

Condover CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123543
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	314632
Inspection date	17 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Wilde
Headteacher	Jane Potter
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	Condover Shrewsbury SY5 7AA
Telephone number	01743 872108
Fax number	01743 874904

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who investigated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues: • why the performance of pupils in mathematics is relatively weaker than in English and science • how effectively the school checks pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, assessment and tracking records, observations of the school at work, and discussions with staff, the chair of governors and pupils. The parental questionnaire responses were analysed. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its selfevaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a small village school with pupils taught in four mixed-age classes. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.

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. It promotes tolerance and care for others within a Christian ethos and provides pupils with a friendly and stimulating environment in which to learn. Parents are rightly proud of the experiences provided for their children and are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parental comment is typical of many: 'We are delighted with the progress our daughter is making. The staff and children have a very caring attitude to each other that contributes to the warm and friendly atmosphere you feel as soon as you enter the school.' At the heart of the school's success are good leadership and management. The headteacher provides focused educational direction and a clear vision for future improvement. All involved in the life of the school share this vision and a strong team ethos is evident. Staff with management responsibilities carry out their duties diligently and with enthusiasm. Self-evaluation is accurate and enables the school to identify and prioritise appropriate areas for development. These include improving the attainment of more-able pupils in mathematics and developing the role of leaders of subjects other than in English, mathematics and science to monitor more effectively the progress pupils make. Good professional development opportunities are provided for all staff and these are linked well to whole-school priorities and individual needs. The role of governors has been improved since the last inspection and now, as well as continuing to be supportive, they are also effective in holding the school to account for its performance. The school's recent track record shows there is good capacity to make any necessary improvements. Children have a good start to their education in the Reception class and make good progress. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1, standards are just above national averages in all the areas of learning. This good progress is maintained throughout the rest of the school. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and are well above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. As pupils start school with skill levels that are broadly similar to those expected, this represents good achievement. The performance of pupils in mathematics is relatively weaker than in English and science. The main reason for this is that fewer pupils attain the highest level in this subject than in English and science. This stems from more-able pupils not always being challenged sufficiently to perform to their full capability. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because the extra support they receive is effectively targeted. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. They behave well and are kind and considerate to others. Pupils collaborate well in pairs and small groups to solve problems and complete tasks set for them. They make a good contribution to the life of the school by taking on various responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council. Leaders are keen to develop the council's role in enabling pupils to have a voice in how the school might develop further. Pupils contribute effectively to the wider village community by their involvement in church services and environmental work that includes recycling paper. Pupils are adopting healthy lifestyles well, being aware of the need to eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise. They also show a good awareness of how to stay safe, for example, by moving responsibly in and around school. They enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above-average rate of attendance. Pupils are developing literacy, numeracy and social skills well, which shows they are prepared effectively for the next stage of their education. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and this makes a positive contribution to their good progress. They are inquisitive and keen to take on responsibility, and show initiative in their activities. This was seen to good effect in a literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in which they were developing effectively their skills in forming complex sentences and punctuating

them correctly. Teachers use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding and extend their speaking and listening skills. They plan lessons thoughtfully to encourage pupils to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, and this contributes well to their good personal development. Planning is usually effective in providing pupils with activities that match their different abilities, which is especially important in mixed-age classes. However, teachers do not always successfully challenge pupils who are more able to work to their full capability in mathematics. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The curriculum is extended well by a variety of good quality enrichment opportunities. These include extra-curricular activities and a wide range of visits to places of educational interest. Pupils say they especially enjoy the residential stay they can experience in Years 5 and 6. They also have opportunities to work with a variety of visitors, such as an environmental artist, musicians and drama groups, to add further interest to their learning. There are good links with others, including professional sports coaches, to extend pupils' skills. The curriculum is planned carefully to include focused topic weeks, such as environment week, multicultural performing arts week and Get Up and Go week. It is also enhanced by the use of a specialist teacher to develop pupils' skills in music throughout the school. The school is aiming to improve further the good curriculum for children in the Reception class by using the outdoor area more effectively to promote their learning. The pastoral care and support of pupils is strong and parents are very pleased with this aspect of the school's provision. There are rigorous procedures to ensure pupils' safety and well-being in and around school and during visits. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school. There are good links with outside agencies to provide extra support for individual pupils when required. The procedures for checking the progress that pupils make in English, mathematics and science are thorough. For example, they enabled the school to identify that pupils who are more able in mathematics do not always make the progress of which they are capable. They are not rigorous enough in other subjects to provide a clear picture of the progress pupils make.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress because of the good quality teaching they receive. The teacher plans lessons effectively to meet the different needs of children. Activities are practical, stimulating and linked well to their own experiences. As a result, they capture their interest and imagination and children enjoy their learning. They are encouraged to make choices for themselves and this makes a positive contribution to their development as independent learners. There are good procedures for helping children settle in when they first start in Reception and they quickly become accustomed to everyday routines. Their social development is promoted well through being encouraged to work together in pairs and small groups. Leadership is good and has identified the need to utilise the recently improved outdoor area more effectively to promote children's learning. There are good links with parents that ensure they are kept fully informed about how their children are doing throughout the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils who are more able in mathematics are always effectively challenged.
- More rigorously monitor the progress made by pupils in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

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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 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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

- 18 April 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Conover Church of England Primary School, Conover SY5 7AA. Thank you for the really friendly welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you and seeing the things you do. Yours is a good school. It helps you make good progress and reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are well above average by the end of Year 6. What I found your school does well.
- It is a very friendly and happy place in which to work and play.
- You enjoy coming to school and your attendance rate is above average.
- Children have a good start to their education in the Reception class.
- You behave well and are kind and considerate to others.
- You make a good contribution to the school community and to the life of the village.
- The curriculum is made interesting by enrichment weeks, after-school clubs and a wide range of visits and visitors.
- You are keen to learn and you work well with other pupils.
- Adults look after you well and make sure you are safe in and around school and on visits.
- You are adopting healthy lifestyles well and show a good awareness of how to stay safe. What I have asked your school to do now.
- Make sure that those of you who are more able in mathematics are always given work that makes you think hard.
- Check more carefully the progress you make in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. I hope you carry on being kind and considerate to others and also keep on enjoying your learning. All my best wishes for the future Melvyn Hemmings Lead inspector



18 April 2008

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Inspection of Condover Church of England Primary School, Condover SY5 7AA.

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What I found your school does well.

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- Adults look after you well and make sure you are safe in and around school and on visits.
- You are adopting healthy lifestyles well and show a good awareness of how to stay safe.

What I have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure that those of you who are more able in mathematics are always given work that makes you think hard.
- Check more carefully the progress you make in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

I hope you carry on being kind and considerate to others and also keep on enjoying your learning.

All my best wishes for the future
Melvyn Hemmings
Lead inspector