

Cheveley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110785
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	325219
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Goodchild

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	119
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rowena Berridge
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Zak
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Park Road Cheveley Newmarket Suffolk CB8 9DG
Telephone number	01638 730273
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools although the number of pupils on roll is gradually rising. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There are currently no pupils of minority ethnic heritage or who are learning English as an additional language. An average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These relate mostly to moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, physical difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Reception and Year 1 class. Cheveley Acorns Pre-School operates from a community room attached to the primary school. This provision is inspected separately because it is privately run and not managed by the school's governing body.

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 that has seen many changes in teaching staff since the last inspection. This turbulence has slowed the rate of improvement but the school now has a stable staff and a recently restructured senior leadership team. This is providing a firmer foundation for school improvement and efforts to raise achievement are now taking effect. Parents are generally satisfied with the school's work. They say that their children are happy at school and they value the way that the school cares for them.

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average overall. Children join the school with attainment that is broadly in line with what is expected for their age. In recent years, pupils have made satisfactory progress, though in 2008 progress was inadequate and the school performed significantly below its targets. Efforts to raise achievement have already begun to make a positive difference to pupils' progress and to the standards they reach. Children get off to a good start in acquiring basic skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress this year has been good at Key Stage 1. Achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 because there is more variation in the progress made by individual pupils and between subjects. In some areas, standards are now above average, but there is more work to do to raise standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. Throughout the school, staff have good relationships with their pupils and manage their behaviour well. They make it clear that pupils are expected to concentrate and apply themselves. In turn, pupils are well behaved and cooperative. There is variation, however, in the extent to which teachers match work to the needs of the different groups of pupils in their classes, including those in different years. Some parents express concern about the mixed-age classes because they feel that their children do not always make as much progress as they should. Inspection findings confirm that this is sometimes the case although the mixed age classes are not, in themselves, the cause of this. It is due, rather, to the inconsistency with which work is matched to pupils' prior attainment. Where lessons are carefully planned so that work is matched to the next steps in pupils' progress, as at Key Stage 1, pupils in mixed age classes make rapid progress.

Pupils are well cared for and make good progress in their personal development. The school is a warm community where pupils feel safe and are known as individuals. They say that 'it is a friendly school' where they 'know almost everyone' and 'the teachers try to make learning fun'. They have a good knowledge of how to keep healthy and safe. During their time at the school, pupils gain good personal qualities and make satisfactory progress in acquiring basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. This ensures that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a commitment to school improvement and, since the last inspection, the school has put in place a good system for tracking pupils' progress. Senior leaders increasingly use the analysis of data as a means of raising achievement and of holding teachers to account for their pupils' progress. However, monitoring is not yet rigorous enough to pinpoint precise strengths and weaknesses, particularly in teaching. Governance is satisfactory. Governors provide good support to the school but do not hold the school to account sufficiently through checking detailed aspects of the school's performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

As a result of good teaching, children achieve well in the Reception year. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, numeracy and physical development. Their progress is satisfactory in other areas of learning because more emphasis is placed on developing children's basic skills rather than providing opportunities for exploration, problem solving and imaginative play. Children are well cared for and are happy and confident. The school has made a good start in developing the areas immediately outside the classroom and children have access to an exciting grassy area nearby with climbing and balancing equipment and a wildlife habitat. Leadership and management are good. Assessment information is used in grouping children according to the next steps in their learning in, for instance, phonics sessions. Parents find staff approachable and there are some good systems for involving parents in their children's development. Helpful workshops have been provided to inform parents about how to support learning at home. The establishment of a two-way flow of information about children's learning is satisfactory and improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, especially in writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics and science at Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that teachers consistently match work to the range of different ages and needs within their class so that all pupils make good progress.
- Increase the rigour with which the school's work is monitored and evaluated by leaders and governors to drive continuous improvement.

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

In 2008, attainment in Year 2 was average in reading, below average in writing and exceptionally low in mathematics. The school's test results in Year 6 were below average in English and exceptionally low in mathematics and science. There has been good improvement at Key Stage 1, and the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is currently well above average in reading, above average in mathematics and average in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 in all three areas has also increased. There has been an improvement in achievement at Key Stage 2 but this is less marked and progress is satisfactory overall. Standards in Year 6 are now average in mathematics and science and above average in English. There has been an improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5, except in science where it remains below average. There are no distinct differences between the achievement of different groups of pupils, and the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that of their peers. They make good progress where they receive support from teaching assistants, either individually or in small groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they say that they enjoy school. Attendance is average and most pupils attend regularly. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The school has gained the Health Promoting Schools Quality Mark and pupils have a good understanding of healthy living. They readily take part in a range of physical activities and those who bring a packed lunch enjoy gaining rewards for bringing in two pieces of fruit. Behaviour is good and pupils have a good awareness of keeping safe. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They readily take responsibility in school, for example when acting as buddies in support of younger children or as members of the school council. They raise funds for charities, including sponsoring a child in Kenya, and are closely involved with the local community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Assessment has improved since the last inspection and this means that teachers are clear about how well their pupils are progressing. In the best lessons, they ensure that different groups of pupils undertake activities that are closely matched to the next steps in their learning. This is not consistent, however and, at times, pupils all do exactly the same work regardless of their age and prior attainment so that some make less progress than they should. At other times, pupils make good progress for part of the lesson when they are divided into groups and undertake work that is matched well to their prior attainment. However, before they move off to work in groups they sometimes spend too long as a whole class where everyone does the same work. In these lessons, teaching assistants are not deployed as well as they could be to ensure all pupils receive the right level of challenge for the whole lesson. Most pupils engage well with the tasks they are given and enjoy the many opportunities to discuss their ideas in pairs. They generally need prompting, however, to think independently and to solve problems for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactorily matched to pupils' needs and interests. The school has been successful in renewing the Basic Skills Quality Mark in recognition of its commitment to raising standards and appropriate emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy, where standards are rising. The school is at an earlier stage in improving learning opportunities in science, where there is still some underachievement. Good attention is given to promoting pupils' personal, social and health education and there are strong links with the local church. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have weekly French lessons and the school is introducing a Spanish club. A range of clubs and a satisfactory variety of visits out and visitors to the school enrich pupils' learning, including a residential trip for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school has good links with local businesses and organisations which benefit the pupils. Good sporting links with other schools have enabled pupils to take part in a range of competitions and activities. Pupils have also been involved in special events with other local schools, such as a choir festival and a Chinese day, and taken part in activities organised for those who are gifted and talented. The curriculum is satisfactory rather than good, however, because curriculum planning does not always match experiences

sufficiently to the different ages within each class. This slows pupils' progress and, at times, reduces their enjoyment in learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Adults in the school are committed to the care of the pupils, and parents say that they find the school friendly and the staff approachable. All legal requirements for safeguarding are met, risk assessments are carried out and procedures for child protection are in place. The school works well with outside agencies to support pupils' personal development and attendance is promoted well. A good system has been established to track pupils' progress so that those who are underachieving can be identified and support put in place. Older pupils are clear about their curriculum targets in English and mathematics. Some good marking explains what pupils need to do to improve their work, though this is variable. In the school as a whole, parents are well informed through newsletters and termly information leaflets about the work that is to be covered. In addition, the school has provided a range of helpful workshops to develop parents' skills in supporting their children's learning and development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior leaders are, rightly, placing emphasis on raising standards and have made good use of local authority support, for instance, to improve the quality of provision in mathematics and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The many changes in the teaching staff since the last inspection have meant that much staff training and development has had to be repeated. After undertaking training, staff have often left before their increased knowledge has had time to take effect or lead to an improvement in pupils' learning. A strengthened senior leadership team and the recruitment of what is now a stable staff mean that the school is satisfactorily placed to improve. Leadership of some aspects of the school's work is good but monitoring is not used as rigorously as it should be to drive school improvement. For instance, teachers' planning and the setting of homework are not checked closely enough to ensure all pupils make consistently good progress. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. The school works closely with its local community and actively promotes pupils' global awareness. It is developing national links to increase pupils' awareness of people from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	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	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 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

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

22 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cheveley Church of England Primary School, Newmarket, CB8 9DF

Thank you for making me feel welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed coming into your lessons, looking at your work and talking to some of you. I am writing now to tell you what I found out about your school.

Cheveley Church of England Primary is a satisfactory school that has begun to improve. These are the some of the good things I found out about your school:

- The school is a friendly place where people get on well together.
- The staff take good care of you and there is always someone you can talk to if you are worried about anything.
- You behave well and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe.
- You enjoy taking responsibility by helping around the school and supporting each other.
- You make good progress in some lessons and you are willing to work hard.

The headteacher and other staff would like to make the school better for you and so I have asked them to:

- Make sure you reach higher standards, especially in writing in Years 1 and 2 and in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Think more carefully about what different pupils in a class need in order to make good progress and give you work that is not too difficult and not too easy.
- Check everything the school does very carefully to make sure it becomes as good as it could be.

You can help by always working hard and by thinking really carefully about your work. I hope you enjoy the rest of your time at the school and wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Ms M J Goodchild

Lead inspector