

Heddington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126327
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315495
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan Lindsay

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	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Katherine Brooke
Headteacher	Tracey Dunn
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2003
School address	Church Road Heddington Calne SN11 0PJ
Telephone number	01380 850489
Fax number	01380 859869

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small village school situated near Calne, where a large proportion of pupils live. The great majority of pupils are White British. Two-thirds of the pupils are boys. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average but no pupils have a statement of educational need. At the moment, no pupils claim entitlement to free school meals. The school currently has an acting headteacher and there have been other recent staff changes. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy School Award in 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Parents are very positive about the school. They are fulsome in their praise for the family atmosphere and the care and support for their children. The school has had a recent change of leadership but the acting headteacher has quickly grasped the issues for the school. Along with the other staff and governors, she has a clear vision for the school, and so there is a good capacity for the school to improve. There are strong links with other schools, the local community and with parents that have a positive impact on pupils' learning and personal development. 2007 results show that at the end of Year 2, pupils achieved standards that were above average, although no pupil has gained a high level in writing for a number of years. This is an area the school is addressing. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, although there is a dip in standards in writing in Year 4. By the end of Year 6, standards in 2007 were above average, although again, fewer-than-expected pupils gained the higher level in English compared to mathematics and science. Standards for pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 indicate an improving picture in relation to English, with standards overall still above average. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are some good elements, particularly the planning for teaching Reception children who are in the same class as older pupils. There is very effective use of teaching assistants. However, some older pupils are not always challenged enough and lessons are not always aimed appropriately at the wide range of ages and abilities. This can affect pupils' enjoyment and concentration in lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers. The curriculum is satisfactory, with a good range of clubs, visits and visitors to enhance learning and enjoyment. Personal development is a strength and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a strong sense of community both within the school and in the village. Behaviour is good and it is a joy to see how older pupils care for younger ones. Pupils feel secure in school, knowing who they can turn to for help. Pastoral care is very strong, with individual pupils known extremely well. The academic support they get is satisfactory but could be developed further to support higher-ability pupils. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory and reflects the progress they make in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Attendance levels, whilst satisfactory, are adversely affected by parents removing their children for holidays.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. With very small numbers joining the school each year, there is a wide variation in attainment on entry, but it is generally in line with what would be expected for four-year olds. All children have had some pre-school experience. Reception children are in a class alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. However, through careful planning and an appropriate curriculum they have enough opportunities to learn through play and they make satisfactory progress. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good and they benefit from the very good relationships with older pupils. There is no dedicated, secure outdoor play area for the Reception class, which does have an impact on the children's physical progress and their ability to choose independent outdoor activities. Plans are in place to address this issue.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils, but especially higher attainers, achieve as well as they can in English. Identify and address the decline in progress in English in Year 4.
- Ensure teaching captures the interest of all pupils and caters for the needs of all abilities with suitably challenging work.
- Further develop academic support to be well targeted to support higherattaining pupils to achieve as well as they can, especially in English. A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children in Reception make satisfactory progress in most areas of their learning, although there are wide variations given the very small number of children. A recent change to the teaching of phonics through the use of "Letters and Sounds" and the introduction of 'story making' is beginning to have some impact on the relatively weak areas of speaking and listening and reading. Test results for 2007 for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that overall standards are above average. However, the school has not achieved any high levels in writing for a large number of years, indicating that higher-attaining pupils may not be achieving as well as they could. Test results for 2007 for pupils in Year 6 show a steady improvement in standards, although less so in English than in mathematics and science. Again, there were fewer higher levels achieved in English. Data show that pupils who have been in the school since Year 2 make satisfactory progress overall in relation to what they would be expected to achieve. This includes pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is aware of the dip that occurs in progress in English, particularly in Year 4, but has not been able to fully identify the reasons. However, recent initiatives, such as adapting 'story making' for older pupils, weekly sessions of 'The Big Write' work and a more consistent approach to assessing pupils' work, are beginning to have an impact. School targets for 2008 show a predicted improvement in pupils achieving the higher levels. Inspection evidence confirms this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

In this small school, it is very heartening to see how older pupils relate to younger ones, helping them spontaneously at lunchtime, for example. Pupils and parents are adamant that there is no bullying. However, pupils recognise that if they did have a problem, it would be sorted out quickly. Behaviour is often exemplary, for example, amongst the youngest pupils and in the assembly, despite it being a very lively and happy event! Occasionally, some older pupils lose concentration in lessons where the work may not always be matched to their needs, but this is rarely disruptive. The school has had a successful focus on improving behaviour in lessons. Pupils are very aware of the rewards, such as being 'Star of the Week'. They understand what happens if they misbehave and this is effective. Pupils now take more responsibility and have positive attitudes to school. The school council plays an important role in improving the school community and pupils are aware of the needs of the wider community through charity fundraising and visits out into the local area. The Healthy School award has given pupils a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives. Pupils' cultural awareness has been expanded through learning about other religions, other countries and how people of all races contribute

to society. Families taking holidays in term time against the school's advice has adversely affected the unauthorised attendance figure.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Throughout the school, teaching is satisfactory, with good elements. Planning for the Reception and Year 1 and 2 class takes account of the different needs and abilities of the youngest children and makes best use of the teaching assistant to support learning. Occasionally, lessons for older pupils are not fully addressing the needs of the wide range of age and ability. The challenge for higher-attaining pupils is not always sharp enough. This means that some pupils are not achieving as well as they could, particularly in English. In addition, the tracking and use of targets and assessment, whilst improving, is not used consistently enough throughout the school to ensure that all pupils, but especially the most able, know what they need to do to achieve the higher levels. Recent initiatives, such as pupils assessing their own learning, are in place to address the relatively weak areas, such as writing and progress in English overall, and they are beginning to have an impact.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A topic-based curriculum is being developed to help pupils enjoy their learning more. Emphasis is now being placed on writing in other subjects to try to improve pupils' progress in this area, although there is still room to develop this further. The school has embraced other new initiatives to focus on improving writing, for example, the "story making" project. A high number of new computers in school has enriched the curriculum for pupils and improved their skills in this area. A good range of afterschool activities is in place for pupils with sport and other interests such as cooking catered for. Older pupils join another school for an annual residential visit. Visitors into school, to take assembly, for example, and visits out into the community enrich the provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The strong family atmosphere in the school is reflected in the way staff know and care for pupils very well. As a result, pupils feel safe, happy and ready to learn. The strong links that are in place with the very many supportive parents benefit the pupils. Where support is required to cope with behaviour problems or emotional need, the school uses outside help effectively, tailored to the individual pupil's needs. Well-trained teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and in general for all pupils. Good procedures are in place to safeguard children and for child protection matters. Support for academic development is satisfactory. Whilst tracking and assessment data are in place and in use, this has not always been used effectively to identify and turn around underachievement, particularly amongst the more able pupils in English. Pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve and reach the higher levels. Changes are being put in place, however, with more regular use of 'assessment for learning' in lessons for older pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The acting headteacher has only been in the school for a few weeks but she has quickly grasped the issues for the school. She has clear ideas for the school and plans for improvement without being too radical in the changes she would like to make. Other staff changes mean that there is a heavy burden on some staff in the school, but there is now a clear focus and commitment to improve achievement, particularly in English. Targets are now appropriately challenging, as there is a more rigorous examination of why some pupils do not achieve as well as expected. However, the school is unable to identify why there is a regular dip in progress in writing in Year 4. There has been much improvement in the role of governors. They are now regular visitors to the school, well informed and more questioning rather than just accepting. This allows them to play a more active role in school development planning.

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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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

- 31 January 2008 Dear Pupils, Heddington C of E Primary School, Heddington, Wiltshire SN11 0PJ Thank you very much for welcoming me into your school in such a friendly way. I enjoyed talking to you and the adults in the school. It was good to be able to join you for lunch and to see how much fun you had in your assembly! I liked these things most about your school:
- When you do your tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, you get better scores than other schools.
- You and your parents feel that the school is like a 'big family' and I really enjoyed seeing how the older pupils help the younger ones.
- You generally behave well and you are happy in school, and feel safe because you say there is no bullying.
- The adults in school take good care of you and help you to lead healthy lives. Your parents work well with the teachers and this helps you to learn.
- All the staff want to see the school improve and it looks well placed to do that. I have suggested a few things that I think could make your school even better:
- Some pupils could make better progress in English, especially in writing.
- Sometimes your lessons could be more interesting and planned to suit all the different ages and abilities in the class.
- More use of your targets and how well you think you have done in lessons could help you to understand how you could do even better. Joan Lindsay Lead Inspector

31 January 2008

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Joan Lindsay
Lead Inspector