

North Hinksey Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123156
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	327859
Inspection dates	1–2 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter McGregor

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)	188
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	Mr Keith Elmitt
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Wheatley
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	North Hinksey Lane Botley OX2 0LZ
Telephone number	01865 248626
Fax number	01865 794330

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

North Hinksey is a primary school of average size. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little lower than usually found. This is also true of the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils from minority ethnic groups are from mixed or Pakistani backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language or are eligible for free school meals. The school has increased in size this year and moved to single-age group classes throughout the school. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in its Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

North Hinksey is a good school. Effective progress has been made on a number of fronts in the past year, which has enabled pupils to make substantial improvements in their achievement and standards. In particular, an exciting new curriculum is impacting on achievement and initiatives to track pupils' progress closely have become accepted aspects of school procedures. These factors are raising standards in Year 6 so they are above average, reversing a slight fall in previous years. Children enter the Reception class with standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age and make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 6. Current standards are above average in Year 2.

Pupils' personal development is good. They appreciate the friendly, positive environment and willingly take on responsibilities. Their behaviour is usually very good. They feel safe, are physically active, and adopt extremely healthy lifestyles. Relatively new systems to resolve bullying and inappropriate conduct work well. An historical issue of bullying, over which a minority of parents still show concern, has been resolved. Pupils are confident and articulate, with good standards of numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT); they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Teaching and learning are good. Work is often exciting and very well prepared. Pupils are actively engaged in their own learning. Progress for some groups slows occasionally when work is not well enough matched to the wide range of pupils' needs in a class. The curriculum has several excellent elements and is evolving rapidly as subjects are carefully drawn together under topics and themes that enhance pupils' interest and enjoyment. Staff care about pupils' welfare and develop very good relationships with them. They are vigilant in their supervision during breaks in the day. Systems to monitor pupils' progress are in place so that support can be provided where underachievement is identified. The frequency and accuracy of assessment, however, are not yet consistent across the school, and this results in shortcomings in the quality of additional support.

Leadership and management are good. Governors are well informed, carry out their statutory duties with care, and work hard to promote improvements. Senior leaders, with the support of all staff, are striving to raise further the quality of academic guidance, the curriculum, teaching and learning, in order to improve standards. Well-organised monitoring of lessons and pupils' work contributes well to this end. Communication between school and home has not always been fully effective in involving everyone to work together to enhance each child's success. The school's self-evaluation is detailed and the school has a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Issues identified in the last report have been tackled well and the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well managed and effective. Children enter Reception from a number of pre-school settings, with a wide range of knowledge, skills and experience. Overall, these are in line with those expected at this age. Due to good teaching, children achieve well in the six areas of learning. Children's progress is tracked with care and key personnel provide effective individual support. A good balance is struck between tasks selected by the children and those chosen by staff. Most children achieve, and some exceed, the expected levels by the time they

are ready to enter Year 1. Progress in children's personal and social skills is particularly good due to good relationships with staff and high expectations. Learning support and teaching staff work together very well as a team for the benefit of the children. Although standards in writing have lagged behind other areas, they are showing good improvement, largely through more opportunities for children to use and practise their early skills independently. Children enjoy a broad range of interesting and engaging practical activities. However, the indoor role play and outside play areas are not sufficiently stimulating. The school has recognised the need to develop the outside environment and plans are in place to do this. Excellent links have been made with the pre-school on the same site, including some joint activities, which ensures a smooth transition to the Reception class.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make by matching work better to the range of prior attainment in each class.
- Ensure consistent use of assessment data to inform planning and thus improve standards.
- Ensure that communication between school and home encourages everyone involved in each child's education to work together to enhance enjoyment and success.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Good achievement and higher standards in English and mathematics have resulted from more effective class arrangements, and better tracking and intervention systems. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive targeted, helpful support. In Years 1 and 2, standards are improving through early recording of and active engagement in mathematics, and writing creatively across several curriculum areas. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are improving as work is more closely matched to National Curriculum levels and specific, achievable targets are set. Year 2 pupils working on series circuits had to write instructions so that Year 1 pupils could carry out the task, exemplifying how specific targets in writing and science are brought together to enhance standards. Achievement in science in Years 3 to 6 is getting better as gaps in pupils' knowledge, identified through rigorous assessment, are systematically taught and learnt. Standards are good in ICT because confident staff make effective use of modern technology, including recently acquired class computers and laptops.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions, are good. Pupils of all backgrounds accept and respect each other. A minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying in the inspection questionnaires. Although some pupils confirmed that bullying took place in the past, all those spoken to felt that the school's anti-bullying initiatives are now dealing with the issue. All staff and pupils sign an anti-bullying charter that they have been involved in writing. Pupils' attendance is above average and they enjoy coming to school. They have an outstanding commitment to healthy living, through energetic play and eating sensibly. As one said, 'We have to eat healthily to be able to work better'. Pupils have a good awareness of the need to keep themselves and others safe, for example when older pupils act as playground buddies. On the walk to the Easter service at the local church, Year 6 pupils, paired with Reception children, held their hands to ensure their

safety. Pupils' contribution to the school community is good. Many have daily jobs to help the school run smoothly. Year 6 pupils proudly look after the school office at lunchtime and others prepare fruit as healthy snacks for younger pupils. The school council is pleased with its initiatives, especially the playground improvements. Pupils are well prepared for later life and learning through their good levels of achievement, confidence, and positive attitudes to work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and form very good relationships with pupils. They make work relevant, interesting and enjoyable. Teaching assistants usually work closely with individuals and groups of pupils, facilitating their success. The behaviour of lively pupils is managed effectively and lessons are well structured. Pupils have opportunities to discuss work with one another and assess their own levels of knowledge and understanding. Teachers frequently use small whiteboards effectively to evaluate individual progress in lessons. The challenge and pace of lessons is often good, although the rate of working falls where tasks are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of particular groups. At times, teachers talk without gaining the attention of all pupils, and boys and girls are not always equally engaged. When questioning is good, it elicits positive responses from pupils, and expansive answers, helping them to improve their understanding by voicing their ideas and memories. Pupils are very confident and cooperative learners, keen to learn and do well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and helps pupils to achieve well. In the past year, the school has worked extremely hard at developing a creative curriculum that motivates and interests all pupils by linking different subjects together to make them more meaningful. This is not yet fully established but has already had an impact on raising standards. Detailed planning ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Specialist French lessons and sports coaching, as well as the availability of individual music lessons on various instruments, provide additional breadth. The school's emphasis on personal, social and health education has had a positive impact on all pupils' personal development and well-being. An excellent range of visits and visitors, and very popular extra-curricular activities, including music, sports, science and the arts, enhances pupils' learning experiences. Many pupils attend at least one club such as 'mad scientists' or chess. Residential visits for Years 4, 5 and 6 support pupils' social and personal development as well as their academic work. The visit to the Science Museum in London, where pupils sleep overnight among the exhibits, is a recent introduction that has proved exceptionally popular and successful.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good personal support for pupils, ensuring their health and safety during breaks. Careful and observant supervision allows pupils to have fun safely using the timber trail on the field, and boys and girls of different ages to play touch rugby in a lively but sensible way. The positive ethos of the school ensures that praise and reward are the means by which improvements are achieved. Incidents of misbehaviour are noted and dealt with through both

guidance and sanctions. Attendance procedures are appropriate, including rigorous processes to minimise holidays taken during term time. Records of pupils' progress and standards are in transition as the school moves to an electronic system, enabling easier access to data and better use of information to support learning. Assessment is sound, including the recording of pupils' National Curriculum levels, although there is not yet consistency in how often or how accurately this assessment is carried out. It is developing as staff improve the way in which they assess. Pupils know their targets in English and mathematics and aspire to achieve them. Pupils are not made aware of specific targets in science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. Ably supported by senior staff, she has ensured that teachers now take the lead in subject roles, helping pupils to meet challenging targets – the main issue of the previous inspection. All staff are involved in writing the school development plan, which is focused on raising standards. Teachers observe each other, as part of peer support and classroom research, but newer subject managers have not yet had the opportunity to monitor the teaching of their subject. Teaching and non-teaching staff make sure that the school runs smoothly for the benefit of all pupils. Aspects of home-school links are good, including curriculum sessions for parents to learn about innovations such as the use of interactive whiteboards. A minority of parents, however, do not feel fully informed about developments within the school or about the progress of their child. Links with the local and wider community are good. Community cohesion is promoted well, such as by visits to a local mosque and developing links with three European schools through the Comenius programme. This enhances pupils' understanding of other faiths, backgrounds and cultures. For example, Moslem and Christian pupils show a good understanding of each other's needs and happily work together. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are rigorous and appropriate. Governance is good. Governors bring a good range of skills to the school. They monitor and evaluate performance and provide good challenge and support.

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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 ¹ 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

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	2

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?	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?	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**

27 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of North Hinksey Church of England Primary School,,OX2 0LZ

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome. We enjoyed being in your school.

North Hinksey is a good school. From Reception through to Year 6 you are making good progress in your work and doing well. The school's new and exciting curriculum, and the way staff check that you are making progress, are helping you to improve your standards. You all get on very well together.

You try to live extremely healthily, taking lots of exercise and eating the right types of food. You can be lively, but your behaviour is usually very good. You told us how bullying problems of the past have been overcome and you feel safe and enjoy coming to school. The staff look after you very well. You are confident and like the many responsibilities you are given. You speak well, have good ICT skills and are good at number work. By the time you leave Year 6, you are well prepared for your next school. Staff plan work carefully to try to help you learn and make work interesting. We have asked the headteacher to make certain that all your tasks are designed to get the best from you. It will also be important to assess your work accurately, in a way that makes it easier for teachers to help you improve further.

Your headteacher provides good leadership and she is given helpful support by her senior team and all the staff. The school governors work hard to help the school improve. Communication between school and home has not always been as good as it could be and so we have asked everybody involved to work closely together, helping each other.

Thank you again for your help. We hope that you will want to try even harder and be even more successful, continuing to enjoy all that is happening in your exciting school.

Yours faithfully

Peter McGregor

Lead Inspector