

Haselbury Plucknett Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123816
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340432
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Jonathan Morris
Headteacher	Gill Evans
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Four teachers were seen teaching six lessons, and inspectors met with governors, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including records of pupils' progress, teachers' planning and that relating to monitoring, evaluation and strategic planning. The responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils in Years 3 and 4 and by 31 parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether the improvements in attainment and progress made in 2008/09 have been sustained
- the progress of and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- whether the quality of assessment has improved since the last inspection
- the incisiveness with which school leaders identify and tackle relative weaknesses.

Information about the school

This small school serves a rural part of south Somerset. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity. While the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, the range of these needs is wide and includes, for example, behavioural difficulties, dyslexia and physical disability.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Under the leadership of the current headteacher, it has improved considerably since the last inspection in 2007. Children and pupils now make good progress throughout the school, and by the time they leave at the end of Year 4 they attain standards in English, mathematics and other subjects that are above average. A particular strength is the use of assessment to identify slow progress and to plan work that meets individual needs. The progress of all pupils is carefully monitored, including that of those who have received additional help in the past, to ensure that they do not slip back again. Hence, all pupils, whatever their background or need, make similarly good progress. An important factor in this success is the outstanding care, guidance and support that all pupils receive, enhanced by excellent links with partner pre-schools, schools and external agencies.

Pupils behave well, especially in lessons, and have good relationships with each other and with adults. They develop good skills of concentration, independence and teamwork. Pupils say they feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lives, and talk freely of the need to avoid tobacco, alcohol and drugs as well as understanding the importance of exercise and a healthy diet. Attendance is high, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. These wide-ranging strengths reflect pupils' good overall achievement.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which she has successfully shared with staff and governors, so that all involved demonstrate the necessary drive and ambition to further improve the school. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. When a weakness has been identified, for example with the progress of pupils in a particular year or subject, effective action has been taken to put things right, further demonstrating the school's good capacity for improvement. Teaching is consistently good and on occasion is outstanding. Where weakness occurs, this is due to over-complex planning which can, on rare occasions, lead to confusion among some pupils as to what they should be doing. The curriculum has many strengths, including opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in a range of subjects and a very good range of additional activities. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, although the organisation of the resources and facilities does not provide an environment that offers the maximum possible levels of excitement and stimulation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that the planning of lessons enables all pupils to:

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- understand the task they are undertaking and its purpose
- be secure in their understanding of a basic skill before moving on to its more complex applications.
- Ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have the best possible opportunities for imaginative play by improving the degree to which the provision offers them an exciting and stimulating environment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly as expected. They make good progress throughout the school and reach standards that are above average. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Years 1 and 2, pupils gave the teacher random numbers which she placed in or outside a circle dependent on whether the number obeyed her 'secret rule'. Pupils quickly spotted that the rule was 'divisible by five', even though numbers as high as 100 million were used. Pupils then used other 'rules' to place objects in the correct field of two intersecting hoops. This began to develop their understanding of sets and Venn diagrams, representing high attainment for pupils of this age. In design and technology, Years 3 and 4 pupils designed and made 'moon buggies' as part of their work on space exploration. Their designs were imaginative and were turned into working models with flair, accuracy and dexterity. This lesson was also noteworthy for the high degree of teamwork and collaboration shown by pupils.

Pupils behave very well in lessons, although they can occasionally become boisterous in the small playground. They contribute well to the school and local communities, for example as school council members and through links with the church. They show tolerance towards those of different faiths and backgrounds, for example through enthusiastic charity collection. These features reflect the good quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use a number of forms of assessment extremely well to identify pupils' progress and their learning needs. Targets are well understood by pupils and are regularly reviewed and updated. A particular strength is the reference to literacy and numeracy targets when pupils are undertaking work in other subject areas. Pupils are learning how to assess their own and each other's work. Marking is detailed and helpful, and is used from an early stage alongside verbal explanation by staff. Lessons are always interesting and are generally well planned, although through enthusiasm, teachers occasionally try to cram too much in, for instance by introducing area before pupils have a thorough understanding of length and perimeter. Teachers, with the good support of teaching assistants, ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are encouraged and included, for instance when choosing a pupil to answer a question.

The curriculum is varied and offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills by finding the solutions to problems. Visits to places as varied as Bristol and Wells Cathedral broaden their understanding of scientific, technological and cultural matters. There is a very good range of clubs and activities for pupils of this age, including competitive sport, gardening and chess. The school recently conducted a survey of internet use and was surprised at the proportion of younger pupils using the internet at home. School leaders have rightly decided to place greater emphasis on education for safe use of the internet.

The school has good relationships with parents and carers and works hard to keep them informed about and involved in their child's education. Pupils are known to all staff as individuals and this helps to ensure their outstanding care, guidance and support. This is further enhanced by excellent links with pre-schools and with the middle school to which pupils transfer.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The skills and enthusiasm of all staff are harnessed very effectively to ensure that all aspects of the school are improving. Monitoring, including that undertaken by subject leaders, is detailed and accurate and is widely shared, including with governors who are then effective in challenging the school to improve, for example in enhancing the progress of a particular year group. School leaders and governors are rightly exploring alternative models of organisation that will secure the school's future, further exemplifying their good ambition and drive. They successfully ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils, and that any potential discrimination is tackled effectively.

There are good arrangements to keep children safe which meet all requirements. Governors have made good progress in meeting their responsibilities to promote community cohesion. They have received training, identified gaps in the provision, such as in pupils' opportunities to develop an understanding of the range of cultures represented in the United Kingdom, and are taking appropriate steps to rectify these.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by the end of which almost all attain the expected standards, with many exceeding these. Provision for their learning, development and welfare is good, enhanced by favourable staffing ratios, effective teaching and very good relationships with parents and carers. The parent of a child who had not settled well at pre-school said of her starting school: 'We were astounded, she loves going to school and is keen to tell us about her day.' Organised activities develop their skills well, for example when children raced around with their numbered space rockets and then placed them in correct numerical order on the table. The large classroom is well resourced and gives direct access to a large, secure outdoor space with a small covered area. However, this provision is not organised in a way that maximises children's opportunities to explore their environment with imagination and excitement. The provision is led and managed well, for example staff identified that children were making less progress with their calculation skills and in their creative development than in other areas of the curriculum, and have taken effective action to rectify this.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers are happy with what the school provides. Areas of concern by a very small minority include the way behaviour is managed and the degree to which their child's individual needs are met. Inspectors found that behaviour is generally managed well, although playground supervision might be strengthened. The school does all it can to meet individual needs and is successful in doing so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haselbury Plucknett Church of England First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 60 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	48	16	52	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	48	14	45	2	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	32	18	58	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	45	14	45	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	55	12	39	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	42	16	52	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	61	11	35	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	39	14	45	2	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	45	12	39	4	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	26	19	61	3	10	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	35	16	52	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	48	15	48	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	48	14	45	2	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Haselbury Plucknett Church of England First School, Crewkerne TA18 7RQ

We would like to thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We would also like to thank you for taking the time to talk with us and to show us your work. We agree with you and your parents or carers that it is a good school. These are some of the best things about it.

- You do well in your lessons and make good progress. We were very impressed with how good Class 2 pupils are at numeracy, and with the 'moon buggies' designed and made by Classes 1 and 3.
- You behave very well in lessons although you sometimes need to be a bit calmer in the playground.
- You feel safe at school and know how to keep safe.
- You know a lot about how to keep healthy.
- Your lessons are interesting and fun.
- You know how well you are doing and what you need to learn next.
- You have lots of exciting trips and clubs. We hope Year 4 enjoyed themselves at Wells Cathedral.
- You are very well cared for at school.
- The staff and governors run the school well.

We have asked the school to do two things to make it even better. We have asked the staff to make sure you are always given enough time to understand something new, and to make Class 1's room and outdoor area even more exciting.

Wishing you the best of luck in the future,

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler

Lead Inspector

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