

# Charlton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118747
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	313075
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Selwyn Ward

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	213
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Lines
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carole Barrett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2002
<b>School address</b>	Barton Road Dover CT16 2LX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 201275
<b>Fax number</b>	01304 219 238

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 November 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	313075

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average in this average-sized school. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds but many come from socio-economically disadvantaged homes. Children's standards are generally below what is expected for their age when they start school.

## 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. Staff, parents and pupils alike refer to themselves as part of 'the Charlton family' where, as a parent put it, 'Teachers, parents and children all work together as a team to make Charlton a warm and loving environment where children can learn, grow and thrive'. What stands out most about this school is its encouragement both of friendly relationships - with children looking out for and after each other - and of pupils' positive attitudes to learning. These result in pupils' outstanding personal development. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils say how much they love coming to school. With such very good relationships between children and with the adults that look after them, they are made to feel very safe at school and their knowledge and understanding of the need to live healthily are impressive. Parents describe how their children are 'flourishing at this school' and they point to the effect this is having. Several refer to their children 'achieving grades higher than I would have expected' and one eloquently explained how the children were 'taking with them the fundamentals of lifelong learning and principles of citizenship'.

Children get off to a firm foundation in their Reception Year. They make especially good progress in their social development, so that all quickly learn and follow the orderly routines they need to make good progress through their time in school. Some opportunities for creative work are missed, however, for children in the Reception Year because activities are sometimes directed too much by the adults.

Throughout the school, lessons are well planned with varied activities that engage pupils' interest and ensure that all enthusiastically take part and do their very best to succeed. As a result, pupils of all abilities work at a brisk pace and make good progress. The standards attained in the Year 2 and Year 6 tests represent good achievement. In some subjects, standards are above average and the pupils' achievement is remarkable. This is particularly the case in science, where three quarters of the pupils last year attained the higher level in the Year 6 national tests. It is no coincidence that it is the science curriculum that is particularly creative, with topic work that excites pupils' interest by incorporating elements of other subjects, including history and design and technology, and with strong productive links with local secondary schools and businesses. It is writing where pupils have historically done least well, although current work shows that the efforts made by school leaders this year to extend pupils' writing skills are bearing fruit and that standards in writing are rising.

Charlton succeeds because it is well run. Staff share the headteacher's vision of this being 'a family school' and many parents particularly praise how well the staff work as a team with shared aims and values. School leaders recognise, however, that there is scope to further sharpen their own impact: monitoring of lessons has tended to focus on checking elements of good teaching rather than on pupils' learning and progress. This has limited the feedback to teachers on how they can make their lessons even more effective. Nevertheless, the headteacher and senior leaders have an accurate picture of how well the school is doing and of those areas that could be better. Their success in addressing issues such as the dip in standards in 2006 demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

By the end of the Reception Year, the majority of children achieve the expected level for their age in several, but not all, areas of learning. Children's achievement in personal, social and emotional development is particularly good. This is because staff have high expectations of good behaviour, make these clear to the children and are vigilant in ensuring they are maintained. Children are helped to settle to school routines and to feel secure and this helps them to grow in confidence. Staff plan activities carefully, but there is not always enough balance between those tasks that are directed by adults and those the children initiate to enable them to explore and develop their creativity. This limits children's progress in this area of learning.

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

- give children in the Foundation Stage more opportunities to develop their creativity by doing more for themselves
- ensure that school leaders' monitoring of lessons focuses on pupils' learning and gives teachers sharper feedback on how to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well during their time at the school. Standards are average overall, but they are generally better in mathematics and science than in English. Writing has been a relative weakness but is improving. Standards in science have been particularly impressive. Even pupils who have struggled in other subjects have done very well in science, where an imaginative curriculum has stimulated pupils to succeed. In 2007, there were pupils with very low scores in English who nonetheless attained Level 5 in the national test in science. Parents recognise and appreciate such successes. Several describe their children's progress as 'fantastic' and refer to them as having 'come on in leaps and bounds'. The good progress that pupils make in their key literacy and numeracy skills prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils have excellent attitudes to their work and are very supportive of each other. Their behaviour is exemplary. The school's nurturing and caring ethos is very evident in how they empathise with each other's feelings and look after each other. As a parent explained, 'Charlton is more than just a school, it is like a big family as the older children look after the younger ones'. Pupils greatly enjoy school and enthuse about the range of activities and the help they get from staff. One pupil stressed, 'If it wasn't for the teachers, we would not be as good as we are'.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The pupils are very well aware of the spiritual side of life and how this can impact on feelings and emotions. They are very well informed about the need to make healthy choices and how to keep themselves safe. They contribute very well to the life of the school, for example as prefects and on the school council. They are proud of the contribution they make to the wider community, including through charity fundraising. Attendance is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in some respects but children's creative development is held back by the lack of opportunities to do things for themselves. Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well and they use their knowledge of how well each child is doing to plan work that is appropriately matched to pupils' different abilities. This, and the good feedback given in marking, particularly to older pupils, helps ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress. Pupils who need extra help, including those with learning difficulties, benefit from the good support given by teaching assistants.

Teachers generally have high expectations of what their pupils can do, and the pupils enthusiastically rise to the challenge. Because pupils develop in confidence, they are increasingly keen to have a go at answering teachers' questions. This means that the level of active participation in lessons is very high. In turn, this leads to lessons moving on at a brisk pace with pupils getting a lot done. In some lessons, however, particularly in Key Stage 1, a rather heavy reliance on worksheets sometimes limits opportunities for pupils to write at length. Homework has evidently been controversial with parents, with some finding it intrusive, particularly over holiday periods. Most, however, welcome it and say that it helps their children to build well on what they have learnt in lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are offered a curriculum which is varied and provides a wide range of experiences for all. The enrichment activities, through the many clubs and visits, are excellent. Personal, social and health education is catered for extremely well, and the school is careful to ensure that pupils learn how to keep healthy and safe. Cultural development is promoted well and periodic events such as Science Week add to the rich range of experiences the pupils encounter, and fuel their enthusiasm for learning. The links between subjects are strong, for example using literacy skills in a history lesson to reinforce the idea of using non-fiction books for research, but these are more evident in some classes than others.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Parents comment that one of the most striking features of the school is the way 'children are treated as individuals and encouraged to do their best'. Pupils certainly have a very clear picture of how well they are doing. They know the levels at which they are working and what they need to do to do better. There are very good systems for ensuring pupils' safety. Assessment procedures are comprehensive and are regularly maintained by staff to judge the progress the pupils are making and to ensure they are on track to achieve the next stage in their learning. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare because the consequences of actions are well known and any isolated incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they are well supported.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school very well and has built a staff team who work well together to support the pupils. There is a shared drive and vision for maximising what every pupil can achieve. School leaders have an accurate picture both of the school's strengths and of those aspects that could be better. The measures put in place to address pupils' weaker performance in writing have already had a positive effect. School leaders acknowledge that the whole-school targets set for national test results have not been as challenging as they could be because they have been based on relatively modest projections of how well pupils should be doing. They have already agreed to draw up more challenging targets for 2008 and beyond. School leaders monitor lessons regularly but they tend mainly to look out for the features of good teaching rather than focusing on whether pupils are all making good progress in their learning.

Governors know the school well. They are very supportive and discharge their responsibilities appropriately. They have been very active in campaigning for improvements to the school buildings but they do not do as much as they could to challenge school leaders, for example over why standards in English have not been as good as those in science.





## 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?	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	3
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	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	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	3
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	3
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charlton CE Primary School, Dover, CT16 2LX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Many of you told us that Charlton is a good school. We agree. We were pleased to see that it is a well-run school where the good teaching means that you make good progress. In some subjects, like science, you do very well indeed. Writing is where pupils have not usually done as well, but we were pleased to see that the school is doing more this year to help you improve your writing and this is already having an effect.

We were especially impressed by how well you get on with each other and how very well behaved you all are. You have a good understanding of how well you are doing, and we were pleased to see that you all know and use the targets you have in literacy and numeracy to help you to improve your work.

The school looks after you very well, which is why you feel so safe and secure at Charlton. You, and your parents, told us how much you enjoy school and all the interesting things you get to do, both in lessons and in the many clubs. We could see, too, how keen you all are to join in in lessons.

The children in the Reception Year do very well in some areas, particularly in the way they learn to get on together, but we would like to see them do more things for themselves. We think that would help them to do even better. We have also asked that when staff go in to see each other's lessons, they look especially at how well you are all learning. We think that would help them to help your teachers help you to make even better progress.

You can all help, too, by continuing to work hard and doing your best.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours sincerely, Selwyn Ward Lead Inspector