

# Church Lench CofE First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116792
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326448
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gerald Griffin

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	58
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>	Susan Bell Cordelle
<b>Headteacher</b>	H M Bainbridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 2006
<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>	Main Street Church Lench Evesham WR11 4UE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01386 870297
<b>Fax number</b>	01386 871933

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<b>Age group</b>	4–10
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Church Lench Church of England First is a smaller-than-average school. Four fifths of the pupils are from White British families and one fifth are from Traveller families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Reception group taught jointly with Year 1.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Church Lench is a good school. Achievement is good and standards are above average. Children in the Reception group make good progress. The school has been through a difficult few years during which staff turnover was high. As a result, standards dropped and progress slowed, especially for pupils in Years 2 to 5. The school now has stable staffing and is rapidly improving under the good leadership of the headteacher, whose unrelenting drive to raise standards is shared by all who work at the school.

Pupils' personal development is good and thrives in the school's supportive family atmosphere. Their behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. They are very polite to each other and to adults. They feel very safe in school and their thorough enjoyment of learning is reflected in their above-average attendance.

Teaching is good, and there are many signs that it is improving. Lessons are interesting and pupils are keen to learn. Older pupils know exactly what is expected of them because teachers make lesson objectives very clear and this is accelerating progress. However, the progress of children in Reception sometimes slows because they are not always given sufficient guidance as to what they must do in activities they choose for themselves. For most of the time, pupils are challenged well by their work and make good progress. Occasionally during a lesson, the pace of learning and progress slows when the teacher talks for too long or when the work pupils are given does not precisely match their needs. Pupils really enjoy school because the good curriculum provides them with a wide range of stimulating activities that broadens their horizons. The curriculum has an appropriate emphasis on improving standards in writing and mathematics. Pupils are very well cared for. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of each child extremely well to provide a high standard of pastoral care. Pupils from Traveller families and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with sensitive support that helps them to make similar good progress to their peers. Teachers provide pupils with clear guidance on how they can make their work better and care, guidance and support is good.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One wrote, 'Church Lench provides a happy, safe and stimulating environment for children to learn and grow into confident young people.' Another said, 'Both my children have made excellent progress under the guidance of enthusiastic teachers.'

The headteacher is supported well by subject leaders, who are effective in checking standards in their areas of responsibility, and leadership and management is good. The school's record of improvements shows it is well placed to become even better.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children's skills and experiences when they start Reception are below those typically expected. They make good progress in Reception and reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. They progress especially well in their personal development, which is good. Children behave extremely well and are very polite to each other and to adults. They share resources well and readily help each other. Children are very well cared for and are very safe both indoors and in the outdoor learning area. Parents are very happy with the induction arrangements that mean children quickly settle into the routines of school. They appreciate the regular updates they receive on their child's progress and the useful advice they are given on how they can help

them learn at home. The good teaching accelerates children's progress through a wide variety of stimulating activities. Progress is especially good when children are taught as a group. The same level of progress is not always sustained during activities chosen by children because adults do not consistently provide them with clear enough guidance on what they need to do. For example, children are not always encouraged to write lists and use number in their role play. The outdoor learning area is well used, and makes a significant contribution to children's gaining of independence. Leadership and management are good. Adults use assessments effectively to plan children's next steps in their learning.

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

- Sustain a rapid pace of learning throughout lessons so that pupils make even better progress by ensuring teachers do not talk for too long and provide pupils with work that precisely matches their needs.
- Improve the guidance given to children in the Reception on what they need to do in their chosen activities to sustain their good progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Children enter school with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. Children make good progress overall in Reception to reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. This good progress continues, and pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave school in Year 5. Standards vary from year to year, reflecting the small number of pupils in each year.

Pupils' ability to link letters with the sounds they make and their understanding of the meaning of the text they read has improved significantly this year. When writing, pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas clearly and add interest to their stories and accounts. Their punctuation is a relative weakness. Pupils apply their knowledge of number skilfully to solve mathematical problems but their estimating is not always accurate enough. Standards in science and information and communication technology are above average. Pupils' investigation skills in science, which were a relative weakness last year, have improved markedly because teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to undertake practical work.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils reflect maturely on their feelings. Their crystal-clear understanding of right and wrong underpins their outstanding behaviour. In lessons, they do not call out answers or distract others, which means learning proceeds without interruptions. Pupils work well in teams and are keen to help each other. Pupils respect people from different backgrounds and have a well-developed understanding of the diversity of British culture. Pupils feel very safe in school because they say bullying is unheard of. They are secure in the knowledge that adults deal promptly and effectively with any teasing. They ensure others come to no harm around school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when crossing the road. Pupils understand the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle and most do their best to take plenty of exercise and eat a balanced diet. Pupils really enjoy all aspects of school, including the lessons, meeting their friends and the visits out of school. Pupils are keen to take responsibility, for example as members of the school council. They are proud of the way they

have helped the school make decisions about changes to the school uniform. Most pupils readily participate in village activities and in cultural events, such as music festivals, in Worcester and Evesham. Pupils' positive attitudes and above average standards means they are well prepared for middle school and future employment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

In lessons, relationships are positive and pupils work hard. Pupils are challenged well by their work and make good progress. This is particularly so when pupils discuss and clarify their ideas in small groups. Occasionally, progress slows when the teacher talks for too long and learning becomes passive or when an activity does not match the needs of a particular group of pupils closely enough so that they find the task either too hard or too easy. Teaching assistants often make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from Traveller families. However, they sometimes do not make a sufficient contribution to learning when the teacher is leading the class.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum broadens and enriches pupils' learning experiences through activities such as learning to play a musical instrument, exploring wildlife in the school's pond and orchard, educational visits to the Roman Museum and taking part in sports activities with their peers in other schools. More opportunities to write longer pieces of work in subjects such as history have strengthened pupils' ability to write in different styles, such as reports. More time spent practising mental arithmetic has helped raise standards in mathematics. There are good opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to work with their peers in other schools but the school recognises that it needs to better develop their special talents in lessons. The curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. For example, lively assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on belief and their moral values.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils confidently turn to adults with their problems because they know they will be sympathetically and effectively resolved. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are accurately assessed and their learning programmes match their requirements well. Close liaison with Traveller families and Traveller support agencies ensure these pupils take full part in school life, attend regularly and make good progress. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and regularly updated.

Teachers provide pupils with clear and effective advice about how they can improve their work and this is contributing to their good progress. However, teachers do not consistently check that this good advice is acted upon. Older pupils are not entirely clear about the levels they are expected to reach by the end of the school year. This means they cannot check or take personal responsibility for their rate of progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Rigorous monitoring and evaluation provide the school with a largely accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. Development plans have appropriate priorities and are successful in raising standards. For example, writing has improved because pupils are given more opportunity to write at length in subjects other than English. Most subject leaders take full responsibility for standards and improvements in their areas; for example, they have provided training to sharpen staff skills in teaching practical work in science. A few subject leaders are new in post and their role in improving standards is still developing. The school sets challenging targets. It regularly checks the progress of pupils towards them and provides effective support if pupils fall behind so that they catch up on work. The good progress of pupils from Traveller families and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a testament to the school's thorough commitment to equal opportunities. The school is a harmonious society and it supports the local community, especially Traveller families and pre-school groups, well. It is developing links with a school in Ghana, and community cohesion is good. Adults are used well to ensure teaching groups remain small so that pupils can get more individual help. The governors work hard on behalf of the school. They understand data well and are not afraid to hold the school to account.

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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

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<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	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	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	2
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**

10 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Church Lench CofE First School, Evesham, WR11 4UE

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially liked seeing Years 2 and 3 working so hard and enjoying their literacy lesson discussing Roald Dahl's book, *The BFG*. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We think Church Lench is a good school and it is continuing to improve. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make a good start to school in the Reception class.
- Good teaching helps you make good progress in your lessons.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you attend very regularly.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and activities, which you enjoy.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- You have a good understanding of how you can improve your work.
- The headteacher and adults are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do two things to help you do even better in your learning.

- Make sure teachers keep you working hard throughout lessons so that you make even better progress, by making sure teachers do not spend too long talking to you and by providing you with tasks that really stretch you.
- Tell children in the Reception Year what they need to do in the activities they choose so that they too make even better progress.

You can help the school by continuing to behave very well, trying your best in lessons and attending very regularly.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Gerald Griffin Lead inspector