

Charleton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113391
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	325808
Inspection date	6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Pyner HMI

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)	30
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	1
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Lamble
Headteacher	Rachel Perkins
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	West Charleton Kingsbridge TQ7 2AL
Telephone number	01548 531275
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Charleton is a very small rural school that serves the village and surrounding area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The attainment of children on entry to the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is very mixed but broadly as expected for their age. The school serves an area of relative affluence and all the pupils come from White British backgrounds. In recent years there has been increased mobility with pupils joining and leaving at times other than the usual ones for admission and transfer. Children in the EYFS share a class with pupils in Key Stage 1. The headteacher took up her post in January 2008.

The school has achieved the Healthy School and Activemark awards.

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 which has improved since the previous inspection in October 2007, when the school was issued with a notice to improve. Specifically, the school was required to improve pupils' achievement and standards reached in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. There have been clear improvements in these subjects, and other areas of the school, since that time. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Parents responding to the inspection survey overwhelmingly support the work of the school and recognise the improvements over the last year, especially the leadership of the headteacher. This comment is typical, 'The school now seems to be going from strength to strength with the new leadership.' Parents also recognise the good level of care and support available to pupils and how these enhance their learning and life at school. As one parent commented, 'My daughter likes coming to school and always talks about what she's done or doing. Charleton is a really lovely school and they make you really welcome. The children are really nice and care for each other.' Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and their commitment to, and understanding of, healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although their understanding of wider cultural issues is less well developed.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils make better progress in response to an increasing amount of teaching which builds on the assessment of individual learning needs. As a result, standards have risen so they are broadly average by the time pupils leave. This represents a significant improvement in mathematics, but attainment in writing is not as strong. Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory overall. Although progress has been uneven in the past, leaving a legacy of gaps in pupils' skills, it is now more consistent. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Provision is satisfactory in the EYFS enabling pupils to make appropriate progress.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and includes an effective range of out of school activities, especially in sports, together with good participation in community events. This helps to promote the pupils' excellent understanding of the requirements for healthy living. The school cares for the pupils well. Assessment tracking systems have improved and these are now leading to a clear impact on pupils' achievement. However, although marking in pupils' books is encouraging and positive, there are few examples of comments which support individuals to understand the next steps needed to improve their understanding and learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Key factors promoting improvement are the unity of purpose promoted effectively by the headteacher, guidance from the local authority, and developing teamwork by staff and governors. Skilfully led by the headteacher since her appointment, staff and governors have identified what has to be done to bring about improvement and have established sound use of resources and staff. The governors have a strong commitment to improvement and have worked hard to develop systems to monitor and evaluate the school's overall performance and that of individual subjects. However, these are not yet embedded in the life of the school. Overall, the school has a sound capacity to improve with promising signs of further potential.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

There are very small numbers in the EYFS. Children enter the school with knowledge and skills generally at a level expected of a four-year-old. The progress of the few children recently in the EYFS has been at least satisfactory in the six areas of learning. A good induction into school involves visits to pre-school settings and homes enabling children to settle quickly. Children who will be entering the EYFS in January 2009 have already started sessions in school, establishing early routines. A newly formed playgroup in the school is helping to encourage new families. Children are nurtured in a safe and secure environment and all welfare requirements are met. There is a supportive atmosphere where children are encouraged to be independent and have a go. Attitudes to work and behaviour are very good. Systematic observations and assessments of early learning ensure the planning of the next steps and relevant activities. However, care needs to be taken to plan an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. An outdoor play area and an exciting adventure area are accessible in good weather but not in inclement conditions. The outdoor curriculum would be enhanced by appropriate all weather protection. An enthusiastic practitioner satisfactorily leads the EYFS and Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and standards in writing across the school.
- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils understand the next steps in their learning.
- Develop and embed the role of the governors in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the whole school and individual subjects.

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

Standards are broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. Expectations of pupils' attainment and rate of progress have been increased over the past year and the targets to be achieved have become more effective in promoting improvement. The impact of this can be seen in the improvement in basic skills, particularly in reading and numeracy. Children settle into the school well due to the individual induction procedures and make sound progress in their time in Reception. Although small cohorts mean that attainment can vary from year to year, national assessment results show that pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards had suffered a sharp decline in 2007, but performance in 2008 shows a significant reversal of this position with reading, writing and mathematics broadly in line with national averages. However, fewer pupils gain the higher level in writing than nationally. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, mathematics and science. Standards had been declining but there was a significant improvement in 2007 which has been sustained in 2008. This represents good improvement in mathematics and reflects the impact of the hard work to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in this subject. However, pupils' performance in writing remains below average. The school is working on this area and improving the opportunities for pupils to undertake sustained extended writing. Most pupils with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress reflecting the careful and targeted support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are good but, although pupils learn about the lives of people in other countries, understanding of living in a multicultural society is less well developed. Relationships with adults and between pupils are particularly positive and children say they feel very happy coming to school. Pupils attend well and enjoy school, with older pupils relishing the opportunities to take responsibilities such as being playground leaders caring for younger pupils and as librarians. Behaviour during lessons and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils feel safe and recognise that behaviour has improved and respond well to the positive systems developed in the last year to encourage and celebrate hard work and achievement. This is summed up by the comment from a pupil that she likes school 'because it a happy place'. Members of the school council feel valued and know their views are taken seriously, such as the improvements in displays around the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of health issues and can discuss in a mature way their need to eat healthy foods and take regular exercise. They participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities to take part in sports and regular exercise. The pupils' good social skills and improved academic performance soundly prepare them for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Rigorous monitoring and support for teaching are bringing about significant improvements. For example, planning has been strengthened to ensure that lesson objectives are clearly focused, although this could be sharper in some lessons. Sharing of objectives with the pupils has improved their understanding of the learning in lessons. Classroom management is satisfactory overall, and in some cases good, but sometimes the pace of a lesson can slow and, as a result, pupils lose interest. Work on teachers' use of assessment information to guide planning and set targets for pupils is beginning to have a clear impact on achievement. There is now effective intervention to improve progress for individuals and groups based on need. Teachers use interactive whiteboards and information and communication technology well and there are good examples of the effective use of subject knowledge to extend pupils' enjoyment and learning of literacy skills. Teaching assistants support pupils well, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and teachers ensure that the contribution to lessons of this group of learners is shared and celebrated.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and encourages the pupils' personal development well. It is broad and balanced and enriched by a good range of visits and visitors to the school. For example, a drama teacher employed through the local learning community takes the older pupils for drama lessons which are greatly enjoyed and the children benefit from this specialist teaching. Pupils learn French in Key Stage 2 and learning is enhanced through the colourful and thought-provoking displays all around the school. This is encapsulated in the comment from a pupil when she said,

'I like school because it is fun and challenging.' For a very small school, there is good enrichment of class activities through clubs, and pupils are encouraged to use the community amenities. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop healthy lifestyles. Links with the local church are strong. The school lies at the heart of the community enabling pupils to make positive contributions to their school and village life, for example at the recent Harvest celebrations. Hence, the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is a strength of the school. All pupils are known as individuals and parents appreciate how the school works hard to take care of their children. Arrangements to secure the health and safety of pupils are good and clear policies guide procedures. Pupils appreciate the secure and safe site with good levels of supervision at break times and lunch times. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and staff training is up to date. Staff work well as a team to support all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress is monitored very carefully and accurately. Academic guidance is satisfactory overall. Teachers give good oral guidance and targets are used effectively to help pupils to learn in literacy. Pupils are less clear of their targets in mathematics and some struggle to understand them. There is now a robust assessment tracking system in place which is understood by all. However, although marking in pupils' books is regular and provides praise and encouragement, there are limited examples where it guides pupils to understand the specific next steps needed in order to improve learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher gives a good lead in developing the pupils' educational achievement and standards together with promoting healthy lifestyles and good pastoral care for all pupils. In the short time since her appointment, she has driven improvements across the school but has also created a good team ethos with staff and governors. Parents appreciate her work in the school. Over the past school year staff and governors, with good support from the local authority, have steadily tackled a legacy of underachievement and are raising achievement and standards. To accomplish this they have continued an intensive programme of classroom monitoring and a team approach to planning the curriculum. Self-evaluation is accurate and there is a sound awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subject leaders have improved their monitoring of teaching and learning and this is beginning to have an impact on results. Much has been achieved in a relatively short period and the school has done well to re-establish satisfactory provision. However, initiatives have yet to ensure consistently good governance. The governing body has risen to the challenge of being given a notice to improve. Governors have set themselves the task of becoming more aware of the standards achieved by the school and monitoring the teaching and learning within the school through, for example, links with subject leaders. Although governors now have improved systems in place to monitor the school's performance at a number of levels, these are not yet embedded in the life 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?	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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	1
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	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?	2
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	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	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**

7 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charleton CE Primary, Kingsbridge TQ7 2AL

Thank you so much for welcoming the inspection team into your school in November. We enjoyed our visit and I am writing to tell you what we found.

The adults in your school have worked hard to make improvements over the last year and this was clear to the inspectors. Your school is satisfactory overall and there are some aspects that are good. One of these is the good curriculum that provides you with lots of opportunities to learn. Another is the way you develop as sensible, thoughtful young people. Your parents say that you very much enjoy your time at school and we found they are right. We liked the friendly way you work together and how thoughtfully you talked to us about your life at school. You have impressive knowledge about how to live healthy lifestyles and starting the day with skipping certainly gets your brains working! Another good thing is the way the staff take good care of you, making you feel safe and secure. Lots of people talked to us about the new things happening now in the school and your parents feel that things are better than they have been. You and your parents like the way your headteacher has introduced new ideas since she started at your school.

Everyone at the school has worked hard to help you improve the standards that you achieve in your work and we could see this in your books and test results. This means that you are making better progress in your learning. There are still some gaps in your learning though and we have asked the school to help you to make better progress in writing. We have also asked your teachers to help you understand what you need to do to take the next steps in your learning when they are marking your work. You will then know exactly what you need to do in order to make even better progress. The governors of the school are working hard to help the staff make the school a better place for you. We have asked them continue with this to ensure that you can make the most of the opportunities available to you.

You can play a very important part in helping to improve your school even more by continuing to work hard and help each other. I am sure that you will.

Best wishes. Yours faithfully Robert Pyner Her Majesty's Inspector