

Christopher Rawlins Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123186
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	314530
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2008
Reporting inspector	John Collins

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Oldfield
Headteacher	Mrs R C McCready
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	Aynho Road Adderbury Banbury OX17 3NH
Telephone number	01295 810497
Fax number	01295 816074

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2008
Inspection number	314530

© Crown copyright 2008

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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils at this smaller than average sized school are of a White British background. Whilst the overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average, it varies between year groups. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English are much smaller than average. The school has Healthy School status and is working towards an Eco School silver award. After the closure of the Partnership Foundation Unit, the school has recently opened a new Foundation Stage Unit, which admits three-year olds.

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, improving school. The great majority of parents see this as an effective school and a focal part of the community. One parent echoed the feelings of many when commenting, 'We feel we made a good choice of primary school'. In a very short time, the strong leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff, ably supported by the governors, has successfully dealt with issues over staffing, the quality of teaching, and pupils' behaviour and has overseen the introduction of a new Foundation Stage Unit. Issues from the last inspection over Foundation Stage provision, teaching and learning, and assessment have been successfully addressed. Children start school with skills expected for their age. The new unit is highly regarded by many parents, who are 'extremely impressed with the new Foundation Stage'.

Improvements to teaching and learning, and new systems of assessment and tracking pupils' progress are resulting in improved achievement. Tracking and monitoring data shows that achievement is now good and standards are rising. Current standards by the end of Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in reading and mathematics at both the expected and higher levels. Whilst standards in writing are above average at the expected level, there are fewer pupils who achieve the higher levels. The school recognises the need to improve standards in writing, particularly for more able pupils.

Pupil's behaviour has improved significantly and is now good. The great majority of pupils have responded well to the raised expectations of their teachers and show good attitudes to learning. They readily talk of how much they enjoy their lessons and the activities planned for them. Pupils appreciate the need to work hard; as one Year 6 pupil put it, 'You learn more when the work is hard'. Talking to pupils shows they have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle, evident in their suggestions to improve school lunch menus. They show a good awareness of being safe. The school council feels that it makes a good contribution to the life of the school. It values its involvement in promoting good behaviour in the playground and in caring for younger pupils by acting as 'lunchtime leaders'.

The leadership team has introduced new methods of assessment and tracking that are beginning to be more securely established in the day-to-day life of the school. Better use is now being made of the data collected to track the progress of individual pupils. However, it is not yet used as effectively to track the progress of year groups or particular groups of pupils nor to identify specific targets for improving standards and achievement. Whilst the current school improvement plan provides a secure basis for future improvement, at present it does not always clearly relate its areas for development to the impact they will have on raising standards and achievement.

The school has successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection over provision in design and technology, and information and communication technology (ICT). Successful improvements since the last inspection and improvements in teaching, behaviour and in the shared vision created by the leadership team provide good evidence that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for the Foundation Stage has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The school now admits three-year-old children into the well-resourced unit. Teaching provides a good balance between activities children choose for themselves and those led by staff. This helps children develop independence and show initiative. A good emphasis is placed upon children's personal, social and emotional development. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well by all adults and children are encouraged to work collaboratively. Good use is made of the outdoor areas to promote learning. Planning between staff is consistent and addresses all areas of learning. Assessment is thorough and used to plan activities that motivate the children well, although occasionally some do not provide sufficient challenge for the more able. The good transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is carefully managed. The majority of children respond well in this supportive and stimulating learning environment and make good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for more able pupils in both key stages, through providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- Make school improvement targets more specific by linking them to expected gains in pupil's learning in order to identify more clearly how well particular groups are making progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The latest test and teacher assessments for 2007 show that standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 were broadly average at the expected levels and above average in the higher levels in mathematics and science. Standards in reading have improved more than in writing. The school has recognised the need to improve standards in writing and its current plans are beginning to address this issue. Last year in 2007, achievement was satisfactory. Current tracking and assessment data shows that this has improved and is now good. These improvements have been brought about by consistently good teaching, better focused support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) and increasingly effective leadership by subject leaders in English, mathematics and science. Good provision for groups of pupils with moderate learning difficulties enables them to make progress equally as good as other groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In assemblies, pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on important values. They have a good sense of right and wrong and are polite and considerate towards each other. Fundraising for charities, such as the guide dog sponsorship scheme, helps to involve pupils in the community beyond school. Pupils respond positively to the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles. They enjoy growing their own vegetables and eating fruit at morning break. Pupils appreciate the additional exercise gained from joining the 'walking bus' to school. They are keen to come to school and attendance is above average. As one parent said, 'The fact that my children are always keen to attend school

speaks volumes!' Lessons are enjoyable because 'teachers make learning fun'. Very good relationships ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. The school's good focus upon teamwork and applying basic skills helps to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are making good progress because the quality of teaching and learning is now consistently good and often better. Accurate monitoring identified where teaching and learning needed to be improved and robust action has been taken to bring about improvements. Lessons are well planned and behaviour is well managed. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults, and these contribute strongly to pupils' enjoyment of learning. A purposeful working atmosphere is created in which pupils are challenged to work hard. All pupils are encouraged to contribute to class discussions. These good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills help improve pupils' confidence and self-esteem. In most lessons the pace of learning is good, but this dips when teachers do not allow sufficient time for pupils to contribute their own ideas. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and their good support for pupils with moderate learning difficulties in literacy and numeracy enables these pupils to make equally as good progress as other groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good achievement in English, mathematics and science is supported through a broad and well-balanced curriculum. Whilst links between subjects are being developed more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills remains an area for development. The creative arts and the use of ICT are particularly good. A significant strength is the focus on personal learning for the older pupils. Pupils are helped to identify the conditions in which they learn most effectively. Where appropriate pupils are encouraged to identify their own questions to answer, promoting their independence in learning. This involvement in devising their own route to learning has generated an enthusiasm and a love of learning that has increased their awareness of the part they play in raising standards and achievement. The school's involvement in the Healthy Schools Award and Eco Schools initiative contributes well to pupil's personal development and well-being. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of enrichment activities. These include 'special subject days', sports activities and opportunities to learn modern foreign languages.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All aspects of health and safety and safeguarding are well established and understood by all staff, helping pupils to feel safe and secure. External agencies are used effectively to meet pupils' specific needs. Very good support for pupils when they join school, transfer to a new key stage, or move on to their secondary school enables them to settle quickly. Assessment is helping to identify individual pupils who require additional support. However, insufficient use is made of this data to identify the needs of particular groups of pupils. Teachers' marking helps pupils to know how well they are doing. In writing, pupil's assessment of their own and each other's work is promoted well enabling them to identify areas for improvement. The new

system of setting individual targets for pupils helps to engage them in their own learning. This provides challenge and helps them to gauge their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff have successfully created a shared vision and sense of direction that is moving the school forward. Governors are providing good support and hold the school to account for its plans. A very large majority of parents are supportive of the school, finding it 'a school with a very welcoming atmosphere'. Leadership and management of the new Foundation Stage unit are good. Subject leadership in English, mathematics and science is also good. Leaders are making a positive and successful contribution to the drive to raise standards and achievement through their good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. Ambitious and challenging targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics. Senior and middle leaders are all involved in the school's accurate evaluation of its strengths and areas for development, identifying the need to improve further, particularly in writing and its use of assessment data.

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	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?	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	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?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christopher Rawlins Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary
School, Banbury, OX17 3NH

We were very pleased to visit your school and see you working so hard. Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work. The school council and others told us how much you enjoy school. We agree with you that yours is a good school.

These are some of the things we think your school does well.

- The headteacher, teachers and other staff, and the governors are doing a good job in running the school.
- Many of you are reaching higher standards than you have done before, particularly in mathematics.
- We agree with you that this is a safe and happy school where learning is fun.
- We think your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.

We think there are some things the school could do better.

- It needs to improve your standards in writing, particularly for more able pupils, by letting you use your writing skills in other subjects.
- We have asked the school to set targets to improve your standards even more carefully so they can check on the progress you are making.

You can help them by continuing to work hard and enjoy your time at school. Remember to ask your teachers if you have any problems, we are sure they will help you to do even better than you are doing now.

Good luck to you all in the future.

John Collins

Lead Inspector