

Garsington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 123123 |
| Local Authority | Oxfordshire |
| Inspection number | 314506 |
| Inspection date | 11 October 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Christopher Schenk HMI |

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

| | |
|---|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 180 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr N King |
| Headteacher | Mr K Brassington |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 February 2004 |
| School address | Wheatley Road Garsington Oxford OX44 9EW |
| Telephone number | 01865 361263 |
| Fax number | 01865 361263 |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 4-11 |
| Inspection date | 11 October 2007 |
| Inspection number | 314506 |

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how the school is bringing about higher achievement in Key Stage 1, whether the school's judgements about the quality of teaching are accurate, and what is the quality of the care, guidance and support given to the pupils. He gathered evidence from observing lessons in all classes, looking at pupils' books, reading the school's self-evaluation and other documents, analysing test and assessment results and the responses to the parents' questionnaire, and talking to pupils, the head teacher, other staff and the chair of governors. 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

Garsington is one-form entry primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is in the middle, since it is more than about half the schools in the country and less than the other half. The same is true of the proportion of pupils who are of minority ethnic heritage and of those who speak English as an additional language. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is around average. About two thirds of the pupils come from the villages of Garsington, Cuddesdon and Denton. The others come by parental choice from parts of Oxford City or from other villages. The turnover of pupils is relatively high: around 10% come to the school or leave at other than the normal times during each year. Many of these are from families who are studying at Ripon Theological College in Cuddesdon, usually for a two-year period.

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 because the teachers take great care to find out what the individual pupils in their class already know and can do, so that they can give them work at the right level, that is not too easy or too difficult. When children first come to the school at around the age of four they vary widely in their knowledge and skills and in the pre-school experiences they have had. As a result, all year groups have pupils with a wide range of attainment in them and there are differences in the overall levels of attainment between year groups. Some year groups were below average when they first came to the school; others were around average. Because class teachers cope well with the different levels within their class, all pupils are able to make good progress, whatever their starting points. By the time that they leave the school at the age of eleven, standards are high. For the last three years, the results of the tests in Year 6 have been above average in English, mathematics and science. In 2007, nearly half the pupils reached the higher level in English and mathematics and over half did so in science.

Following the last inspection, the school has worked successfully to raise the standards attained in the assessments at the end of Year 2, which are now around average. However, the school has rightly identified the need to continue with this process and, in particular, to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level, especially in writing. Indeed, writing has been a focus for development throughout the school and this has resulted in improvements because pupils are given stimulating and interesting things to write about.

The pupils are enthusiastic learners and their enjoyment of school is outstanding. Several pupils comment that what they really like about the school is that 'we do hard work and we have fun lessons'. They are all given full access to the range of activities that is provided. They much appreciate the trips, the visitors, the clubs and the opportunities they have for sporting activities and for musical and dramatic performances. The school's links with Garsington Opera make a special contribution to the experiences of the pupils, who all learn to play the violin or cello in Year 3, as well as having the opportunity to go backstage in Year 6. They gain throughout their time at the school from the contact that they have with a local cultural centre that is of national importance.

Because the pupils are encouraged by their teachers, they grow in self-esteem; because they are also challenged to improve, they grow in self-knowledge. When a group of Year 6 pupils talked about the all-round personal targets they had set themselves, they showed maturity, insight and an understanding of what they needed to do to get better in their academic work and in their personal development. Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities for looking after the younger ones and all pupils value the harmonious way in which they get on with one another. As one pupil said: 'You know everybody and you are friends with everybody so if you are lonely, you can go and play with anyone, boys and girls'.

The school council is active and its views are listened to. It has been instrumental in raising awareness of ecological issues. As a result, the school has recently received a bronze award and is working towards Eco-school status.

The teaching is good. The following comment from a pupil illustrates the skilful approach: 'When you're stuck the teacher doesn't tell you the answer but helps you to work it out for yourself'. Lessons engage the interests of the pupils and take account of their different levels of attainment. The teachers share their expertise and subject knowledge and the teaching assistants give good support. There are helpful links between subjects and teachers and pupils

regularly use information and communication technology (ICT). As a result, the pupils are confident and imaginative in their ICT skills.

Pastoral care is good because the school has a detailed knowledge of its pupils and their backgrounds and has their well-being at heart. Academic guidance is thorough and helps pupils to know what they need to do to improve. There is some extra support for pupils who have learning difficulties and some additional provision for pupils with particular gifts and talents. However, the school is aware that the extra support and additional provision does not always meet the pupils' needs in the most efficient and appropriate way and there are sensible plans to review procedures in the near future.

The headteacher leads the school well. He has the respect of the pupils, the parents, the governors and the staff. He is ably supported by the senior management team and all teachers play a full part in identifying areas for improvement and working on them together. The governors are closely involved in the work of the school and offer challenge as well as a great deal of support.

The response to the parents' questionnaire, sent out at the time of the inspection, was overwhelmingly positive. The following comment was typical of many: 'We are extremely pleased with all aspects of the school. The teachers are very approachable and seem to genuinely care for the children. Our child has thrived on school life and is really enjoying the challenges. We think the behaviour and discipline of the children is a credit to the school and we like the way all the years get together and look after one another'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

From the moment that the children come into the Foundation Stage class in the morning, they are in a calm and purposeful environment with plenty of interesting things to do so that they can learn in an enjoyable way. Although it is early in the school year, they are already eager and disciplined learners. As one parent comments: 'I am amazed at how quickly and confidently my child has settled. She absolutely loves school (to the point of annoyance - and;quot;Can we go yet?and;quot;). The staff are very inviting and friendly and it comes across as a very motivating approach to learning'. The teaching is good because both members of staff are always encouraging and often challenging in the questions they ask and the comments they make as the children take part in activities. The children show great confidence, for example in using computers and in showing the information books they had made to the rest of the school in a Book Week assembly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in Key Stage 1.
- Improve further the procedures for the identification, support and challenge for pupils with learning difficulties, for those with particular gifts and talents, and for those with both.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Achievement and standards

| | |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ 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 | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| 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? | 2 |

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? | 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

29 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Garsington Church of England Primary School, Oxford, OX44 9EW

Thank you for your welcome when I came to visit your school recently. I am particularly grateful to the Year 6 pupils who came to talk to me during the lunch hour.

I think that you go to a good school. You make good progress and reach high standards in English, mathematics and science as well as being able to use computers confidently and imaginatively. I am particularly impressed by your enthusiasm for learning: you really enjoy coming to school. You told me that you have to work hard, but that lessons are also fun. I think you are given a good range of interesting things to learn about and to do, including trips, clubs, sports and performances. I am pleased to know that you gain such a lot from your contacts with Garsington Opera. Your school council is active and has raised awareness of ecological issues so you are now working towards Eco-school status. As one of you said to me, 'What makes the school really good is the teachers because they are really nice and when you're stuck the teacher doesn't tell you the answer but helps you to work it out for yourself'.

I have talked to your headteacher and to some of the teachers and governors about what the school can do to become even better. I have said that they should continue to improve the progress that younger pupils make. I have also said that they should go ahead with the plans they have made to look more carefully at what things you find difficult and what things you are particularly good at so that you can have any extra support or additional challenge that you need.

You can help them by continuing to look after each other, to behave well, to be enthusiastic and to work hard.

Best wishes

Christopher Schenk

Her Majesty's Inspector