

Chawton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116281
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290483
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bill Wilde
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Osborn
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002
School address	Chawton Alton GU34 1SG
Telephone number	01420 544381
Fax number	01420 655381

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils live in the villages of Chawton and Faringdon though an increasing number come from surrounding areas. The overwhelming majority of pupils are from a White British background. One is at an early stage of learning English. Overall, pupils' socio-economic circumstances are advantaged. The school has the following awards: Investors in People, Enhanced Healthy Schools, Artsmark Gold.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Chawton is a good school with a number of outstanding features. One parent encapsulated the views of many when she wrote, 'Chawton has an outstanding nurturing effect on the children. They are happy, caring individuals.' There is an overwhelming family atmosphere in which all pupils are included in the rich range of opportunities made available to them. The high quality of the care and support that staff provide secures the pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils love school and learning. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. By the time that they leave the school, pupils demonstrate exceptionally mature levels of understanding about the need to eat healthily and keep fit.

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some outstanding features, particularly in supporting the pupils' personal development. The school rightly recognises that there is a need to ensure that teachers' plans consistently provide challenge for more able pupils because, on occasion, these pupils' progress has not been as rapid as others. Children in the Reception class progress well because the quality of the provision is good. However, opportunities for outdoor learning are limited in hot and inclement weather because there is a lack of cover.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Results in national tests to 2006 suggest that achievement is strong in Years 1 and 2 and it slows to satisfactory levels in Years 3 to 6. Standards have been consistently and exceptionally high in tests for seven-year-olds. In national tests for 11-year-olds, standards have been significantly above average for the past two years. Achievement in Key Stage 2 has improved in the last year because the school has put into place good strategies to accelerate progress. As a result, current Year 6 pupils are on track to attain standards that are higher than in previous years and Year 5 pupils are on course to attain even higher standards.

Parents are accurate in their view that leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and management. She has a clear vision for the school that is based on her belief in the need to develop the pupils' well-being, interests and their academic development in parallel. She has secured a very strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff. Retiring at the end of the current term after 14 years as headteacher, she leaves the school well set to build on its current effectiveness. She is supported well by the deputy head and teachers with responsibility who each make a good contribution to the school's wide ranging processes for checking the quality of provision and pupils' progress. Governance is excellent. Working together, governors and senior staff have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. When linked to the good improvements made since the previous inspection, they demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the number of pupils gaining the higher level at the end of Year 6 by ensuring that work is always pitched to challenge all groups of pupils, particularly the more able.
- Provide cover outside the reception class to enable pupils to continue outdoor learning in inclement weather.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class from their above expected attainment on entry to the school. Almost all attain the expected goals by the time that they enter Year 1. A large minority exceed them. Although there has been some under-achievement in Years 3 to 6, a number of improvement projects have been introduced to boost progress. These have had a positive impact and current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain much higher standards than those of 2006. In mathematics, for example, teachers have worked together to ensure that the work set more frequently stems from real-life experiences and is designed to strengthen the pupils' practical mathematical skills. A specialist teacher of English has been appointed and she is having a positive impact on Year 5 and 6 pupils' progress. Most of all, teachers' planning has improved to provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils, though this is not, as yet, consistently the case. The school rightly recognises though that more can be done to raise further the number of pupils attaining the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils thrive in the positive atmosphere and effective provision. They develop a strong sense of community, are highly positive about school, learning and each other. As one pupil said, 'Everyone helps when you feel a little low.' Pupils delight in taking responsibility. They enjoy being members of the school council, the healthy school task group and being buddies for younger pupils. Even the youngest children show a sense of responsibility when changing their library books. They scan their returned and new books with aplomb! Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They have a highly developed understanding of the need for healthy eating and what constitutes a balanced diet. They also appreciate the importance of aerobic exercise and thoroughly enjoy taking part in the many opportunities for physical education and sport that are provided. Pupils are well prepared for moving to secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and improving. Some lessons are outstanding because teachers question pupils exceptionally well and provide exciting and interesting activities that capture the pupils' enthusiasm. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) particularly well in many subjects. This enlivens their teaching and they frequently make good use of the laptop computers for pupils to use in class. Good use made of specialist teaching. There are specialists in French, music and also English for Year 5 and 6 pupils. Their subject expertise is excellent and contributes well to pupils' learning.

All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between the adults and pupils. Staff manage the pupils well and lessons are invariably conducted at a brisk pace with pupils concentrating and working together well in pairs and groups. Teachers usually plan lessons well, though there are some inconsistencies. Teachers do not always ensure that the work is effectively matched to the pupils' needs, particularly for the most able pupils. Pupils that have

learning difficulties are taught particularly well, usually in the classrooms but also in small groups outside. These pupils' needs are met well by the effective learning support staff.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provides a wealth of enjoyable and rich learning. In the Reception class, work is invariably based on first-hand experiences and there is a good balance between adult-directed activities and those that the children choose for themselves. However, opportunity for outdoor learning is limited because there is no cover outside the classroom to enable children to play during inclement weather. Expert adaptations have been made to link many subjects together and this is a key reason why lessons arouse pupils' curiosity and interest. For example, literacy work is invariably linked to topics and these are frequently based on first hand experiences. Year 6 pupils, for example, spoke excitedly about their visit to the Victorian museum in Basingstoke. As well as giving rise to history work, this also was linked cleverly to many other subjects. A number of specialist curriculum weeks are held and visiting specialists such as artists, musicians and dancers enhance curricular provision. The school has an exceptionally wide range of additional activities. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy the wide range of sporting, art, and music opportunities provided. These enable pupils to develop and build their own interests and talents. Staff take care to ensure that the pupils' work is celebrated particularly well to provide an attractive and effective learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and that all the adults care for them very well. All current regulations for safeguarding pupils are met and high priority is given to ensuring their health and safety. The school has very good systems for checking and tracking pupils' progress. This information is generally used well by teachers to target future learning. It was the analysis of this progress information, for example, that gave rise to the improvements in provision that has lifted achievement in Key Stage 2. Pupils are given clear and helpful targets for both literacy and numeracy. In addition, teachers mark work carefully and thoroughly and this, too, helps pupils to know what they have to do to improve. The checking of progress for those that have learning difficulties is very thorough because pupils are known so well as individuals by the staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Analysis of provision and progress is used well to inform the good quality strategic plan. Good improvement projects have been implemented to boost pupils' progress and these are having a positive impact on standards at the end of Year 6. Teamwork and commitment are key features of the high quality staff.

There have been many improvements to the school building and its environs since the previous inspection and the school provides a highly attractive learning environment in which pupils' work is celebrated exceptionally well. The new hall is a particular bonus and has extended pupils' achievement, especially in music and physical education. Also there have been

improvements in ICT resources. Although space is extremely limited, all these improvements have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Governance is outstanding. Governors have a clear view of the strengths and needs of the school. They both support the school and sensitively challenge for further improvement. They have good strategies in place to gain first-hand knowledge of the school. This includes a regular 'governors' week' in which governors spend time in classes, talk with staff and review provision and progress.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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	2
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	1
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	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?	1
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.

Annex A

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	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

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chawton Church of England Primary School, Alton, GU34 1SG

I really enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you very much for the friendly way you welcomed me and for your help in finding out about the school.

Both you and your parents told me that you love coming to school and that you feel safe and well cared for. I am not surprised. Yours is a good school and everybody who works there tries hard to help you to do well. Your teachers are good and work hard to make sure that lessons are made interesting and exciting. Your headteacher has done a good job in making sure that you all work and play together in such a friendly way and to make the school successful. I was very impressed with your behaviour, which is excellent, and your very positive attitudes towards each other. Your teachers help you to learn well and also they make sure that everyone feels part of the family of your school.

You work hard in lessons so that you learn lots of new things. Your progress is good and you attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science.

I have asked your teachers to do two things. Firstly, to make sure that more of you reach the higher level in English, mathematics and, science at the end of Year 6. Secondly, to provide a cover outside the Reception class so that the children are able to use the outdoor area whatever the weather.

You can help by working hard to meet your targets. Thank you once again for being so helpful to me.

With very best wishes for your future.

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector