

# Cherry Hinton Community Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110746
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310405
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth Frith

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	162
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jane Phillips
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Boardman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2004
<b>School address</b>	Fulbourn Old Drift Cherry Hinton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 9ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223508772
<b>Fax number</b>	01223508773

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Cherry Hinton Community Junior School is smaller than many other junior schools. An increasing number of pupils arrive part-way through their schooling and pupils' attainment on entry to school is generally below average, particularly in writing. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is very high as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Almost a third of pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds and nearly a fifth speak English as an additional language. A few of these are at the early stages of learning English. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools status in recognition of its work.

There is a playgroup and after school club on site. This provision is not managed by the school's governing body and is inspected separately.

## 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 where pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and make good progress. Outstanding care, guidance and support promote their excellent personal development and well-being and encourage them to feel secure and valued. As one pupil remarked, 'We are really just one big happy family'. Parents are very supportive of the school and what it offers, as shown by the following comments: 'My children are very happy at this school and find the lessons interesting and varied,' and 'The environment is caring, friendly and inspiring'.

Effective leadership, management and governance result in the school providing good value for money. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong leadership, aspects of which are exemplary, such as the headteacher's clear vision for the school and the way in which she has created a staff team who share this vision and her enthusiasm. Staff morale is high and all are committed to raising standards and promoting pupils' well-being. By the time pupils leave school, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average but sometimes higher, as in last year for mathematics and science. Similarly, reading and writing standards are also improving but writing standards still remain below other subjects. Developments to the management of the school have given greater responsibility to individual subject leaders, for example, in using assessment information to highlight areas for improvement and raise standards. They are responding to this well. Good self-evaluation has led to the identification of appropriate priorities for action and, together with a continual cycle of improvements, show that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Teaching and the curriculum are good because lessons are interesting and the pace of learning is usually brisk. Staff use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively as a tool to make learning points clear and to maintain pupils' interests. This, and increasing links between subjects, has had a good impact on motivating pupils and developing their attitudes and learning. Clear procedures for checking pupils' progress mean that staff can quickly identify any in danger of falling behind and provide them with effective support. However, sometimes, teachers do not use the information they have on pupils' progress to plan carefully the next small steps in learning. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff, are taught to respect and care for others, and behave exceptionally well. All these features create a very effective atmosphere for learning. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives and this is influencing what they do. Their particularly good social skills and progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT help prepare them well for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Staff work successfully to create an inclusive school community that is particularly effective in integrating pupils who start school part-way through their junior school education, those from a range of minority ethnic groups and those who are learning English as an additional language. All pupils feel equally valued and achieve well. Taken with the pupils' excellent contribution to the community and the school's effective work in partnership with others, the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring pupils receive plenty of opportunity to write at length in all curriculum areas.
- Extend teachers' use of assessment information to plan the next small steps in pupils' learning

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Recent improvements to teaching, learning and the curriculum have improved pupils' rate of progress and raised standards. This can be seen in the 2008 national test results where pupils reached standards in mathematics and science above those usually seen. Standards in English were broadly average with pupils doing better in reading than writing. In response, staff are currently focusing on improving pupils' writing skills, and they acknowledge that they need to provide more opportunities across all subject areas to encourage pupils to write at length. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working at the levels expected for their age in English, mathematics and science and are on course to reach their challenging targets. Last year, the school exceeded its targets for English and mathematics. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, and those who find learning more difficult, make good progress due to the good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Effective induction arrangements for pupils who arrive part-way through their junior school education ensure that they settle quickly and make similar progress to other pupils.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy school life very much; their attendance is above average and relationships at all levels are excellent. This is a striking feature of the school's work. Older pupils act as good role models, establishing caring relationships with each other and with younger pupils. Pupils feel safe in school, because they are very well cared for. They consistently report feeling valued and listened to, with a Year 6 child commenting, 'Teachers and teaching assistants will support you if you have a problem. They never give up on you.' Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding, as seen in their reflective and caring approach to others. Cultural development is good and a developing area of the school's work. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are friendly and confident, well equipped to resolve minor disagreements, and they express a deep commitment to each other. Pupils make very healthy lifestyle choices in terms of diet and exercise. They show an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and demonstrate a wide range of good skills to contribute to their future success and well-being. Pupils' contribution to the community is excellent, seen most powerfully in their shared sense of belonging and very positive relationships.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Excellent relationships between staff and pupils and the supportive atmosphere in lessons ensure pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and do well. Planning is generally good. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to achieve and plan lessons with the aim of building pupils' learning systematically over time. However, on a day-to-day basis, they do not always use the information they have on pupils' progress and achievement to highlight the next small steps in learning. In the best lessons, teachers use questioning very well to develop pupils' thinking and understanding. They also use the end of lessons well to assess pupils' progress and consolidate learning. Through their marking, teachers show what pupils have done well but occasionally do not give clear enough guidance to pupils on what they need

specifically to do to improve their work. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need additional support with English and mathematics. This ensures that these pupils are fully involved in lessons and feel confident to tackle unfamiliar tasks. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is also good because staff focus on pupils practising their speaking skills and learning new vocabulary through using pictures and gestures as aids.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and responsive to the needs of the pupils. Thematic days, such as the recent 'Olympics Sports Day', are well planned and contribute greatly to the pupils' enjoyment of school. A particular strength is the collaborative art projects, through which pupils produce high quality artwork in a range of media. Pupils take part in a wide variety of meaningful enrichment activities, during and after school. An excellent example is the regular visit to a local football club where the pupils' interest in football is nurtured which, in turn, supports their progress in other areas of learning. Older pupils are being trained as 'Young Leaders' to take responsibility for helping others to be happy at school. The well-established choir and a newly-formed orchestra contribute significantly to pupils' experience of music and to their cultural development. French, although a new initiative, is extremely well planned and is having a significant impact on pupils' enjoyment. Leaders have recently re-organised the curriculum and now all year groups study major topics at the same time. This enables the whole school to explore similar themes and share achievements. One parent wrote that her son, 'Enjoys the innovative activities used to make learning more real and hands-on, and this is reflected in his memory of events and facts'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and staff believe passionately in providing not only the best academic opportunities for pupils, but also the very best pastoral care to promote their personal development and well-being. The school's monitoring systems quickly identify where pupils are finding learning more difficult and enable staff to put measures in place to help them improve. Pupils are very clear about the importance of focused lesson objectives and individual targets. Staff are skilled in developing motivating relationships, which make an extremely effective contribution to pupils' care, personal development and learning. Teachers and teaching assistants give excellent supervision at playtimes by providing clear guidance on behaviour and they often play games with the pupils, thereby further strengthening relationships. Vulnerable pupils are extremely well cared for. All procedures for safeguarding pupils are firmly in place; arrangements for child protection are rigorous and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership is successfully focussed on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development within an environment where all are valued and respected, and encouraged to do well. The impact of this is seen in the good progress made by learners and their sense of security and well-being. Good systems are in place to check how well the school is doing and identify what it could do better. These have been instrumental in supporting the school's drive for

continued development and have resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. Staff take on a variety of responsibilities successfully, and are currently focussing on their use of data to inform their teaching and pupils' learning. Through good work in committees and effective monitoring and evaluation, governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They fulfil their responsibilities well.

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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	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Cherry Hinton Community Junior School, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 9ND

You may remember that two inspectors recently visited your school and talked to you about your work. We enjoyed our visit, and would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. You and your parents think Cherry Hinton Juniors is a good school and we agree with you. If you read on you will see some of the things we found out:

- You work hard and make good progress so that by Year 6, you reach standards similar to other pupils of the same age. Sometimes you reach standards higher than we often see, as in mathematics and science last year.
- You thoroughly enjoy school and behave exceptionally well. You get on extremely well with each other and make good friends.
- Most of you come to school regularly and on time. Well done! Please keep it up so you do not miss any valuable lessons.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and we are very pleased to see that this is influencing what you eat and how much exercise you take.
- Teaching is good. Those of you who sometimes find it difficult to learn are helped a lot and therefore do well.
- You feel safe in school because staff look after you extremely well. We were pleased to hear that you talk to a friend or member of staff if you have problems.

Mrs Boardman leads and manages the school very well and staff and governors give her lots of help. They have all agreed to focus on two things to make the school even better. They will give you more opportunities to write in all subjects because we think you could improve your writing a little more. We know you will try as hard as you can with your writing so that you reach similar standards to those in reading, mathematics and science. Teachers will also make better use of what they know about your work and progress so that your learning regularly moves on in small steps. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith

Lead inspector