

# Cherry Hinton Cof E VC Infant School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110801
<b>Local Authority</b>	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310421
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anna Coyle

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	174
<b>School</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Nicola Hamill-Stewart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison Beardon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	High Street Cherry Hinton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 9HH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223568834
<b>Fax number</b>	01223568835

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Cherry Hinton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School is smaller than many other schools and serves the local community on the eastern side of Cambridge. The majority of children are White British. A higher proportion than nationally are from minority ethnic groups and many learn English as an additional language. Seven children are from Eastern European backgrounds. The proportion of children with additional learning needs is higher than that of other schools. Attainment on entry is well below average. The school has achieved the Activemark Gold award for physical education (PE) and the Healthy Schools award. It is currently being led and managed by an acting headteacher and a consultant headteacher.

## 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 that provides good value for money. It judges itself to be good and the inspectors agree. Parents speak highly of the school, appreciating the way that it works with them, and praising the quality of education and care it provides.

The school has improved well since it was last inspected; teaching has improved, expectations are higher and standards have risen. All this has come about because the leadership, management and governance are good. The senior leadership team has managed the interim period carefully since the retirement of the previous headteacher and is now set to move on. The acting headteacher and consultant headteacher have a clear vision for the school and are keen to make improvements. Staff at all levels share their commitment and this gives the school a good capacity to improve even further.

The starting point for many children is well below average when they begin school in the Foundation Stage and many have early language or additional learning needs, but they all make good progress and achieve well. This leads to standards that are broadly average overall by the time they leave at the end of Year 2. In particular, the school is very good at helping children to attain good standards in PE. Writing, however, is still an area for improvement.

Children develop excellent personal skills because of all that the school has to offer, underpinned by its strong Christian ethos. They strive to meet the teachers' high expectations and this leads to excellent attitudes and behaviour. They develop a strong sense of responsibility, and those in Year 2 carry out many jobs to contribute to community life. For example, children participate willingly in the school council and know that their views are important. The school provides outstanding care for the children and this encourages them to participate fully in school life.

Teaching is good because it helps children to make good progress in learning. Lessons are taught well and children have a good grounding in basic skills. Teachers manage classes well, setting a good pace and ensuring that children become enthused in their work, although the more able children are not doing quite as well as they might. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to children's learning. The school is working hard to develop children's writing skills through successful strategies such as the use of 'Talking Partners'. The curriculum is planned well, and the school makes very good provision for PE. It also offers an exceptionally broad range of out-of-school activities, which includes a wealth of clubs, sports activities and music tuition.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get off to a really good start and achieve well. They enter with limited skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Because they make such good progress in the Foundation Stage, their attainment by the end of Reception draws close to that expected nationally in most areas of learning. This is because the quality of teaching is so good; it is occasionally excellent in both the Nursery and the Reception year. The Foundation Stage is managed well by a conscientious leader who has a clear understanding of how best to meet the needs of young children. Consequently, children rapidly become confident so that they begin to make choices and enjoy new experiences. Relationships between adults and children are very good, and parents appreciate the ease with which children settle. Staff keep a very close eye on how well children are doing and are skilled

in planning. The lack of specialist support is a shortcoming for the early language learners, especially for children who have recently arrived from Eastern Europe, but the staff do all they can to compensate for this. The exciting outdoor area with its wealth of activities and play areas, including the 'Once upon a Time House', is used extensively and enjoyed by all.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the standards in writing by pinpointing what it is that children need to do to reach the next level and use the information to help them improve.
- Extend the existing provision to provide greater challenge for the more able children.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children do well to reach the standards expected nationally by the end of Year 2. From their low starting points, they make good progress and achieve well throughout their time in the school. The results of the national tests show that standards have been rising steadily over the last five years and, although they dipped a little in 2006, they rose again in 2007. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are currently average overall and they are notably good in physical education. Writing standards are more variable, however, and inconsistent in Years 1 and 2, especially at the higher levels. The school has rightly identified writing as a priority and is doing much to help children do better. This is beginning to pay off and, already, progress is accelerating. Nonetheless, the school could do more to stretch the most able children, although those who have additional learning needs are making good progress. Despite there being no specialist language support, children who learn English as an additional language, including the few from Eastern Europe, do well because they are integrated successfully in activities and supported by caring and knowledgeable staff who do their very best to help them.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children say that they enjoy school and their excellent responses and concentration in lessons help them to make good progress in their learning. Attendance is broadly average. Their behaviour is excellent. They say that they get on well together socially and they are confident that staff would deal with any incidents of bullying quickly and effectively if they occurred. Children know how to keep themselves safe because the staff place a high priority on this. As a consequence, the school is a very happy and harmonious community. Children enjoy being able to express their views in lessons, circle time and in school council and say that teachers listen to them and act upon their ideas. They have good opportunities to reflect on issues of concern and on the wonders of nature. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed talking in assembly about the development of frogspawn into frogs and showing their pictures of daffodils. They have good opportunities to develop their basic skills and an awareness of a range of cultures through special events like creative arts' week when they enjoyed learning about African dance.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers' excellent relationships with their children lead to lessons that are based on high expectations of behaviour and achievement. As a result, learning proceeds at a good pace. Lesson plans say clearly what different ages and abilities need to learn, particularly in the mixed-age classes. This, and the conscientious work of the teaching assistants, results in children having tasks and adult support that moves their learning on effectively. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to capture and hold children's attention. They encourage children to use them, as when Year 2 children moved long and short vowel words into the correct lists. Teachers give children very good guidance on how to make their work better. For example, in a literacy lesson the teacher suggested that children could expand on their initial draft to make the writing more interesting and imaginative. There is some excellent teaching which holds the attention of even the youngest children and ensures they progress exceptionally well, especially in their personal and social development. Occasionally, teaching is satisfactory when the pace slackens and the tasks are not matched closely enough to the learning needs of individuals.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned well to meet national requirements and ensure progress from year to year. It is adapted successfully to create imaginative links between subjects and extend learning beyond lessons, although the provision for information and communication technology is not fully developed. The use of excellent displays runs through the curriculum so that children gain creative skills and a sense of pride in their work. They have an excellent range of out-of-school opportunities, including specialist tuition in physical education, violin, dance and art. A wealth of clubs gives children the chance to broaden their experiences beyond the classroom. The curriculum effectively promotes children's understanding of the world around them and environmental issues in 'special weeks' and the 'Natureland' project.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The school's Christian ethos underpins all its work. Parents appreciate the caring ethos with one summarising the views of several others by saying, 'The school has a nurturing and supportive environment which enables children to settle well and feel part of a caring school.' The school has all the required systems and procedures to ensure children's safety and well-being. It has established effective links with other schools, families and community organisations to ease the transition into this school and on to the junior school. There are very good systems for checking how well children are doing. These enable staff to identify those who need extra help and to plan work at different levels for different ages and abilities. Effective procedures for analysing absence figures enable staff to identify the small number of children who are persistently late and to work with the families and the local authority services to bring about improvements in attendance.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Good leadership and management from the acting headteacher and the consultant headteacher are reflected in the warm, welcoming nature of the school and the good achievement of the children. The headteachers work very well together and are steering the school successfully through an interim period. The senior leaders have a clear vision for the way the school will develop and, as a result, leaders at all levels are committed to the school's continuing improvement. The subject leaders and the headteachers monitor the quality of teaching and learning closely, and the school evaluates its own performance accurately. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well, provide positive challenge and actively support the school.

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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
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	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 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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

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

<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 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 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**

17 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Cherry Hinton Infant School, Cambridge CB1 9HH

Thank you for talking to us during our visit to your school. Mr Nelson and I learnt a lot and enjoyed seeing you working and playing together. Here are a few things we found out:

We think you go to a good school and your parents agree. The teachers and teaching assistants care about you and look after you exceptionally well. They are good at teaching you and helping if you find lessons hard or are learning to speak English as a new language. You have plenty of exciting things to do in lessons and you make good progress.

Your behaviour is excellent and you work very hard in lessons. You have lots of interesting things to do after school and you are lucky to have so many clubs that you enjoy so much. It was good to hear that you help by doing jobs and that the school council has lots of ideas about the school.

Mrs Beardon, Mr Marcon and the governors all work together well to make sure that the school runs smoothly and they keep looking for ways to help you learn even more things. We think they should go on helping you to improve your writing and encouraging you to try to reach the highest levels that you can in your work. You can help by continuing to work hard.

We hope that you go on enjoying school. Have a lovely Easter holiday!

Dr Anna Coyle

Lead inspector