

# Hempsted Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 115608          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Gloucestershire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 311998          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 13 May 2008     |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Christine Huard |

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>                     | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Voluntary controlled                                   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4-11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 201  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Robert Reid  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Phil Butterworth                                       |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 27 September 2004                                      |
| <b>School address</b>                     | St Swithun's Road<br>Hempsted<br>Gloucester<br>GL2 5LH |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01452 523567   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01452 411870   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

whether the school has been successful in narrowing the gap between the quality of reading and writing

the impact of the school's initiative to encourage pupils to evaluate the success of their own learning; and

the effectiveness of the joint headship and the effect of this in driving the school forward.

Evidence was gathered from an examination of the school's documentation, parents' questionnaires and pupils' work, observations of pupils in classes, around the school and in the playground, as well as interviews with members of the senior management team, pupils, governors and parents.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Hempsted CE Primary School serves the village and the surrounding area. There is a small, but increasing, number of pupils for whom English is not their home language. The school has co-headteachers who share the role.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It has the overwhelming support of parents because it provides an excellent all-round education for its pupils. As one commented, 'My child is well cared for and taught to an excellent standard by teachers who really do care about their pupils.' There is an exciting and stimulating learning environment, which fully reflects its Christian ethos. The key to the school's success is the vibrant and dynamic leadership of the joint headteachers. This is extremely successful because their common vision extends across the whole school, there is extremely good communication, and both have a consistency of approach which ensures that the systems run seamlessly, not only from day to day, but in the longer term as well. The whole-staff team and governors are wholehearted committed to the fulfilment of the school's aims and values. All continually strive to further improve what is already an exceptional school.

Children in the Reception class get an outstanding start to their education. Exciting activities in a bright and lively learning environment and an exceptional knowledge of each child ensure that individual needs are met. In Years 1 to 6, pupils shine. They really enjoy their learning 'because teachers don't just talk at us, they make lessons fun and interesting'. They reach standards that are well above average, not just in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but also in other subjects such as history, design and technology, geography and performing arts. Achievement is outstanding. This is because the school constantly analyses how well it is doing and takes action to try to improve even further. Although standards in English are high, the focus has been to try to narrow the gap between the quality of reading and writing. In this the school has been entirely successful. It has introduced strategies that have been effective across the school. The improvement in quality is evident not only in English but also in the many opportunities pupils have for writing across the whole curriculum. The school makes excellent provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Similarly, pupils who are especially gifted or talented are speedily identified and care is taken to make certain they are sufficiently challenged, both in the classroom and in many out-of-school activities, such as the science and technology challenge. The few pupils for whom English is not their home language receive excellent support so that they quickly become confident and happy members of the school community. There are many stimulating displays of pupils' work. These illustrate the breadth of the exciting curriculum and are evidence of the way in which pupils' efforts are valued. Excellent links are made across a range of subjects and the use of information and communication technology is fully integrated into all topics. A wide range of visits and visitors as well as an excellent range of out-of-school activities provide pupils with many additional opportunities to enhance their learning. A whole-school production of *Oliver* was very successful and gave pupils a chance to shine in a myriad of ways. Pupils thrive; the care and support provided for them are excellent and they are comfortable and happy at school. One parent wrote, 'My daughter thinks of Hempsted as her extended family.' A comprehensive programme for their personal, social and health education contributes very effectively to their outstanding personal development.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They bubble with enthusiasm. Year 2 pupils responded gleefully when invited to find a fresh range of adjectives to describe *Horrid Henry*. Despite the excitement generated as they discussed these with their 'lollipop partners', their behaviour and attitudes remained exemplary. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn. They use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, skilfully. Pupils enjoy the video clips and PowerPoint presentations, which help to make explanations clearer and lessons more interesting. Teachers

are skilled at planning a wide range of tasks. These are carefully devised to meet the learning needs of all pupils so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. Pupils are encouraged to explore and share ideas with their peers and are invited to assess how well they have understood their learning. They frequently use checklists of success criteria to judge how well they have done. This practice is very well established across the core subjects, but has not yet been extended to others such as history and geography. Pupils understand the levels they are working at, and say marking is particularly helpful. They find their individual targets useful and relish the challenge of working towards, and achieving, them.

Pupils' pleasure in school is reflected in their attendance, which is good. It shows improvement from term to term as a result of working more closely with parents to reduce absence. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They have an excellent understanding of their social and moral responsibilities not only to themselves and each other, but also on a global scale. The 'RATS' club deals with re-cycling, water conservation and other ecological issues and pupils are proud to have reduced the school's waste by the equivalent of one and a quarter elephants. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the need to stay safe. They have an excellent awareness of growing up in a culturally diverse society. The school council is very active and aware of its role in bringing pupils' views to the notice of the school management. For example, they recently fed back their views to the governors on the success of the school's 'Assessment for Learning' initiative. In addition, they organise a range of fund-raising events. Their very good literacy and numeracy skills as well as their excellent global awareness ensure they have an outstanding preparation for future life.

Staff and governors know how well the school is doing. Targets set for future development are demanding, but achievable. Their self-evaluation is totally accurate. There is an outstanding capacity for further improvement, as illustrated by the success of actions taken to further improve writing. The school uses data exceptionally well to check its performance and the robust monitoring system ensures that the quality of teaching and learning is rigorously evaluated. Teachers share good practice and discuss strategies for helping pupils to become independent in their learning. The school improvement plan and subject plans are meticulous, and are vital constituents in the concerted efforts to drive this school forward. The school's success was delightfully expressed by one parent: 'Expectations are high in all areas and the children are valued, praised and rewarded, a lovely school.'

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

When children enter the school, their attainment is often below that expected for their age, although there is considerable variation from year to year. In the Reception class they make excellent progress and they join Year 1 having reached average standards overall, but above average in their personal and creative development. Children are eager to learn because teaching is vibrant and lively. They eagerly planted seeds, discussing with their teacher what they would need to grow successfully. There is a very good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. Visits and visitors, interesting themes, as well as the excellent utilisation of the outside area as an extension to the learning environment, make the curriculum and learning relevant and exciting. The care and attention given to children's welfare are very good. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are exemplary. They ensure that appropriate strategies to support the whole-school focus on writing are implemented and monitored. In addition, the progress of all children is closely monitored to ensure that their needs are met.

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

- Extend opportunities for pupils to assess the quality of their own learning across all subjects.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1   |
| 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?   | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 1   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 1 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| 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                                     | 1 |
| 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  | 2 |
| 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 | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 1 |
| 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 |

<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>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 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  | 1   |
| 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**

14 May 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Hempsted CE Primary School, Hempsted GL2 5LH

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. You certainly seem to be very happy and it was good to hear how you really enjoy your work and all the extra activities in which you are involved. I think your school gives you an excellent education, and is working hard to make it even better.

These are the things I liked best:

- Your behaviour is excellent and you are really keen and enthusiastic about your learning.
- You are all doing extremely well in English, mathematics and science and many other subjects such as design and technology as well.
- You take very seriously the importance of eating healthily at school and taking physical exercise.
- Teachers make learning interesting and fun for you, and you know how to improve your work from marking and target setting.
- You have an excellent, varied curriculum and the special activities arranged to enhance it are outstanding – your production of Oliver sounded magnificent.
- The teachers and staff take excellent care of you while you are in school.
- Your headteachers and governors lead the school extremely well and are very keen to make it even better.

There is one thing that I think could be even better:

- You already have opportunities to check your own learning in English, mathematics and science. I would like to see this extended to other subjects, such as history and geography, as well. I am glad you enjoy your school and hope you will continue to work hard to ensure that it stays as successful as it is now.

Very best wishes

Mrs Christine Huard Lead inspector