

# East Harptree Church of England VC Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109190
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	324921
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanna Pike

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	66
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Cullen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Wheatley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane East Harptree Bristol BS40 6BD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01761 221492

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**Fax number**

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small primary school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and come from the village and surrounding area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There has been some temporary absence among members of staff over the last two years, including senior leaders.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

East Harptree is a good school. Parents overwhelmingly echo this view with comments such as, 'a lovely caring family atmosphere which helps promote a good learning environment for the children' and 'my children have blossomed in the school'. Achievement is good. Children get off to a good start in the Reception class, so that by the beginning of Year 1, they are ready to tackle new challenges. During Years 1 and 2, they continue to make good progress, helped by the exciting activities that teachers plan. Consequently, standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6, maintaining above average standards in Year 6. As a result of the school's actions to raise the achievement of more able pupils, the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics is on track to rise this year and be above average. The school has recognised, however, that a few pupils in Years 3 to 5 are not making fast enough progress. Consequently, the school's tracking system is now identifying these pupils more promptly so that action can be taken swiftly to boost their progress. Pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning because teachers are adept at developing pupils' self-confidence. Because teachers use a good variety of interesting activities in lessons, pupils enjoy their learning. This is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils behave well, both in lessons and around the school. They treat each other with respect and are polite to visitors. Teaching is good. Clear explanations and demonstrations help pupils make good progress with their learning in lessons. When teachers build learning carefully in small steps, pupils make big strides forward. Occasionally, however, teachers miss opportunities to let pupils explain their ideas, or to undertake tasks independently. These relative shortcomings hinder pupils from applying and deepening their learning. Pupils benefit from the school's exciting curriculum, which makes extremely good use of trips and visitors to enhance their experience. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils had written fascinating descriptions of imaginary animals as a result of a recent visit to Folly Farm. This experience enabled them to achieve above average standards with their writing. Cultural and spiritual development is promoted well through the school's close links with the local church and other schools, and pupils' involvement in a variety of special events, such as the Easter service. Their awareness of traditions and cultures beyond their own is also developing. Parents greatly appreciate the school's strong pastoral care. Typical comments include 'a lovely caring family atmosphere' and 'they always make time for all the children and their parents'. Pupils receive useful advice from marking, especially in helping to develop their writing. However, they are not so clear about their learning targets or the steps they need to make to reach them. The headteacher has created a really committed team of staff who, together with the governors, share a strong drive to move the school forwards. There is a good understanding of the school's effectiveness, and plans are well focused on sensible and key priorities to improve provision and outcomes. Monitoring systems are developing well within the school, following staff absences. The governing body is aware that it must now sharpen its monitoring further, especially of academic data, so that it provides robust levels of challenge to the school about standards and achievement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to Reception varies from year to year, but is largely a little above expectations and with a wide range of ability. Good progress means that, by the end of the year, standards are firmly above average. Well planned induction from the pre-school helps

children settle quickly. Care and welfare are strengths and ensure that all children feel safe and secure. A good balance of adult-led tasks and activities children chose for themselves helps children make good progress. Imaginative activities really excite the children and are used to the full to extend children's learning. For example, a visit to the local shop helped children plan what to buy, budget their money and practise their speaking and listening skills. Assessment is very thorough, and shared well with parents. Effective leadership ensures that all adults are clear on how best to support children's learning. There is a good emphasis on developing writing skills. Outdoor education is satisfactory, with plans underway to improve provision for outdoor activities even further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Fine-tune the tracking of pupils' achievement so that any slow progress is identified and tackled swiftly, particularly in Years 3 to 5.
- Ensure pupils have more opportunities to know the steps they need to make to reach their learning targets, and to explain their ideas and work independently during lessons.
- Sharpen the governing body's monitoring, especially of academic information, so that governors offer the school robust levels of challenge about standards and achievement.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Standards in Year 2 and 6 have been above average for a number of years. In 2008, both dipped because the cohorts had a greater proportion of pupils with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, and some more able pupils did not do as well they should have done. The school took firm action to boost achievement, particularly of the more able pupils and especially in writing and mathematics. This action has had a positive impact. Pupils are making good progress across the school and achievement is good. Current standards in Year 2 have returned to above average levels and the number of pupils likely to gain the higher Level 3 has risen in writing and mathematics. This is also true in Year 6, where the school is set to gain a greater proportion at the higher levels than they did last year. The school is now highlighting, much more quickly than they have in the past, the few pupils who are not always making the progress they should.

### **Personal development and well-being**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are proud of their school. They really value its small size, saying, 'you get more individual attention'. They speak enthusiastically of the many opportunities they have to take part in enrichment activities, such as playing musical instruments and trips out. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, appreciating their 'great school dinners' and being able to explain why they are healthy. Pupils feel safe and secure, and are confident that any bullying or upsets are quickly sorted out. The school council gives pupils an effective voice in the school. They benefit from the close links with the local community and church. Older pupils recently contributed a moving presentation about righteous anger to the Easter service, using comparisons between Martin Luther King and Jesus. Experiences such as these lead to good spiritual and cultural development. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the local community. They understand the diversity within Britain today, and are beginning to gain awareness of the global community. Organising stalls at the school fair, fundraising and budgeting, together with their above average literacy and numeracy skills, prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good relationships between teachers and pupils create a positive ethos during lessons and encourage pupils to 'have a go'. The content of lessons are shared with pupils in advance so that they know what they are going to learn, and they benefit from the frequent use of helpful displays to remind them of key ideas and ways to work things out. Sometimes, however, teachers talk too much and miss opportunities for pupils to explain their ideas and thinking. Pupils do not always have the chance to develop greater independence in their learning through having the chance to apply their knowledge and skills. When these shortcomings occur, they slow pupils' learning. Teaching assistants provide effective support in lessons, helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. Older pupils benefit from opportunities to reflect on their own learning, but this good practice is not yet consistent across the school.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned, with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, both in English and mathematics lessons, and through themes. Pupils benefit from practising their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, such as environmental science, although opportunities to use information and communication technology are more limited. Pupils greatly appreciate the way the curriculum is enlivened by frequent trips out, visitors or special events. They also value the wide and varied range of enrichment activities, including sport, and take-up is high. The school has developed many close links with a number of other schools and organisations to further enrich pupils' experiences. Exchange visits with a Bristol school, for example, enhances pupils' understanding of the diversity of culture, faith and tradition in Britain. A recent link with a rural school in India helps further pupils' understanding of the global community.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pastoral care is very strong and the school is now working to sharpen its academic guidance and support. Staff know pupils very well, and are quick to provide support when it is needed. Effective arrangements to ensure pupils' health and safety are in place. Strong provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they make good progress. Their progress is closely monitored and teachers make good use of simple short targets. Across the school, pupils' progress is tracked carefully, and marking provides pupils with valuable advice about their work, especially in writing. However, best use is not yet made of pupils' learning targets because they are not referred to regularly enough for pupils to be familiar with them. Neither do pupils have a precise understanding of the small steps they need to make to reach them.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher provides clear direction for the school and its improvement, and all the staff form a strong, committed team. There is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a strong commitment to ensuring that every pupil does well. The dip in academic performance has been addressed successfully, particularly at the higher levels of attainment for writing and mathematics. These factors indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further. Nevertheless, the school is aware that it must tighten its assessment to pick up issues more quickly. As a result, the school is now tracking pupils' progress more frequently. While staff absence hindered, to some degree, the monitoring of teaching and learning, particularly for sharing good practice, these changes were managed well so that their impact was reduced. Monitoring is now back on track and checks are being carried out more rigorously. Governors are strongly supportive of the school and know it well through regular informal visits. While they ask searching questions of staff, they do not always challenge the school as robustly as they should about pupils' progress because they do not yet make full use of national and school data. The school's work to promote community cohesion is good. It has audited its provision and, whilst recognising its strengths locally and nationally, is working to strengthen pupils' understanding about the global community even more through extending its links with communities overseas.



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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

14 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Harptree Primary School, Bristol BS40 6BD

It was good to come and see you at your school! Thank you for making us so welcome, talking to us and helping us during our visit. We especially enjoyed the good discussions we had with some of you, when you gave us lots of information. You are right to be proud of your school; it is a good school and is giving you a good education. Here are some of the most important parts of the inspection report that we thought you might like to know.

- You work hard in lessons, make good progress and reach above average standards.
- Teaching is good because your teachers make lessons interesting and fun.
- You enjoy your time in school a lot and your behaviour is good.
- Your teachers work hard to give you a well-planned curriculum, which has exciting events such as trips.
- The school makes sure that you all feel safe, settled and secure.
- The school is led and managed well and the staff and governors are working hard so you can all do even better.

To improve further, we have asked the school to do the following.

- Check more often which of you are not making fast enough progress so that staff can help you improve as quickly as possible.
- Help you to achieve even better by giving you more opportunities to explain your ideas in lessons, learn independently and give you good advice for reaching your targets.
- Make sure that governors look very carefully at your achievements, especially in your tests, so they help the school to make things even better.

Thank you again for all your help.

Yours faithfully

Joanna Pike

Lead inspector