

# Henry Chichele Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133552
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328707
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry Elston

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	201
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>	Roger Knight
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen McClymont
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 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>	School Lane Higham Ferrers NN10 8NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01933 352850
<b>Fax number</b>	01933 352853

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school, but numbers are rising steadily. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below that of most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around the national average. The headteacher has been in post for four weeks. There have been several long-term staff absences over the last year, and three senior staff are currently on maternity leave.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The provision is satisfactory. Despite significant disruptions in staffing over the last year, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and standards overall are in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards throughout the school are above average in reading and science because teachers give pupils a love of books, and provide many opportunities to do exciting scientific experiments. The main weakness lies in the achievements of more able pupils at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and writing because they are not always given work that makes the most of their talents.

Parents' views of the school are very positive. They particularly appreciate the way it encourages their children to consider the needs of others and gives them a clear sense of right and wrong. This is evident in the way pupils support those who are sad or lonely, and their excellent behaviour. They say how much they enjoy school and the 'really good friends we make'. Pupils feel safe because bullying is unheard of and adults take good care of them. They talk with authority on the need to live healthy lives, and their work studying their lunchboxes showed a really good understanding of whether the contents were 'funky or junky'.

Pupils think highly of their teachers, who they describe as 'fantastic' and 'really good fun'. Teachers work hard at making learning enjoyable, and lessons are a good balance between the teacher introducing new skills and pupils working at tasks in groups to develop their understanding further. These groups work well for pupils of average ability and below, but the work at Key Stage 2 does not always offer sufficient challenge for the most able in the class.

The school has worked hard this year to develop an interesting curriculum that links subjects together to make topics more meaningful. This is already well developed in Key Stage 1, and pupils have gained much from using their skills in subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science and geography in topics about plants and the solar system. This is still developing in Key Stage 2, and there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to use their writing and number skills in their topics.

Parents are right to feel that the school provides good care, support and guidance. The staff are very good at supporting pupils who need help, and they always know who to turn to if they have worries. The safeguarding systems are rigorous and monitored regularly.

The new headteacher has quickly gained a feel for the school and its strengths and weaknesses. He is supported well by senior staff, who share his high expectations and commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils. The priorities for improvement are the right ones to move the school forward, and actions to raise standards in writing, for example, are starting to bear fruit. The leaders and governors collect significant amounts of data on pupils' progress. However, few have had the training necessary to use it, for example, to identify particular groups that are underperforming or to compare the school's performance with that of others. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the school with skills typical of their ages, although their early writing and number skills are often weak. Induction procedures are good and, as a result, the children settle into school life quickly. Parents are happy about this, and feel well informed about how their

children are getting on. Children make good progress, and standards are above average in all areas by the end of the Reception year. The curriculum is planned well, and makes sure that children have a good balance between activities chosen by themselves and those provided by adults. The staff use the stimulating outside environment well to promote children's learning in all areas. The good arrangements for health and safety and children's personal development ensure that they work in a safe environment and develop good social skills. Behaviour is good. Children get on well with each other and develop good relationships with the adults who help them. The teaching and learning are good. The staff use assessment information well to inform their planning of what children need to learn next and to make sure that children's individual needs are met. Activities are interesting and exciting so that children quickly develop positive attitudes to learning, and this supports their achievement. For example, their work discovering creatures in the sandpit enthralled them and led to them making good progress in their scientific and language skills. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, although the more able children could be extended more in their work on mathematical calculations.

The provision is well led and managed. Classroom areas are well organised, and the adults have a good idea of how the provision could be improved further.

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

- Provide more challenging work for more able pupils in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 so that they attain the high standards of which they are capable.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels and the governing body have the skills necessary to evaluate the school's performance, to put in place measures to rectify weaknesses and to measure how well their actions are working.

A small proportion of the 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**

Standards are broadly average at both key stages and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, they make steady progress, and do well in their reading, where standards by Year 2 have been consistently above average over recent years. They soon learn to use books for their own pleasure, and will often pick one up when they have a spare moment. In writing and mathematics, they make satisfactory progress to attain standards a little above average. At Key Stage 2, data are only available for the last two years. Progress is satisfactory, and standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6 in writing and mathematics, and above average in reading and science. This shows a significant improvement from last year. Standards are lower in writing and mathematics because too few of the pupils who attain the higher levels in the Year 2 tests go on to do the same in Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because the teachers keep a good track of their progress and set them challenging yet achievable targets.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and attendance rates are above the national average. They behave impeccably and mostly concentrate well in lessons. However, some become restless when the work is too

easy. They have a very good awareness of how to stay safe and live healthily. They reflect deeply on topics such as poverty and the human rights of people in developing countries, and realise how privileged their lives are. They are never afraid to ask questions to make things clearer, as was seen to good effect when Year 6 pupils quizzed the teacher about reincarnation when studying Buddhism. Pupils develop a good awareness of their community, particularly by making improvements to their school grounds through the school council, raising substantial funds for charities and inviting local people into school to learn about life in the past. They are well prepared for the future by their enthusiastic participation in community projects, their eagerness to take responsibility and involvement in activities such as writing a curriculum vitae for imaginary job applications.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' work, and they try hard to meet the challenges set. Where learning is slower, the tasks set for more able pupils lack the level of challenge to get the best out of them. Pupils enjoy their work because teachers make learning fun. They respond very well, for example, to teachers using the interactive whiteboards to show them how to make boring sentences more interesting, or turn an aeroplane around to explain degrees of a compass. The pace of lessons is nearly always brisk, and there is a good balance between the teacher explaining things to the whole class and pupils working independently or in groups. In a minority of lessons, the rate of learning is hampered by pupils losing concentration when teachers talk for too long without them contributing. The comprehensive assessment systems provide a clear picture of pupils' progress, and teachers' marking is an important way that pupils learn how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is planned well to provide an interesting range of activities. The linking of subjects has proved successful in Key Stage 1, and has started to raise standards, particularly in English. This is starting to happen with the older pupils, but the planning does not yet offer enough opportunities for them to fully develop their literacy and numeracy skills in the 'themes'. A good programme for personal, social and health education helps pupils to understand the importance of living healthy lives, keeping safe and showing consideration for the feelings of others. The school provides a wide range of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum and develop pupils' cultural awareness. The strong focus on drama and music adds much to the provision, and parents say how much their children benefit from these sessions. There is an adequate range of extra-curricular activities, run mostly by private groups or governors.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

The good quality of care, guidance and support has a positive impact on the personal development of pupils. Pupils know who to approach if they have problems, and are made to feel secure and valued. The school has good partnerships with health professionals, and robust safeguarding systems are in place to ensure the health and safety and well-being of pupils. The message board in the staffroom provides useful information to staff about any pupil who

has particular medical needs. The school tracks pupils' academic progress systematically, but recognises the need to make better use of the information gained to ensure that all groups of pupils make the best possible progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and says how much he relishes the challenges ahead. The leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is satisfactory, and based on detailed records of pupils' attainment. They are good at identifying weaknesses in the provision, and they have made some useful improvements to the curriculum planning to make the 'themes' more stimulating for the pupils. However, they are only just starting to get to grips with how their school's performance compares with that of others, and this means that their sights are not always set high enough. A strength of the leadership and management is in the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who achieve well. Teachers benefit from good support from the leaders to ensure these pupils are given every opportunity to succeed.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Through strong links with other schools with a contrasting ethnic mix, and in-depth work on different faiths and cultures across the world, the school provides pupils with a good awareness of how different people live and worship.

Governors are enthusiastic supporters of the school and are keen to develop their skills. They have a general awareness of its strengths and weaknesses, but are not yet fully involved in analysing its performance and setting challenging targets to improve the provision.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### 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?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	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>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

16 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Henry Chichele Primary School, Higham Ferrers NN10 8NQ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed us how much you enjoy school. Your school is satisfactory. This means that some things are good, but others could be better.

What we found out about your school.

- You work hard and make satisfactory progress. Your standards are similar to most schools, but higher in reading and science.
- Your behaviour is outstanding, and you help make the school a happy place.
- You have a good understanding of how other people in the world live and worship.
- You live healthy lives and know how to stay safe.
- You do much to help people who are not as fortunate as you.
- The leaders are satisfactory, and help the school run smoothly.
- The activities provided for you are interesting, and you enjoy the clubs at lunchtime and after school that teach you important skills in things like music and sport. Some of you play musical instruments really well!
- Your teachers work hard to plan interesting work and help you when you are stuck.
- All staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe.
- Reception gives children a good start to school.
- What we would like the school to do now.
- Make sure that those of you in Key Stage 2 who are really good at writing and numeracy have work that makes the most of your skills. You can help by always looking to improve the quality of your work.
- Your leaders need to check on your progress more carefully so that you all make the best possible progress.

Good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Terry Elston

Lead inspector