

# Horspath Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123121
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314505
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Vanessa Ward

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	123
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Debbie Montgomery
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jenny Knight
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Blenheim Road Horspath Oxford OX33 1RY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 872702
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 872702

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, and investigated:

- how successfully the school is improving achievement in writing;
- how effectively teaching challenges different groups of pupils, particularly the more able,
- what the apparent strengths are in the provision and outcomes for pupils' personal development.

The inspector gathered evidence from the school's records, planning and policies, from observing teaching and learning, from discussions with staff, governors and pupils and from scrutiny of parents' questionnaires. The inspector did not investigate other aspects of the school's work in detail, but 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 in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is average sized. Pupils enter in the September after their fourth birthday and attend part-time until the term in which they become five. Prior to starting school, many attend the privately-run on-site Nursery. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. A minority come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. These include pupils with moderate learning, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The percentage of pupils who qualify for free school meals is well below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Horspath Church of England Primary School is a good school. It provides a good education that enables its pupils to achieve well in both their academic and personal development. Care for individual pupils is outstanding because it is given a high priority by all staff. This means that pupils feel very safe and secure in school and develop positive attitudes to learning. Parents comment favourably on the 'kind and relaxed atmosphere' and the 'friendly, professional and approachable staff'.

The headteacher has a thorough understanding of how to improve the school and she has developed a strong sense of commitment and teamwork among the staff and governors. She enables the staff to carry out their leadership roles effectively and to successfully influence developments in their subjects. The governing body has a good understanding of, and involvement in, school improvement. It fulfils its roles very effectively and offers a good balance of support and challenge to the headteacher.

The school's procedures for self-evaluation are rigorous and accurate and have led to successful initiatives, such as raising standards in reading and mathematics. Such developments indicate that the school has good capacity to continue improving.

Standards in test results fluctuate because numbers in each year group are small and so the proportions of higher and lower attainers affect the statistics disproportionately. Overall, by Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science, often being well above average. However, standards in writing are usually lower than those for other subjects, being markedly so in 2007. Following analysis of pupils' work, the school has implemented a range of strategies to improve standards in writing. These include tracking pupils' progress with greater rigour and providing additional support for pupils whose progress is slower than expected. These strategies are having a positive impact, and achievement is improving. The school recognises that it needs to continue with these initiatives so that the full benefits are realised.

Good teaching and a stimulating curriculum contribute to the pupils' good progress. They comment that, 'teachers always make learning fun'. This, combined with positive relationships, ensures that pupils enjoy learning. At the start of lessons, teachers share with their classes what they are going to learn, and this helps pupils to review their progress at the end of lessons and to understand how well they are doing. Although teachers plan work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, they are aware that they could sometimes provide greater challenge for the more able pupils. This issue is currently being addressed and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The curriculum has recently been successfully revised to make it more creative and to increase the links between subjects. A recent whole-school study of rainforests has both enthused the pupils and provided valuable opportunities to make interesting links between subjects such as geography, English, history and science.

The outstanding care, guidance and support contribute significantly to the pupils' good personal development. Parents comment on how the school 'builds confidence and social skills'. Pupils who have moderate learning, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are identified early and are given excellent support to help them to make good progress, both academically and in their personal development. Pupils are supported particularly well when they prepare for the transition to secondary school. Pupils are very aware of the challenging targets they are trying to achieve. The school is increasingly involving them in evaluating their own learning. Systems

such as 'playground pals' and 'buddies' help to make playtimes happy and safe for all. Pupils take all of these responsibilities very seriously and carry them out conscientiously. They say that bullying is rare and that there is always an adult available to help if there is a problem. Pupils appreciate the care shown to them by the staff.

Pupils are proud of their school council and feel that it gives them an opportunity to express their ideas and views. They say that it enables them to contribute to developments such as the school's healthy eating programme and to decision-making about things like playground equipment. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, and participate enthusiastically in exercise and healthy eating in school. Their involvement in local environmental issues and in recycling helps them to understand broader issues. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem, and behave well, both in lessons and at playtimes. Opportunities to work in pairs and teams and to organise fund-raising for charity, combined with the school's successful focus on basic skills, prepare them well for later life.

Many parents commented positively about the school, often mentioning the hard work of the caring staff. One parent's view summed up the opinion of many in saying 'it is a very happy school where our children do well'.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are given a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. They are helped to settle quickly when they are first admitted and this enables them to adjust speedily to school routines. On entry to the Reception class, many of the children have skills that are better than those generally found in four-year-olds. Good teaching and regular assessment enable the children to make good progress, and most reach the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, often exceeding them in several areas of learning. The curriculum provides a good range of activities that link to all areas of learning. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. The school makes best use of the outdoor area although it is currently somewhat restricted. Plans are in hand to expand and develop it further.

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

- Raise standards and achievement in writing to redress the imbalance between standards in English and mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching provides sufficient challenge for more able pupils.

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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?	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	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	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**

03 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Horspath Church of England Primary School, Oxford, OX33 1RY

Thank you for welcoming me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and hearing your comments. You think that you go to a good school and I agree with you.

Here are some of the good things I found in your school:

- All of the grown-ups take excellent care of you and this helps you to feel safe and happy in school.
- You make good progress in your work and do better than pupils in many other schools in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at Year 6.
- Your teachers make learning interesting. You told me that lessons are fun.
- You are good at looking after one another and you take care of your school, and this makes it a happy place to be.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are good at finding ways to make your school better.

I have asked your teachers to do a couple of things to make your school even better. They are already helping you to make your writing more interesting. I have asked them to continue with this, so that your test results in writing are as good as those for mathematics and reading. Also, I have asked your teachers to make sure that work is hard enough for those of you who learn quickly. You can help with both of these things by always doing your best.

I hope you continue to enjoy being at school and working hard.

Best wishes

Vanessa Ward

Lead Inspector