

# Hook Norton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123097
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327847
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rob Crompton

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	247
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>	Mr Joe Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Stella Belgrove
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 May 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>	Sibford Road Hook Norton Banbury OX15 5JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01608 737 379

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	327847

**Fax number**

01608 737 684

**Age group** 3-11

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**Inspection date** 10 March 2009

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**Inspection number** 327847

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The school was visited for one day. The inspectors investigated the following issues in detail.

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' achievement.
- The quality of teaching and learning.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records together with curriculum and planning documents. In addition, observations were made of the school at work; including attending parts of some lessons. Interviews were held with some staff, pupils and governors. The parents' responses to the questionnaires were evaluated. 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 were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is broadly average in size. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few pupils have mixed White and Black Caribbean heritage. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A below-average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a mixed-age unit for Nursery and Reception children. As they start school, children's skills, knowledge and understanding are generally above those typical of the age group.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school with a distinctive caring, community ethos. As a result of excellent teaching, pupils do very well so that their achievements are outstanding and standards of work are very high by the end of Year 6. The headteacher provides an inspirational lead to the staff and, as a result, the school has moved forward on many fronts since the last inspection. Also, past strengths have been sustained; all aspects of the school's work are now first class and standards have risen further.

Parents are extremely appreciative and supportive of the school. 'Excellent', 'fantastic' and 'wonderful' were the words most frequently used by parents in their descriptions of the school. Echoing the views of the overwhelming majority, one parent wrote, 'We are exceptionally lucky to have as our local primary school one that takes account of the whole child, not just academic achievements.'

Teaching and learning are outstanding and enable pupils, including the more able and those finding learning difficult, to make excellent progress. Teachers and support staff are very knowledgeable about their subjects and pupils' individual needs. They prepare lessons extremely well and use assessment information in an exemplary way to identify where pupils are and to implement strategies to quicken their progress.

The most able pupils are identified early and set increasingly challenging work. This is reflected in the proportion of pupils in Years 2 and 6 who reach especially high levels in their English, mathematics and science work. The proportion that gains very high levels in national tests is often twice the national average.

Less confident pupils benefit from additional support during lessons and from working in small groups outside the classroom. The well trained and enthusiastic teaching assistants play a significant role in helping all pupils to reach their potential.

Teachers are skilled in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote pupils' learning, interest and understanding of new things. Pupils routinely use computers for research and to record and present their work. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils made excellent progress in creating sequences of commands to programme a floor robot. Many went on to devise programmes to produce on-screen 'nets' that they could print out to construct paper cubes.

Pupils are given clear targets for improvement and receive precise guidance on how to achieve these. Targets for English, mathematics and science are presented in a meaningful way to pupils, so that they know what to aspire to and how to evaluate their efforts. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils commented sensibly on how well their classmates had used 'imperative verbs' when writing a series of instructions. This lesson exemplified the way links are made between subjects to make learning meaningful to pupils. Based on previous work in science, the instructions were about how a local skip hire company might set about sorting materials. Although the feedback pupils' receive is generally very good and books are marked well, there are some inconsistencies in the way teachers mark pupils' work to make it very clear how pupils might develop their work.

The outstanding curriculum enriches teaching and learning. A rich programme of academic study, together with creative and sporting activities, enthuses pupils and promotes their wholehearted participation. Sporting activities contribute much to pupils' fitness. Music features

strongly in the curriculum. Many pupils are learning an instrument and there is a school orchestra, a choir and recorder ensembles.

The school council and pupils' eco committee are very active. The school has gained national recognition for its success in promoting pupils' health, economic awareness and international understanding. Pupils learn French and close links with schools in Sweden and Turkey, with exchange visits by pupils, successfully develop their international awareness. Pupils have a keen awareness of religions and cultures different from their own. For instance, they talked with great enthusiasm about their international week and the number of visitors who come into school to talk to them about life in other countries or how their faith shapes their lives. Mixing with children from Turkey provides pupils with valuable first-hand insights into the Islamic faith. Links such as these aid community cohesion extremely well. Assemblies celebrate the school's Christian heritage, instil an appreciation of the contribution of others and promote a caring community.

The neighbourhood is used extensively in teaching and pupils make a valuable contribution to the local community. They take part in sports tournaments and music festivals. They entertain local senior citizens, learning how to engage with older members of the community and with people with disabilities. Older pupils wrote to the Parish Council to complain about litter and co-ordinated a litter pick in the village. They designed badges for a 'healthy week' for the local doctor's surgery. Such activities successfully promote cooperative group work and encourage pupils' independence and initiative. These personal characteristics, together with pupils' very secure literacy, numeracy and computer skills, provide an extremely good foundation for their subsequent education and beyond.

In response to excellent care, support and guidance, the pupils' personal development and well-being are of the highest quality. Parents were fulsome in their praise, describing the school as 'caring and nurturing'. They also noted the 'real sense of community'. Many paid tribute the sensitivity and compassion shown by staff, the strong sense of community and supportive family atmosphere, and these characteristics were evident during the inspection. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, behave extremely well and develop very mature attitudes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their understanding of Britain's rich cultural diversity, is also advanced for their ages. Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school, they converse politely and enthusiastically about the many opportunities open to them and feel that staff will help them to improve their work.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know what to do about bullying if any occurs and do not see it a major issue. Pupils know why it is important to eat healthily and to keep fit. They offer visitors accurate advice on what makes a healthy diet and take an active part in the many games and sports activities open to them. Pupils display a generosity of spirit, support a range of national and global charities and show great concern for their environment.

Pupils' excellent progress and high standards of personal development owe much to the outstanding leadership and management throughout the school. Staff and governors work as a cohesive team and share a very strong commitment to inclusive education. Their views of the school's qualities are informed by an extensive range of information, including meticulous tracking of pupils' progress. Self-evaluation involves all staff, governors, parents and pupils. When areas for development are identified, action to bring about improvement is swift and effective. Indeed, senior staff used their expertise to help another school within the local authority to address its difficulties and move forward. Hook Norton has made considerable

headway since the last inspection. As one parent said, 'It has gone from strength to strength.' The school has an outstanding capacity to maintain and build on its success.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

'We have been so pleased with our child's progress this year'; 'We are very impressed with the Foundation Stage.' These parental comments are fitting tributes to the high quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The children make an impressive start due to the outstanding care and welfare they receive, coupled with very good induction procedures. They demonstrate excellent levels of enjoyment, independence and concentration in their learning because of the exceptionally good curriculum on offer and the high-quality teaching. Consequently, they often make excellent progress in all aspects of learning.

Well-planned activities capture their imagination and excite them to learn. Nowhere is this better exemplified than when children happily collaborated; digging in the undergrowth, making mud-pies, exploring mini-beasts' habitats and gathering wood for a camp fire. Staff motivated, excited and helped children to use their senses to explore the environment and respond to what they saw. Lessons are vibrant, full of rich, well-resourced opportunities for the children to explore the world around them, and at the same time develop the important skills in language, numeracy, ICT and personal development. Leadership and management are excellent. The adults keep a very close check on each child's progress and tracking procedures are rigorous.

Parents are kept informed of their child's progress through a meeting mid-way through the Early Years Foundation Stage and through end-of-year reports in Reception. Informal feedback through the 'key person' system offers parents the opportunity to stay in touch with their child's progress; however, some parents would appreciate more frequent formal feedback.

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

- Build on the best practice in marking to ensure consistency across the school.
- Review opportunities for parents of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage to discuss their children's progress with staff.

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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?	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?	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?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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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>	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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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?	1
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**

20 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hook Norton Church of England Primary School, Banbury, OX15 5JS

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave my colleague and me when we visited your excellent school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, visiting some of your lessons and finding out about the many exciting opportunities you have for learning. Members of the school council told us your views of school and said that you think the school is outstanding. We agree. Hook Norton is an exceptionally good school in which you make excellent progress. Your school also does a tremendous amount to support your personal development and well-being. You are well prepared for the future.

The reason why you do so well is that the teaching and curriculum are exceptional. The youngest children have a great start to their school life. The adults organise many appealing activities. Children really enjoy learning in the classrooms and the outdoor areas and they especially look forward to their visits to the forest.

What amazing opportunities you have to learn through activities in addition to your usual lessons! You are so lucky to have visits to Sweden and children from Turkey staying in your study centre during their visit. It was good to see how many of you are learning a musical instrument. The list of opportunities you have is too long to include here.

Your behaviour is excellent and you make a very important contribution to the school community through your responsibilities. For example, the recycling scheme introduced by the eco committee has really taken off. You play an active part in the wider community through events with other schools and links with the church. You do a lot to help others less fortunate than yourselves by raising funds for charities.

The headteacher, staff and governors keep working hard to make the school even better for you. We know how much you and your parents appreciate this and everything that they already do. To help your school to become even better, we have asked the teachers to do the following things.

- Share their good ideas about marking so that all of you know exactly how to improve your work.
- Think about how teachers may be able to give parents of children in Nursery and Reception more information about their children's progress.

Thank you once again. We really enjoyed our visit. Keep doing your best in everything!

Yours faithfully

Rob Crompton

Lead Inspector