

Hartwell Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121977
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	327611
Inspection date	17 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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)	197
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	Neil Morrison
Headteacher	Jayne Clancy
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Hartwell Northampton NN7 2HL
Telephone number	01604 862880

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	17 September 2008
Inspection number	327611

Fax number

01604 864651

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	17 September 2008
Inspection number	327611

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the use of information about how well pupils are doing to ensure that all are challenged to achieve well

pupils' attitudes towards learning and the way that they take responsibility and contribute to school life

the role of the senior management team and subject leaders in ensuring continued improvement

the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS – the Reception year).

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussion with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of parents' views. 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 its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Most pupils come to this average sized rural primary school from the village of Hartwell, although a few travel from further afield. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The number eligible for free school meals is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Parents and pupils are justifiably proud of this outstanding school. The school's belief that 'second best is not good enough' is reflected in all aspects of its work. Consequently, exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 6 have been maintained for several years. Pupils are very well guided and supported, enabling them to flourish both socially and academically. Pupils develop a love of learning and are sociable, friendly and articulate. They greatly enjoy school, with comments such as 'every day is fun' and 'teachers are very caring' typically summing up their views.

Pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils make good progress in the Reception year, where members of staff lay a very firm foundation for future learning, and then excellent progress in the rest of the school. Pupils do so well because teaching is good and because there are very rigorous systems for identifying and supporting any pupils who are in danger of falling behind. Although there have been many changes of teaching staff over the last 18 months, teaching is consistently good or better, and in some year groups it is outstanding. New teachers have been given high quality support, and minor areas for development in classroom practice are quickly identified and tackled. This has led to consistent improvements in their teaching over time and has ensured that pupils' progress has not dipped. Teachers are enthusiastic and have very high expectations of how well pupils should achieve. Teachers are generally very successful at meeting differing needs and they make good use of information about how well pupils are doing to plan what to teach next. However, the school has rightly identified that there are occasions when work is not pitched at the right level for some less able pupils in numeracy lessons. In contrast, the more able pupils are challenged very well throughout the school day and this is reflected in the very high number of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests at the end of each year. Teachers make excellent use of targets to help pupils understand how to improve. Pupils talk very knowledgeably about the next steps in their learning and take good account of these targets when they are working.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Relationships between classmates and adults are superb, and everyone helps each other when needed. Pupils' exemplary behaviour is a major factor in their very high achievement. There is a delightful atmosphere in lessons because pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards their work and always try their best. Pupils quickly learn to respect and care for each other and they are very polite and courteous to visitors. They are very keen to take on responsibilities and do so very sensibly. School councillors are very conscientious. They are full of bright ideas and they make a good contribution to school life. Pupils are developing a good awareness of the importance of looking after the environment and they make a good contribution to the community by taking part in local events and working with village groups such as the allotment committee. Their good knowledge of different cultures contributes well to community cohesion. The school is working to strengthen this further by extending links beyond the local community.

The excellent curriculum supports pupils' learning exceptionally well. The strong focus on developing basic skills is very effective and ensures that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and their later life. Teachers foster creativity very imaginatively through lessons and clubs. Pupils especially like the wide range of musical and sporting activities that the school provides. Pupils produce high quality artwork such as the superb pictures on the theme of 'The Fire of London' that are displayed in the Year 2 classroom. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, talking very confidently about the

importance of exercise and the need to eat a balanced diet. Leaders regularly review the curriculum and there are good plans in place to strengthen the transition from the Reception year to Year 1. At the moment, there are some missed opportunities to extend good Reception year practice into Year 1 by giving pupils more opportunity to take part in free choice activities and to learn outdoors.

The school is so successful because it is led and managed exceptionally well. The headteacher's commitment and drive have been pivotal to the achievements of the school, and she is ably supported by a very strong team of senior managers, governors and subject leaders. Together, they do all they can to ensure that every pupil fulfils his or her potential and to ensure that the school continues to move forward. As one parent rightly noted, 'The school is always looking to improve and at new ways of doing things.' There is a very clear understanding of the school's priorities for development based on very thorough systems for checking effectiveness. The headteacher and governors have demonstrated, in the way that they have continued to ensure improvement since the last inspection, that they are very well placed to realise their aspirations.

The school has established outstanding links with parents, who make a very strong contribution to their children's learning by working with them at home. One parent summed up the almost unanimous views by writing, 'I am pleased that my son is getting such an excellent start to his education.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well because teaching is good and their welfare and care are given a very high priority. There is a good curriculum that includes exciting activities that successfully motivate and engage children. Consequently, from starting with skills that are in line with those typically expected for their age, children's standards rise to above average levels by the start of Year 1. Children make especially good progress in personal, social and emotional development. At the time of the inspection, children in the Reception year had only been in school a few days, but they were already remarkably settled, showing very positive attitudes toward learning and beginning to make sensible choices about activities on which they would like to work. Adults help children quickly to develop independence and confidence and they learn to play with and help each other. This means that there is a happy and purposeful atmosphere in lessons throughout the day. Children are given good support by adults, although there are occasionally missed opportunities to extend learning when they are working independently. Good leadership and management ensure that provision is reviewed regularly and action taken as needed. Leaders are making increased use of data to measure progress over time so that any areas for development can be identified even more quickly. The school has rightly identified the need to improve outdoor provision so that it is better resourced and can be used more fully in the different areas of learning. A good quality action plan sets out an appropriate time scale for achieving these improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work is always pitched at the right level for less able pupils in mathematics lessons.
- Strengthen the transition from Reception year to ensure that the Year 1 curriculum includes more opportunities for free choice and outdoor learning.

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
---	----------------

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?	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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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	1
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?	2
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?	2
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**

Dear Children

Inspection of Hartwell CE Primary School, Hartwell NN7 2HL

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking to you. We agree with you that your school is excellent, and that staff do a lot to help you.

Some of the things we found out about your school:

- You are supported very well and good teaching helps you to learn new things very quickly throughout the school. This means that you consistently reach very high standards by the end of Year 6.
- Younger children get a good start in the Reception Class, where you work together well and settle quickly.
- Adults provide many interesting and exciting activities both in and out of lessons and this helps you to enjoy school greatly.
- You behave exceptionally well and take responsibility very sensibly. We are very pleased that you are learning about taking good care of the environment. You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy.
- The school council does a very good job of representing your views.
- Your teachers and other adults are very kind and caring and they give you high quality help when you are struggling with your work.
- The school is very well led and managed and all the adults are working very hard to make the school even better.
- Almost all of your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Ensure that work is always pitched at the right level for everyone in mathematics lessons.
- Ensure that some of the super free choice and outdoor activities in the Reception class and are carried through into Year 1.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. You can help your teachers by continuing always to do your best and we wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Capper Lead inspector