

Chartham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118357
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326812
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	263
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	Valerie Elvidge
Headteacher	Judith Martyn
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Shalmsford Street Chartham Canterbury CT4 7QN
Telephone number	01227 738225
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils in this large village school are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. These pupils' needs are varied. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides for four- and five-year-old children, taught in two Reception classes. There is a breakfast club run by the school and an independent nursery that is not managed by the governing body. The school has gained Active Mark for Sport and Healthy Schools status.

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 with good features. It is improving under the good leadership of the headteacher. She has stimulated in staff a focus on raising standards and creating an inclusive school of which to be proud. Some aspects of the school are outstanding. Some key staff are new and there has been insufficient time for developments to have had their full impact, particularly at subject leader level. The parents are very supportive and have confidence in the school. One wrote, 'Our daughter looks forward to school every day and would go to school at the weekend if possible.'

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with broadly average skill levels. The school builds very well on their starting points and children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning because of outstanding provision in the EYFS. Consequently, pupils start Year 1 with above average standards. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents satisfactory achievement. Higher attaining pupils do less well in mathematics than in the other two subjects.

Pupils behave well, helped by effective behaviour policies and specialist staff. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community with older pupils readily looking after younger ones and taking on day-to-day responsibilities around school. They gain an understanding of their local community through opportunities such as performing to the senior citizens at the church. The pupils' understanding of different cultures is well developed through links with a rural area of India, other areas of England and studying and playing musical instruments from South America. As a result pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity in society is good.

Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, but has a number of good features. For example, teachers ask effective questions that ensure critical thinking and use a wide range of resources to stimulate pupils' interest. Where teaching is less effective, there is not enough challenge to enable pupils, particularly the higher attaining, to make sufficient progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support and consequently make similar progress to their peers. The curriculum is planned to engage pupils' interest, which it does successfully. This promotes good attitudes and contributes to pupils' good behaviour and includes many activities and visits to widen pupils' experiences. For example, the visit to Tyland Barn and Canterbury Cathedral broadens pupils' understanding of the world around them. However, the curriculum for the higher attaining pupils is underdeveloped and limits progress.

Good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils grow into confident and responsible citizens. Pastoral care of pupils is very strong and safeguarding systems are robust. Academic guidance has improved and information from regular assessments of pupils' progress is used well to target pupils who are falling behind and in need of additional support. This has contributed to the improvement in the achievement of girls. However, there are occasions when assessment is not fully used to highlight to pupils the next step in their learning. Marking provides some useful prompts on how pupils can improve their work. The school's good capacity to improve is evident in the way it has successfully implemented strategies to raise pupils' achievement in English. The headteacher provides decisive and effective leadership and her clear vision is evident in the effective self-evaluation. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a structured plan to support the school in tackling aspects requiring development. In the past, subject leaders have not played a sufficiently prominent

role in promoting good practice and raising achievement. Good plans are in place to extend their influence in these areas.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children start school with the knowledge and skill levels expected for their age, although there is significant variation between different years. Outstanding management and provision help children thrive, and children form very good relationships with each other and adults and are keen to learn. All staff promote children's personal, social and emotional development exceptionally well, with the result that children show considerable ability to sit and concentrate on tasks to completion. Staff carefully maintain accurate records of children's participation, work and their practical involvement to assess their progress and help plan future activities. A well balanced combination of supported activities with independent work and play exploits indoor and outdoor facilities to the full. Planning shows very clearly how all the different areas of learning are addressed through interesting topics. Leadership and management are outstanding. The reception teachers are highly knowledgeable and have effectively introduced the new EYFS Framework.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise teachers' expectations of higher attaining pupils and ensure they are always given sufficiently challenging work.
- Improve teaching and learning to ensure they are consistently good.
- Ensure subject leaders monitor planned improvements more rigorously and subject-specific and school initiatives are robustly delivered in the classroom.

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

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. While some pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, the majority make satisfactory progress. Improved systems for checking pupil progress have enabled swifter identification of weaknesses. Standards in writing have improved considerably and standards in mathematics, although above average, are less strong with too few pupils reaching the higher levels. The school recognises there is more to be done to ensure all pupils make as much progress as they can. There has been good improvement in the progress made by pupils in their use of information communication technology (ICT) skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, as shown by their good attendance, and behave well. Pupils say incidents of poor behaviour are rare because, as one pupil commented, 'Everyone is friendly and the school deals quickly with any bullying that does occur.' Pupils are enthusiastic and respond well to all the opportunities that the school provides. The school is a friendly place and, in lessons, pupils co-operate well in group work to solve problems. Being healthy is

important to the pupils and they value their nutritious school dinners. The high participation rates in sport indicate a strong commitment to an active lifestyle. They explained that their next initiative is to grow and eat their own food and they are raising funds for a vegetable garden. Pupils have learned about and have a sound knowledge of other religions and countries. They have less experience and understanding of living in a multi cultural society. Pupils, particularly the older members of the school, have positions of responsibility through the school council and have raised money to make improvements to their facilities. Their fund raising has made them active participants in their local community and they have also supported national charities like Children in Need and Red Nose Day. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers use a mix of strategies for teaching pupils including good use of discussion between pupils as well as with the teacher and a range of practical, first-hand experiences. Careful explanations and exciting resources promote learning as well as enthusing pupils. However, teachers do not always use pupils' misunderstandings to accelerate the progress made during lessons. Pupils enjoy lessons when teachers make learning interesting through lively teaching and stimulating activities. There are, nevertheless, variances across year groups in the quality of teaching. Expectations of pupils are not consistently high enough resulting in tasks not matching pupils' ability and hence slower progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum places a suitable emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills, and interesting and enjoyable enrichment activities keep pupils well motivated. There is a good take-up of the wide range of clubs on offer because there is something to appeal to everyone, including opportunities that develop pupils' creative, sporting and useful life skills. The new skills based approach develops pupils' application of skills in different contexts, for example their use of ICT in a range of subjects. The provision for extending the thinking of higher attaining pupils is not consistently applied throughout the school and curriculum objectives do not sharply focus on pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils and parents alike recognise the school's strength in caring for and nurturing individuals, with staff responding sensitively and effectively to particular needs. Pupils feel safe and secure, knowing and feeling confident to seek support from staff if needed. The school's safeguarding and child protection systems are thorough, contributing to pupils' feeling of security. The school's motivating environment increasingly ensures pupils are reaching targets set. The school's assessment information provides some good academic guidance, although this is sometimes unevenly applied.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management have a clear focus on raising standards and have identified the correct priorities for improvement. Effective subject leadership in English has helped to improve teaching and learning. This good model is now being used to develop the skills of other subject leaders who, in the past, have not played a big enough part in driving improvement. Rigorous monitoring by the headteacher ensures that the school's self-evaluation is accurate and provides a clear agenda for improvement. Governors provide effective challenge and support and are fully involved in the life of the school. The school has a good reputation in the community and does much to involve the local community in its work as well as promoting effective national and global dimensions to its work.

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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	2

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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	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

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	2
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	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

15 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chartham Primary School, Chartham, CT4 7QN

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and you all helped us get to know your school very quickly. Your school gives you a satisfactory education. You make progress particularly when teachers ask you challenging questions and show you how to improve your work. Those of you who are in the Reception classes make excellent progress because you do lots of exciting things to help you learn.

Your behaviour is good – well done! Your attendance is good. You told us how much you enjoy learning and the range of clubs on offer, many of which help you keep fit and healthy. Your knowledge of healthy eating is good. You also have a good awareness of how to stay safe. You play an important role in organising the school through your elected school council and the jobs you do to help each other in the school.

We have asked the adults to do three things to make the school better. First, we have asked them to always make sure work is challenging, particularly for those of you who find work easy. Second, we have asked the staff to make sure that your lessons are always good, and third, we have asked the teachers to keep a close eye on how well subjects are helping you to learn. You can help too by trying your hardest in all lessons.

We enjoyed our visit to your school.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector