

Harnham Church of England Controlled Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126351
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315510
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Anthony Shield

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	K Smith
Headteacher	Luke Coles
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002
School address	Saxon Road Harnham Salisbury SP2 8JZ
Telephone number	01722 327218
Fax number	01722 327218

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Harnham Church of England Junior School is of an average size. Most pupils are of White British origin and live in the immediate area, which consists of a mix of private and social housing. On entry, most pupils' attainment is average. The school houses a centre for pupils with complex moderate learning difficulties, and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is just above average. The school has experienced high levels of staff turnover in recent years.

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, poised to make improvements as the impact of new staffing and management structures takes effect. The school has experienced a rapid turnover of staff in recent years, which has hindered its improvement, but it is now more settled. There are some strengths. Pupils enjoy the family and community spirit which the school promotes. As one parent commented, 'For a relatively large school, it still feels quite intimate'. Pupils work well together and have good social and collaborative skills. Relationships throughout the school are good, and pupils like their teachers. The school nurtures this good personal development of pupils through good care, guidance and support, the organisation of classes into mixed ages, and a climate which encourages generosity and respect. Pupils care for each other and behaviour in class is good.

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. However, attainment in both writing and mathematics is relatively weaker and pupils lack a fluency in applying basic literacy and numeracy skills in other contexts. Teachers make learning interesting and fun for the pupils. As a result, pupils are keen to please and have positive attitudes to work. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers usually plan interesting work. While teaching is improving, work does not always make enough demands on pupils because teachers' assessments are not used well enough. The school's curriculum is satisfactory, with a sensible emphasis on teaching basic skills. It makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has encouraged a school climate which values and cares for individuals. New management systems are encouraging the school to tackle academic achievement with greater rigour. As a result, standards are improving. The school involves all staff effectively in monitoring and self-review, but not all subject leaders are planning improvements in their own subjects which reflect whole-school priorities. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Governance is satisfactory overall, but some individual governors, ably led by the chair, are making a good contribution.

Parental views are very mixed. Many are enthusiastic in their support of the school – 'My child has made excellent progress thanks to the dedicated and personalised care that each child receives' was typical of many comments. A minority are critical and feel that the school is not well run, communication is inconsistent, and that their views are not taken enough account of.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend pupils' application of mathematical and writing skills across the curriculum to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Use the knowledge of how well pupils are doing to plan challenging work which meets the needs of all pupils.
- Sharpen the focus of the monitoring and development planning to reflect more closely whole-school priorities.
- Work more closely with parents to improve the quality of communication.

A small proportion of the 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

Overall standards are broadly average, and this is reflected in national test results over the last five years. During this period, there has been no marked improvement or dip in results in English, mathematics or science. However, mathematics and writing are relatively weaker areas. Many pupils lack confidence in manipulating numbers and in using and applying their mathematical skills. In addition, some pupils have difficulty in writing with fluency and clarity. This is impeding their progress in a number of subjects. Achievement is satisfactory, but this judgement masks some differences in progress. While some pupils achieve well, others do not always achieve their full potential. Pupils with learning difficulties make more securely satisfactory progress because of the careful identification of their needs and close attention to their individual progress.

In 2007, targets were met in English and science but not in mathematics. Target- setting processes have recently improved and more aspirational targets are being set which challenge pupils more consistently.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are confident and friendly, reflecting the strong family ethos which the school nurtures. They enjoy coming to school and speak well of their teachers and other staff. They show good attitudes to work and exemplary behaviour during lessons, working well together and listening carefully to one another's ideas. A small number show less self-control in the playground. Attendance is average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are respectful occasions and pupils take opportunities for reflection seriously. They have a good understanding of social and moral values, and their cultural and global awareness is enhanced by links with a school in Kathmandu. They have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and the importance of diet and regular exercise. The school has been awarded both Healthy School status and Activemark in recognition of its work in this area. Pupils are keen to be prefects, librarians or school council members, and have a good awareness of their responsibility to the community. They know their views will be taken seriously. Pupils feel safe and bullying is dealt with quickly. They are satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy their lessons and comment that 'teachers make our lessons fun'. In particular, good use is made of interactive whiteboards to excite and inspire pupils. However, while teaching is improving, it remains inconsistent and not enough teaching is of a reliably good quality. Although teachers mostly have good subject skills, the teaching of mathematics sometimes lacks confidence. Classrooms are purposeful and pupils work well together. The use of 'talking partners' to discuss work together is particularly effective. Teachers work effectively to encourage pupils' participation and regular use of praise encourages pupils to try hard. Teaching assistants offer well-targeted support, enabling pupils with learning difficulties to succeed. While expectations of behaviour are high, there is room for greater challenge in some of the

lesson activities. Assessment data are being used with increasing confidence to set targets, but these are not always challenging enough. This is usually because planning is not always geared to the wide range of abilities and ages in each class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum reflects the school's strong emphasis on personal, social and health education, which has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Mixed-aged classes and residential visits provide good opportunities for pupils to work with other year groups. Although broad and balanced, the curriculum is not always planned well enough to meet the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities within the class. There is a reasonable range of enrichment and after-school clubs. Singing in particular is a strength. The school has sensibly started to develop good curricular links with the adjacent infant school to aid transition. The school is working to develop a more relevant and meaningful curriculum which encourages links across subjects, particularly in the application of literacy and numeracy skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel well cared for and parents appreciate the school's family ethos. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements make sure everyone is safe. Good relationships enable staff to know pupils well and take good care of them. This has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal development. The school makes good provision for more vulnerable pupils. In the specialist learning centre, pupils with complex learning needs are very well supported with a well- designed curriculum. Pupils' academic guidance is increasingly effective. Marking is mostly helpful and gives pupils targets to aim at. Performance data are now being collected and increasingly used to track pupils' progress and identify potential underachievement. However, this is not yet rooted in everyday practice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has established a school culture which values individual children and cares for them all with sensitivity. In this, he is well supported by his deputy and staff. Recent management reorganisation has encouraged a sharper focus on ensuring levels of achievement match those of the school's pastoral care. The role of year group leaders is proving to be pivotal in realising these higher ambitions. There is now a greater optimism amongst governors and staff that higher standards can be achieved. This is reflected in the improving picture of teaching and pupils' progress. Fewer pupils are at risk of underachievement because of action taken to tighten the tracking of their progress and to plan intervention strategies for them. This focus on better use of data has encouraged a review of the school's target-setting processes. While in the past, targets have been realistic but not particularly challenging, there is now more ambition in the targets being adopted.

Monitoring by the senior team and middle leaders is leading to greater consistency and realistic self-evaluation. This provides a secure basis for future development. The school's development plan accurately reflects its self-evaluation, but not all subject action plans mesh closely enough

with whole-school priorities. Governance is satisfactory, and some individual governors, very well led by the chair of governors, make a good contribution.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	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?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 December 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Harnham C of E Junior School, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 8JZ

We enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome. Our thanks especially to those who talked with us during lunch. You obviously enjoy your time at school. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education, and is making some changes which will make things better.

What we liked most about your school

- You make satisfactory progress and by the time you leave in Year 6, standards are in line with what most schools achieve. This is because you are taught satisfactorily and teachers make your lessons interesting.
- You are well behaved and friendly and play well together.
- You are being helped to grow up as sensible young people.
- You are learning lots of interesting things.
- Staff take very good care of you.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Make sure that you do even better, particularly in using your skills in writing and mathematics in other subjects.
- Make sure that all teachers plan tasks in lessons which are suitable for each one of you.
- Ensure that your teachers all work together and aim for the same things when they plan how to improve the school.
- Work more closely with your parents to keep them in touch with developments at the school.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. With best wishes for the future!

Yours sincerely,

Mr Tony Shield Lead Inspector