

West Chinnock Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123820
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	314730
Inspection date	4 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Alison Grainger

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	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Wheatly
Headteacher	H Townson
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2004
School address	Scotts Way West Chinnock Crewkerne TA18 7PT
Telephone number	01935 881367
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school draws its pupils from the village of West Chinnock and the surrounding rural area. Pupils are from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. Almost all are of White British heritage. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The amount of movement of pupils in and out of the school, other than at the usual times of joining or leaving, is higher than in most schools. As a result of a falling school roll, the school has recently reduced from three to two classes. There is a wide spread in individual pupil attainment on entry. Most children begin the Reception Year with the skills expected for their age.

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. The warm family atmosphere together with the exceptionally wide range of activities such as clubs and visits are features particularly appreciated by pupils and their parents. As one parent said, reflecting the views of many, 'I think West Chinnock is a fantastic school which makes excellent use of its resources and gives the children an all-round and imaginative education.'

High quality pastoral care results in children settling well in the Reception Year and quickly growing in confidence. Almost all pupils enjoy school a lot and behave consistently well. They care for each other and, as one pupil commented, 'Almost everyone is friendly to everyone.' Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that they are sure that they have an adult to whom they can turn should the need arise. Healthy lifestyles are actively encouraged and pupils gain a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy through diet and exercise.

Pupils contribute much to the school and wider community. Their development of positive personal attributes and a desire to learn does much to prepare them for their future lives. The breadth of the curriculum successfully increases pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. However, pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of modern multi-ethnic Britain is less well developed than it should be.

By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve well and standards are above average. Pupils not only do well by the time they leave in English, mathematics and science, but they also become competent in using computers. The good curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to succeed in sports and a wide variety of creative and practical activities. The success of members of the cookery club, for example, is well known. Although pupils' progress is good overall, the most significant gains in English, mathematics and science are made from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6.

Teaching, as well as the curriculum, is a key factor influencing pupils' progress. Teaching is consistently at least satisfactory and much is good, particularly in Years 3 to 6, which means that its influence on pupils' progress is good overall. When teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, not enough account is taken of the full range of needs in the mixed age and ability classes.

Leadership and management are good. The governors, headteacher and other staff work well as a team to support pupils personally and academically and are clearly focused on improving the school. However, the way in which data on pupils' attainment and progress is recorded is not an effective management tool. The systems in use are adequate, but they do not support easy and regular reviews of how well each individual is doing or of the effectiveness of the school in meeting their needs. Even so, the school has a good understanding of its main strengths and weaknesses. It has made good progress since the previous inspection and is well placed to improve further as demonstrated in the smooth way in which it has adapted to being a two-class rather than a three-class school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children are given good and sensitive support to settle into school. The school draws well on its positive relationship with the on-site playgroup, preparing children for the move well in advance of the start of the Reception Year. As one parent commented, 'The transition from

pre-school to Class 1 was done with great care. Any initial reservations regarding having three year groups in one class have been unfounded.' Reception children benefit from mixing with older children. This, together with a high level of adult support, helps children to get off to a strong start in aspects of their personal, social and emotional development.

Adult involvement in activities helps children to develop their speaking and listening skills and to increase their vocabulary. However, the school rightly recognises that there are times when children do not have enough opportunities for independence and initiative. Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory and ensure that children make reasonable progress in all areas of learning. The school has clear plans for developing the provision further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teaching takes full account of the wide range of pupils' needs in each class.
- Record data on pupils' attainment and progress in a way that supports easy and regular checks on how well individuals are doing.
- Increase pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of modern multi-ethnic society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6 and reach standards that are above average. Not only do almost all pupils reach the level expected for their age in the national tests in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, but a good proportion also reach the higher level. Progress is not as significant in the Reception Year to Year 2 as it is in Years 3 to 6 although it is steady.

The satisfactory progress made lower down the school is reflected in the standards attained. At the end of the Reception Year, attainment is close to the level expected and it is broadly average at the end of Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Real strengths in moral and social development are reflected in pupils' good and much improved behaviour, their positive attitudes and the respect they show towards each other and the adults in school. Older pupils willingly support younger ones. Pupils who join the school other than at the usual time are made to feel welcome and settle in quickly as a result. Enjoyment of school is shown in the above average attendance rate, which is an improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through the school council and by taking on responsibilities. They are actively involved in the wider community, for example participating in village events and raising funds for charities. Cultural development is a relative weakness because pupils do not know a lot about the diversity of faiths and cultural traditions of people living in Britain today.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is strongest in Years 3 to 6 and this is why pupils' progress accelerates in these years and standards rise. Nevertheless, there are good features to teaching in all year groups. Lessons are characterised by a calm and productive atmosphere. Explanations and instructions are clear so that pupils know what they are doing and why they are doing it. The deployment of teaching assistants to work with specific groups is well thought through.

Activities for groups are usually well matched to the pupils' ages and capabilities. Teachers organise groups within their classes so that the most able are challenged by being taught with older pupils. Where relevant to pupils' needs, those with learning difficulties work with a younger age group. However, the reason why some teaching is satisfactory rather than good is that it is not closely enough matched to the full range of needs in the class. This is particularly the case in whole-class sessions when the input and questions are not targeted sufficiently at different groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

An exceptional range of activities is offered in addition to daily lessons, through lunchtime and after-school clubs, visits out of school and visitors who share experience and expertise with pupils. These activities contribute tremendously to pupils' enjoyment of school. Themed days and weeks also broaden pupils' experiences considerably, as does the teaching of Spanish throughout the school. A close partnership with other local schools also increases the opportunities available, for example through use of a shared minibus for visits.

The curriculum in subjects such as English, mathematics and science contributes to the good progress pupils make by the end of Year 6. Writing is given a higher profile now than at the time of the previous inspection. A new computer room is increasing opportunities for the use of computers across the curriculum. The school is continuing to develop its curriculum to meet the challenges presented by having pupils in Years 3 to 6 together in one class. It is also rightly exploring how the curriculum for Reception to Year 2 pupils might be altered to support better progress in these years.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is a real strength. Many parents, including those whose children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, value the high level of care and support provided. Pupils who join the school other than at the usual time are helped to settle quickly and report how happy they are to be at this school. Good efforts are made to ensure pupils' health and safety and arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. Adults are good role models for pupils in how they treat others and, in the words of one parent, provide 'a kind, caring environment'.

There are good features to the academic guidance. Targets to help pupils to improve their performance are individual and well matched to their needs. Pupils' work is marked regularly although there are some missed opportunities to provide comments linked to targets to push learning on. While pupils' attainment and progress are monitored satisfactorily, the systems in

use do not easily support regular and frequent reviews of how well each individual is doing both in the short term and over a longer period.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong teamwork of the headteacher, staff and governors has led to good improvement since the previous inspection. Staff are committed to doing their best for pupils and put a good deal of effort into providing a huge range of activities within and outside the school day. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction and leads by example. The involvement of other teachers in reviewing and developing provision has increased and is now good. Responsibilities are sensibly distributed to make good use of staff expertise.

Governance has improved tremendously since the previous inspection. The governing body is well organised and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for development. It not only supports a good deal but also challenges the headteacher and staff. A factor preventing the school from being more analytical of its performance is the way in which data on pupils' attainment and progress are recorded. Currently, it is not recorded in a form that readily allows staff and governors to ask really searching questions about the progress of year groups and individuals.

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
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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	3
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

5 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Chinnock Church of England Primary School, Crewkerne, TA18 7PT

Thank you for helping me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. Many of you told me that you enjoy school a lot and that you would recommend your school to other children. I am not surprised because your school is a good school. It looks after you well and makes sure that by the time you reach the end of Year 6 you have made good progress.

I saw that you behave well and are kind and considerate to others. One of you told me that 'Almost everyone is friendly to everyone.' You also told me that you feel safe at school and are sure that you have an adult to turn to if you have any worries. The school does all the things it should to make sure that the school is a safe place.

You know a good deal about how to keep fit and healthy through diet and exercise. It was good to see those of you in Years 3 to 6 doing exercises at the start of the day. You contribute much to your school through the school council and by undertaking responsibilities. You are also active in the community and do a lot to raise funds for charities.

The school provides an amazing range of activities in addition to your daily lessons. You are lucky to have so many clubs, visits out and visitors who talk to you or teach you new skills.

I have asked the school to work on these three things to make your school even better.

- Make sure that all the teaching is at the right level for each of you; the teaching in your school is good overall but there are times when you could be helped to learn more quickly.
- Record information on how well you are making progress in a way that makes it easier for the adults to see how each of you is doing.
- Help you to find out about the many different backgrounds, including the faiths and traditions, of people living in Britain today.

You can help by always doing your best, behaving well and being kind to each other.

Yours sincerely

Alison Grainger Lead Inspector

Annex B

5 June 2008

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Alison Grainger
Lead Inspector