

Churchend Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109797
Local Authority	Reading
Inspection number	325028
Inspection date	16 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	267
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	41
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Spokes
Headteacher	Mrs K Dethridge
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Usk Road Tilehurst Reading RG30 4HP
Telephone number	01189 015450
Fax number	01189 015452

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the EYFS, and investigated the following issues: overall achievement, boys' achievement, particularly in writing, teaching and learning and the impact of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation (SEF), national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, tracking documents, observation of the school at work, interviews with staff, pupils and an analysis of parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments as given in the SEF were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Churchend is a larger than average primary school. Children from three to five years of age attend the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Although the number of pupils from ethnic minorities is average with about half of them having English as an additional language the majority are in the EYFS and foundation stage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. Phase 2 of a major refurbishment of the school buildings is nearing completion. The school holds the following quality marks: Healthy Schools, Activemark and Investors in People. It has recently been designated a National Support School.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Its excellence is evident in pupils' outstanding academic achievement as well as personal development. It is led by an inspirational and dedicated headteacher who works tirelessly to ensure educational excellence. She is supported extremely well by a very hardworking staff who share her enthusiasm and commitment. Pupils love their school and all it has to offer. This is shown in their good attendance and excellent attitudes and behaviour. They say that school is 'brilliant' but challenging and that teachers make learning fun and are always on hand to help them when they find things difficult to master. Parents appreciate their children's achievements and are very supportive of the school. 'I moved my child to this school recently and would highly recommend it to anyone,' and 'When my child started school she had no English. With the help of a very professional and supportive team of teachers and assistants, she has made exceptionally good progress'. These comments reflect some of the very positive views of the communities the school serves.

Children get off to an excellent start in the EYFS so that they make rapid progress. This is built on successfully across Key Stages 1 and 2 so that by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average and sometimes high in English, mathematics and science. Current Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are on course to gain exceptionally high standards, building further on the school's success. Relative weaknesses in boys' achievement overall, but particularly writing at Key Stage 2, have been very successfully addressed by the school. Staff carefully analysed boys' learning and as a result worked hard to improve their stamina for writing through exercise as well as adopting a more visual approach to their learning. This included, for example, film clips from 'Dr Who' and 'Star Wars' that hugely improved both boys' motivation and the quality of their writing.

Pupils' outstanding progress is due to excellent teaching and rigorous assessment, tracking and monitoring. These ensure the pupils reach their potential. In this school, every child is considered unique and every child is made to feel they matter. Teachers plan and organise lessons meticulously ensuring work is very well matched to pupils' different learning needs. They use methods that fully engage pupils in their learning, for example, using drama to explore emotions in history and getting pupils to explain to a partner the methods they use to solve problems in mathematics. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for small groups and individuals. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and teachers are held fully accountable for their class so that progress across the school is even. Pupils are fully involved in setting their targets, which they work hard to achieve. Data is thoroughly analysed by gender, ability or ethnicity in order to identify areas of weakness, so that the relevant intervention strategies are instigated. The 'Reading Recovery' programme is one such intervention, which has been used with enormous success. The needs of vulnerable pupils as well as those who are most able are very well met.

An excellent curriculum and high quality pastoral care fully support pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils collaborate well on activities, enjoy paired work and support each other in lessons. They take their responsibilities as school councillors and 'buddies' seriously and are keen to raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. They contribute well to the wider community as the school choir sings at local concerts and pupils take part in sponsored walks to support Helen House Hospice. However, older pupils do not always have enough involvement in initiating and managing activities within the school and this limits their contribution to the school community. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay healthy quoting, 'exercise,

fruit, vegetables and plenty of calcium to ensure healthy bones and teeth'. A particularly good contribution is the sporting clubs that many attend and fully enjoy. They are particularly pleased with being 'Primary School of the Year' in the Reading Sports Awards. They also benefit from very good science links with a local independent school. They are currently learning to 'sign' so that they can communicate with non-speaking pupils in the new special school on the adjoining site. The huge success of this initiative was seen in an assembly that took place during the inspection. This reflects the school's community ethos and its very close links with local groups enables it to foster community cohesion extremely well. A particular feature of the school is its strong focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many senior staff are leading teachers within the authority. Their expertise is used extremely well within the school to ensure excellent curricular provision and promote outstanding teaching and learning. For example, there is an advanced skills teacher for music and a leading literacy teacher who has led the improvements in boys' writing.

Outstanding leadership at all levels underpins the school's many successes. This has been secured through a clear focus on using the leadership skills of staff at all levels. As a result, the senior leadership team is very effective as is the work of subject leaders. They readily accept responsibility, teamwork is excellent and morale is high. All aspects of the school's work is under constant and rigorous scrutiny in order to maintain and build upon high standards, ensuring an outstanding capacity to make further improvement. The school's commitment to providing a learning community where a love of learning is fully developed is being realised. Governors hold the school to account very well with a good balance of support and challenge. Their expertise with regard to the building refurbishment has been invaluable.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children's attainment on entry is below expectations and sometimes low. Due to outstanding provision for children in the nursery and reception class many children achieve a very high level of development by the end of EYFS. Staff regard each child as unique and take great care to help them to develop well in all aspects of their personality.

Children enjoy their learning and make rapid gains in all aspects of the curriculum, particularly in developing excellent personal and social skills. They respond well to challenges, such as the best way to build a house for a doll or a pet, and are enthusiastic learners. Teachers carefully plan activities and make excellent use of observations to track the progress of each child. As a result, all children achieve very well through carefully planned and interesting opportunities to play.

Children behave sensibly, and learn to be safe, for example, when crossing at a pedestrian crossing in the outdoor area of the nursery. They learn and practice basic hygiene, such as washing hands before making chapattis and know that to keep healthy they need to eat fruit and vegetables and have exercise. The setting is well-equipped, safe and secure, enabling all children, including the most vulnerable, to thrive.

Leadership and management are exemplary and the impact of this is shown by the excellent quality of children's learning and achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop older pupils' involvement in initiating and managing activities so that they make a greater contribution to the work of the school.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

29 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Churchend Primary School, Reading, RG30 4HP

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for being so friendly and helpful. We enjoyed meeting the school council and the group of pupils from Years 4 and 6. We were delighted to learn how much you enjoy school, especially the recent Arts Week and the after-school clubs.

We found your school to be excellent and we know that your parents agree.

Here are some other things we particularly liked about your school.

- You have an excellent headteacher, teachers and school staff who are dedicated to ensuring your school is a happy, safe place where you can work hard and do your very best.
- You make an excellent start in the nursery and reception classes.
- You make outstanding progress because you are taught extremely well.
- You thoroughly enjoy school, especially the teaching, sports clubs, visits, and special events such as Arts Week.
- Your kindness, excellent attitudes to work and outstanding behaviour show how keen you are to learn and reflects the excellent care you receive from all adults.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what I have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Give the older pupils more opportunities to be involved in setting up and managing activities to benefit the whole school.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead Inspector