

Harby Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120132
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313525
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Pat Walsh HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachael Holliday
Headteacher	Richard Simpkins
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2003
School address	School Lane Harby Melton Mowbray LE14 4BZ
Telephone number	01949 860553
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The following issues were investigated: the pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, and how well the school's leadership promotes high standards and good personal development. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, the pupils' work, discussion with them, the staff, some parents and a governor, and a scrutiny of school documents and parental questionnaires. 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. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than most primary schools. The majority of the pupils come from the local rural area. A very small proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals, and all are of White British heritage. The proportion identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. Pupils transfer to the local high school at 10 years old.

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 a school where pupils flourish in an extremely caring environment and, as a result, achieve exceptionally well academically and in many aspects of their personal development. The comment made by one parent echoes the views of many: 'An excellent school where I have always found my son to be treated as an individual and his thoughts and ideas encouraged'. At the heart of the school's success are the strong Christian ethos and values, which permeate every aspect of school life. Pupils feel extremely safe and secure because the school knows them all well and has thorough procedures in place to ensure their health and safety.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. This is evident in their exemplary behaviour and very positive attitudes to their learning. They have a clear idea of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle because the school has worked hard to improve their understanding, for example in the recent 'Healthy Week'. Many participate in a wide range of sports and games at playtime, and at after-school clubs. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent, but they have limited experience of the cultural diversity of the wider world. The school has recognised this and has begun to introduce measures to develop a broader cultural understanding, for example a multicultural arts week. There is an ethos of respect between pupils and all adults in the school community. The family atmosphere spreads to the local community, for example through environmental work and contributions to the village newspaper. The school's strong and sustained emphasis on ecological awareness has a very positive effect on pupils' personal development and enables them to make an outstanding contribution to the school and the wider community. The school council plays an active role in decision-making, for example choosing the new playground equipment. Pupils know that they are listened to and that their opinions matter and, consequently, they feel highly valued as individuals. The very good social and organisational skills which pupils develop, added to the exceptionally high standards that they attain in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), prepare them extremely well for their long-term future.

Teaching, which is often outstanding and never less than good, ensures that pupils make excellent progress in lessons. Throughout the school, all staff are committed to creating a learning environment in which pupils feel confident, enjoy their work and become enthusiastic and successful learners. One pupil who said, 'I like this school because we have lots of friends, we learn and it's fun', summed this up. Teachers regularly check, with great rigour, how well pupils are doing and give outstanding practical care, guidance and support. Pupils understand how their targets will help them to improve their work and achieve the next level. This means that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are challenged very effectively and make excellent progress. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and most achieve, or exceed, the expectations for their age by the time they enter Year 1. They build very well on this good start, and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are consistently well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. In Key Stage 2, standards continue to be very high so that by the time they transfer to the high school at the end of Year 5, pupils' achievement is excellent. The school's determination to improve pupils' writing by introducing carefully planned strategies, such as the Big Write, has resulted in even better performance in writing across the school in 2007.

The curriculum is good because it is exciting and relevant to pupils' lives and interests. The school makes excellent use of the grounds and building to help pupils learn about recycling, use compost to grow vegetables, and save energy. The pupils speak enthusiastically about what

they can do to help save their planet and are keen to be eco-warriors in the school. Recent developments in curriculum planning have improved opportunities for cross-curricular working; this was evident in a literacy lesson where children were learning how to plan for a topic on the local canal. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn about a wider range of cultures and communities. The curriculum is supported well by a very good range of enrichment activities including sport, music, French and the arts, and pupils spoke enthusiastically about a recent residential visit to the coast.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The excellent performance of the school owes much to the headteacher's commitment and determination to strive for the very best for every pupil. He provides a very strong lead to the staff, who work very well as a team to move the school forward. School self-evaluation is excellent and accurately identifies the areas for further development, although, at times, it underestimates the outstanding aspects of the work of the school. Subject leaders are monitoring practice very effectively and contributing positively to planning for improvement. The work of the school is strengthened further by the governors who are very well informed, and provide an excellent level of support and challenge. The consistent progress made since the previous inspection shows the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement and provides outstanding value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good teaching and leadership. The staff have created a warm and welcoming ethos so that children settle well into school and enjoy their learning. The children's personal development is good; they behave very well and quickly develop positive attitudes to learning. The younger children feel safe and secure, and benefit from the time they spend with the older children who support and help them in their learning. The curriculum is well planned and provides a good balance of listening and doing, and encourages children to be involved and make choices about their learning. There are good opportunities for creative development through linked topic work and access to equipment. Outdoor provision is satisfactory, but is not yet offering the broadest experiences to develop children's learning to the full. The school has plans in place to improve the outdoor classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- use the curriculum to develop pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.

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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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ 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	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	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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

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

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed looking around, meeting you, your teachers and teaching assistants, and seeing what you achieve in school. I found talking to you in your lessons and at lunchtime very interesting and helpful. These discussions helped me to come to decisions about how good your school is. I particularly enjoyed your singing and recorder playing in assembly.

I know you are all very proud of your school and rightly so. Your school is outstanding and is an excellent place to learn. Your teachers are really helping you to learn in exciting ways and go to great lengths to help you to do your best at all times. It is very clear that you enjoy school, this shines through in your excellent behaviour and in the way you help one another around school. Your writing is getting better because everyone is working together to make sure you know what to do next to improve. I have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to learn about how families and communities live in other cultures, I hope you find this interesting.

The school is in excellent hands under the leadership of your headteacher. The way that all the teachers and governors work together will help the school to get even better in years to come. I hope that you will carry on working hard and continue to make your school a great place to learn.

I wish you well for the future.