

Hartlebury CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135042
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	329011
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	159
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	Beryl Thomas
Headteacher	Carolyn Scott
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Village Hartlebury Kidderminster DY11 7TD
Telephone number	01299 250312
Fax number	01299 250960

Age group	5–11
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Inspection number	329011

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Description of the school

The school is smaller in size than most other primary schools but has grown considerably in the last year. Nearly all pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than that seen nationally and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is very high.

The school opened in September 2007 as part of school reorganisation in this part of Worcestershire. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed at this time. There is a privately managed pre-school on site, which is inspected separately and receives a separate report.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hartlebury Church of England Primary is a good school. It is rapidly moving in the right direction under the clear-sighted leadership of its headteacher. She has created in this new school a shared ethos for learning based firmly on the school's Christian values. Pupils are right to be proud of their school. They confirm that they are very happy and well cared for, with one pupil summing things up by saying, 'We are all one family here.' The overwhelming majority of parents have great confidence in the school and its headteacher. One parent spoke for many when saying, 'Hartlebury Primary School has been transformed by the headteacher and her inspiring teachers ... my children are thriving and love going to school.'

In the short time that she has been in post, the headteacher, with strong support from her deputy, has put in place several highly effective measures that have improved standards, raised achievement and improved behaviour and attendance. When children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills and abilities are broadly at those levels expected of their age. They make good progress because there is a very strong focus on developing children's social skills and their ability to communicate with each other. This good progress continues as pupils move through the school, and currently standards in both Key Stages are above average. Progress in English, however, is slower than in mathematics and science. This is because many pupils find higher level writing skills difficult. They need considerable time and support to explain orally how they reason, deduce and infer things from texts. This is a barrier to even more gaining high levels in their work.

Teaching is good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, give clear explanations and plan their lessons well to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes. They use questioning in lessons skilfully to promote learning, to analyse and improve pupils' performance, and to set challenging targets for individuals. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to meet pupils' specific needs. Learning is occasionally slowed when teachers do not plan well enough to meet the range of needs in their classes. Consequently, in a few lessons, pupils are not challenged as much as they should be.

Pupils achieve well not just because teaching and learning are good, but also because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high. Consequently, pupils' personal development is good, especially their spiritual, social and moral development. Very good relationships and rigorous care, guidance and support result in happy learners. Teachers mark books carefully and regularly. Pupils come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. The attendance rate of nearly 97% reflects pupils' strong enjoyment of school. There have been no exclusions in the last year, which supports inspectors' observations of good behaviour. Lessons are rarely disrupted and can be conducted at a good pace and in a positive climate. Pupils feel very safe and report that incidents of bullying are almost totally absent. Pupils take part in an extensive range of sports and are good at adopting healthy lifestyles. A carefully planned and varied curriculum inspires pupils to work hard and gain a wide range of skills.

Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education and beyond. Although pupils from all backgrounds work and play together well, their awareness of different cultures in the diverse society in which we live is less well developed than it should be. This is because the school has not fully evaluated how well it meets its requirements to promote community cohesion.

Governors hold the school to account well for its work. The school uses its resources and accommodation imaginatively and efficiently and offers good value for money. The school monitors its work well and so knows exactly what to do further on its journey to excellence. This, together with rising standards and achievement over the two years of the school's life, means the capacity to further improve is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision for the Reception class enables children to achieve well and develop good independence. Children love coming to school and parents are very appreciative of the good start that their children receive. Staff have created a safe, attractive environment in which the needs of all children are well met. Teaching is good. Children make good progress because a team of well-qualified adults support the children skilfully by asking focused questions to develop their understanding. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those from which children can choose. Children are developing good social skills because they are making choices and fostering independence through working with others. All adults make observations of children and assess their learning so that next steps are sharply focused. By the end of the Reception Year, standards in most areas are above those expected for their age. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage provides good leadership to her team. She has a very secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and constantly reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care and support. Staff make very good use of the facilities that they have but are hampered from extending learning in the outside area. This is because there are insufficient high quality outdoor resources for the children to improve their climbing, clambering and physical skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on current planning to raise standards and achievement in English by providing more opportunities for pupils to develop higher level skills in reading, writing and speaking.
- Ensure that teachers in all classes plan work carefully in all lessons to match pupils' abilities and their specific needs.
- Provide greater opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding and awareness of people from different backgrounds.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Results in National Curriculum tests in 2008 showed that standards overall were broadly average and there was little difference between the various groups of learners. Pupils' work seen by inspectors, classroom observations of pupils' work and optional, nationally verified, tests carried out by the school confirm standards are above average overall in both key stages. Secure and consistently implemented systems for checking the progress that pupils make and taking action to give support to pupils when needed have resulted in good progress for pupils throughout the school. The great majority of pupils are making well in excess of the expected progress of two National Curriculum sub-levels per year and are achieving well. The major factor holding some pupils' achievement down is the difficulty they have in explaining their ideas when they have read a text, which in turn inhibits their ability to write well. There is very little difference in the progress made by the various groups of pupils in the school. This is because the school

works effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and are excited by all that it has to offer. This is reflected in their keen enjoyment of learning, good attendance, and their enthusiastic involvement in a wide range of activities. They have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and learn to appreciate and enjoy the wonders of life around them. Consequently, by Year 6, pupils are mature, considerate, self-assured, and responsible young people. Pupils report an absence of bullying and racism and relish their involvement in many cultural activities. The focus on social skills starts well in the Reception class where children learn how to concentrate, listen, explore new things and work and play successfully with others. The school, through strong links with the local church and involvement in community projects such as local history workshops, helps to develop pupils' clear understanding of their local community and their good contribution to it. Their contribution to and involvement in the life of their wider community, however, is more limited and many pupils have too little awareness of the multicultural society in which we live.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are characterised by good relationships underpinned by mutual respect, humour and warmth. In most lessons, pupils experience a range of approaches and this helps to sustain their interest, so that they quickly acquire new knowledge and skills.

Sustained challenge and high expectations enable pupils to achieve well over time. Teaching assistants are effective in their work. Pupils are very clear about subject targets and teachers support pupils well to reach their goals and this is an important reason why standards are rising. As one pupil said, 'We all know exactly where we are and how we are doing.' In a minority of lessons, teachers do not plan adequately for the range of abilities in the class or build on pupils' prior knowledge, with the result that a minority of pupils are either not challenged enough or struggle to comprehend.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The carefully planned curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' learning. The school ensures that learning is meaningful because it carefully plans themes with clear links between subjects. Provision for information and communication technology across subjects is good and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good achievement. The curriculum positively supports pupils' personal development through effective personal, social, and health education, and imaginative and thought-provoking assemblies. There is an excellent focus on using visits to widen pupils' life experiences. The school provides pupils with a wide variety of sporting activities as part of the school day. These, together with well-supported creative and educational activities outside the normal school day, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, their levels of enjoyment and their personal development. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Child protection procedures are secure and sensitive. Behaviour management systems are seen by pupils as fair and applied consistently. Staff know the pupils very well and make effective use of assessment information to track and check pupils' progress, so that extra support can be provided if pupils need it. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully identified and their individual learning plans are effectively based upon these, to ensure that they are given good support. As a result, pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are set clear learning targets in English and mathematics, which they confirm are helping them to improve. This effective use of targets to raise standards is now extending to other years and subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are at the heart of the school's success. The headteacher works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities. She communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. Leaders check the school's performance rigorously.

They are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils, and are alert to situations where people need more advice and guidance. Because staff benefit from supportive feedback, a climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better.

Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress accelerating. School governance is good. The governors are committed and astute and fulfil their roles well. The school improvement plan is comprehensive and shows clearly how improving the effectiveness of leadership and teaching and learning is at the heart of all it does. The school has an accurate view of its work. However, because of the limited extent to which pupils are encouraged to become involved in the wider community and with others from different ethnic groups and cultures, community cohesion is not well enough developed and is no more than satisfactory.

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
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	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?	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?	3
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**

12 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hartlebury Church of England Primary School, Hartlebury, Worcestershire DY11 7TD

- Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had! We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. Hartlebury Primary is a good school and is getting better. You told us many interesting things about your school and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the really good things we found out about Hartlebury.
- You have made good progress in the two years that the school has been open and the standards you reach in most of your subjects are higher than in most other schools. This is because your teachers teach you well and you also work hard.
- Your behaviour is good and you look after each other so well. You enjoy working in groups and you like to help your classmates when they find things difficult. Members of the school council work hard to find out what you think and, as a result, have made your school even better.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work. Your headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to stay so good. This is what we have asked your school to do now.
- Work with you to make sure you reach higher standards in English.
- Ensure that all of your lessons are as good as the best by making sure that when teachers plan work for you, it is not too easy or too hard, but just right for you.
- Make sure that you learn more about the beliefs and ways of life of people who come from different backgrounds from yourselves. Please continue to work hard and keep helping your teachers to make sure that Hartlebury becomes an even better place in which to learn. I send you my best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully Michael Merchant

Lead inspector