

## Orchard Church of England Primary School

### Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 120120          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Leicestershire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 313523          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 15 April 2008   |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Ceri Morgan HMI |

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                                    | 213                                                           |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                            |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Martin Stephenson                                             |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Fiona Jones                                                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 24 November 2003                                              |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Blenheim Crescent<br>Broughton Astley<br>Leicester<br>LE9 6QX |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01455 283247                                                  |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01455 286948                                                  |

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|--------------------------|---------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors over one day. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the use of assessment information to ensure all pupils do as well as they can, including in their standards of writing

the effectiveness of monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning

the quality of the curriculum, especially for the more able pupils.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, an act of collective worship, meetings with the headteacher and senior staff, a parental questionnaire analysis, a pupil work sample, observing the school day, including pupil behaviour, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of pupils' writing. 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 form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Orchard is an average-size primary school. Around a quarter of its pupils come from outside the immediate area. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well below average. No pupils are in the early stages of learning English and the school population is almost entirely of White British backgrounds. It is full and oversubscribed and has maintained a very stable staff and pupil population for the last three years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Orchard Primary School is an outstanding school that, in the words of one parent, continues to go from strength to strength. A significant success is the progress pupils make, which was in the top 1% of all schools nationally in 2007, as is the excellent personal development of pupils under the careful guidance of a strong staff team. Children settle very quickly and make excellent progress in the Foundation Stage. Standards reached at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are well above national levels and the school has a particularly effective pupil tracking system that uses half-termly assessments to set ambitious targets for the pupils. The pupils themselves routinely reach these targets and as a consequence the school confidently expects over half of the current Year 6 pupils to reach the higher levels in national tests in 2008. Parents recognise and value the commitment and strengths of the school and in their questionnaire replies there was not a single note of dissent.

The emphasis on high standards and achievement has been achieved alongside establishing a delightful ethos in which pupils and staff show kindness, respect and consideration to all individuals. As a consequence pupils thrive whilst here. There is a sensitive induction process which means children get off to a good start. Any pupils who have additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from accurate and frequent assessments which are then translated into prompt and tailored extra support. A strong team of learning support assistants helps to ensure that these pupils also make outstanding progress. This additional support is expensive to maintain but the wholehearted commitment to inclusive practice is an important contributory factor in the outstanding ethos and value for money the school provides. Standards of reading and mathematics are especially impressive and well above national levels. Standards of writing do vary over time and are below those for reading, but are also above national averages. Sentence construction and the use of grammar and punctuation are very secure, although spelling is marginally less so.

The behaviour of pupils is usually exemplary and they respond well to challenge and additional responsibilities. The peer support scheme for example, gives older pupils the chance to make sure the younger ones enjoy themselves and find friends, although one pupil said that they don't always get the chance to do this as 'we are all friendly here anyway'. Pupils have a very strong awareness of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles, develop outstanding moral and social attitudes and show an eagerness to work that is impressive. An example of this is the regular use of 'talking partners' in which pupils have frequent but tightly defined opportunities to discuss their work with a partner. In many lessons the start of talk time was like the flicking of a switch where pupils instantly engaged in detailed, focused discussion for two minutes and then stopped to re-engage in the lesson. This illustrates the exceptionally effective use of time by teachers and pupils alike in which every moment is used productively. Pupils know their targets and how to achieve them. Such approaches are leading to outstanding progress.

The quality of teaching is also outstanding and there are some particular and consistent strengths. These include strong relationships with pupils and other adults, high quality lesson planning, brisk pace, enthusiasm and effective use of resources. They manage to achieve exceptional pupil outcomes and the pupils themselves say their teachers are the best thing about school. However, on inspection a majority of teaching observed was good as a result of teachers talking at length thus restricting contributions by the pupils, especially where there was a range of possible answers. The quality of marking, a key issue in the last inspection, is

significantly improved and is now good, although the school is also aware that it is noticeably better in literacy than in numeracy.

The curriculum is good overall despite offering less challenge for gifted and talented pupils. It is both broad and balanced and is enhanced by a good range of extra activities, such as clubs and residential trips. There are emerging and appropriate plans to develop it through increased use of information and communication technology by pupils and more open-ended challenges, both in problem solving and research and to foster a greater awareness of enterprise and economic well-being.

A crucial factor in the school's success is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. She has clarity of vision and an energetic and rigorous approach to monitoring that has secured continued improvement. Senior managers support her well and are poised to enhance their contribution to school planning and innovation. Middle managers, for example, do not yet use the full range of school data available to them for their subject plans but are keen to do so. This highlights an outstanding capacity to improve further. Future plans, monitored well by supportive governors, are detailed and ambitious. Although the school knows exactly what it wants to do to continue to develop, parents are less sure – they think it is just right as it is.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The Foundation Stage gives children an outstanding start to their education. Children quickly settle as a result of the excellent induction process and enjoy their time here. The adults show a gentle and encouraging approach to all and the children respond very well to this. Relationships are excellent throughout and a thoughtful curriculum enables children to learn key number and literacy skills alongside their social development. They are happy to work independently and the improved outdoor area allows for a wider range of opportunities for learning. Key strengths of the provision are the high quality leadership shown in the Foundation Stage, close working partnership with families and pre-school providers, and the effective deployment of other adults. Although attainment on entry to school is broadly as expected nationally, the children make rapid progress as a result of a carefully prepared range of activities such as the 'Orchard Vet for a Pet' area and learning the 'Number Bond Rap' to help with simple addition, and by the time they enter Year 1, standards are already above average.

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

- Increase the level of challenge to gifted and talented pupils by enhancing the curriculum through fresh and innovative practice.
- Increase the contribution of middle managers to overall school development.

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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?                                                         | 2   |
| 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                                                           | 1 |
| 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                                                                                    | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners                                                                                     | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 2 |
| 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?          | 1 |
| 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>                                       | 1   |
| 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                                                              | 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**

16 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Orchard Church of England Primary School, Leicester LE9 6QX

You will remember I visited your school recently to see how well it was doing. I would like to thank you all for making me feel so welcome and for talking to me about your school.

It is clear that you thoroughly enjoy school and like to learn. Your attitudes and behaviour were excellent and you can rightly be proud of your work. There is no doubt that you attend a school that is excellent. This is as a result of your efforts and those of your teachers. A special strength is the way you all help and look after each other. You have teachers who make sure you learn well and who are also proud of you. They work hard on your behalf and your headteacher is especially good at making sure that you all get the help you need. As a result of this you are making outstanding progress in learning.

All schools, even when they are as good as yours, can always do some things better. I have asked the school to make two improvements for the future and these are:

- to consider fresh and imaginative ways to make lessons even more interesting and challenging, especially for those of you who find learning easy
- to make sure all staff contribute to this by constantly seeking ways to improve the work of the school in important areas such as business and ICT.

I have no doubt you will play your part well and would like to wish you every success in your future studies.

Kind regards

Ceri Morgan Her Majesty's Inspector

16 April 2008

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Kind regards

Ceri Morgan  
Her Majesty's Inspector