareness could be strengthened. Cultural development is well promoted through the curriculum. Daily assemblies successfully develop a strong sense of self-worth and encourage feelings of spirituality. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the importance of keeping themselves safe and have a good understanding of the consequences of lack of exercise and an unhealthy diet. They are particularly pleased with the new arrangements for school dinners, explaining, 'They're collected from the pub and they're SO healthy; we're the healthiest school in Gloucestershire!' Their very good social skills, together with the good progress made in the core skills, contribute well to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Planning is very good; teachers set appropriate work for each age group and, where necessary, for individual pupils within each age group. In the Reception/Year 1/2 class, the teacher plans work well related to the early learning goals for the reception children alongside the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Teachers know the pupils very well and assess their progress thoroughly. They expect pupils to work hard and behave well and they do. There is strong teamwork between teachers and the well qualified and effective teaching assistants and, as a result, all pupils are provided with well focused individual support. This plays a very important part in securing good progress. Teachers give clear explanations and use questions very effectively to draw out what pupils

know and to challenge them further. The needs of higher attaining pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are considered well and are attended to sensitively. Teachers have worked very hard to significantly improve standards in reading and writing and are aware that they now need to focus their attention on further improving science and mathematics

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. National strategies and guidelines are used appropriately to ensure that learning is built upon year on year and pupils have the opportunities to undertake a broad range of interesting work. The Foundation Stage curriculum, linked clearly to the early learning goals, meets the needs of children well in the context of a mixed-age class. The school offers a good range of lunchtime clubs and after-school activities. It makes use of very good links with a range of local schools and community facilities to ensure pupils receive a wide range of interesting and exciting opportunities. A good range of visits and visitors further enhances and enriches the basic curriculum. These all make a good contribution to the pupils' enjoyment and achievement. The school is aware, however, of the need to develop better cross-curricular links between subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents are overwhelmingly confident that their children are safe and well cared for. The school is particularly successful at welcoming and integrating children who have experienced difficulties at other schools. One parent states, 'I was really impressed by the amount of time both the headteacher and her staff took to really help my son; I am delighted with his progress.' The very good relationships reflect the very good pastoral support and this contributes significantly to pupils' eagerness to learn. Pupils say they are well looked after and safe, are not bullied, and feel able to talk with staff if they have any problems. Outstanding support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Systems for tracking pupils' academic progress have improved significantly and are now well established. These ensure that pupils needing additional support are identified early and that pupils making better than average progress are given appropriately challenging work. Pupils are aware of their individual targets for improvement and teachers' marking in their books is very supportive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and governors are clearly focused on raising standards and determined that all pupils succeed. The sustained outstanding leadership by the headteacher has ensured the distinctive ethos and the consistent progress made by different groups

of pupils. Her boundless enthusiasm ensures that no stone is left unturned to give the pupils the very best provision. The school has recovered well from a period of upheaval and staff turnover, particularly significant in such a very small school. This caused some discontinuity in learning which resulted in a temporary drop in standards. All staff share the very clear vision and feel fully involved in the leadership and management. However, the school is aware of the need to further strengthen subject co-ordinators' management skills. Pupils also display a very strong sense of responsibility for their school, and enjoy being involved in decision-making through the school council. Governors make an outstanding contribution to the school. The methods for evaluating the school's work, the effectiveness of decisions and the areas to be improved are rigorous. Consequently, the school knows itself very well.

Through the analysis of test results, the school has a very good and accurate view of the relative strength of subjects. The school works very hard to overcome the limitations of its cramped accommodation by utilising its very good links with local schools and community facilities. The school is rightly proud of its reputation as a very inclusive school and is outstandingly successful in welcoming and supporting pupils who join the school having started their education elsewhere. Because of the rigorous school self-evaluation and the track record of improvement, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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	2

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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?	1

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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed visiting the school and seeing you at work and play. You gave me lots of comments that helped me to form a good picture of your school.

I think your school is a good school. This is what I found out:

- Your teachers and other adults in the school help you to learn well.
- You behave very well and you know how to tell right from wrong.
- You clearly enjoy coming to school because there are lots of interesting activities for you to take part in.
- I was impressed that the school is helping you to stay healthy by encouraging you to eat healthy foods and take regular exercise and that you do so.
- I also liked the way that you get on very well together and support each other.

There are two things I have asked your teachers to do that would make it even better:

- Help you to do as well in mathematics and science as you do in English.
- Make sure that teachers in charge of subjects have a really good idea of how well you are progressing.

I think that your school is one of which you should be proud. I am confident that, with your help, the school will improve still further.

Good luck to you all in the future.