

Charlbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123000
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340254
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susan Tokumine
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Holt
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 May 2007
School address	Crawborough Charlbury Chipping Norton OX7 3TX
Telephone number	01608 810354
Fax number	01608 819050
Email address	headteacher.2100@charlbury.oxon.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	6–7 July 2010
Inspection number	340254

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St. Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons taken by eight teachers, and support sessions led by teaching assistants. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at curriculum plans, assessment records, minutes of meetings and 118 parental questionnaires. They also had informal discussions with parents and carers.

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

- whether there are any significant differences between attainment in reading and that in writing for the more able pupils
- how well pupils are progressing in mental mathematics and writing
- whether classroom tasks match pupils' abilities and promote their independence and investigative skills.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage with very few from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupil is at an early stage of learning to speak English. Around a fifth of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is about average. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties or speech, language and communication difficulties; a small minority have behavioural and emotional difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. The school has gained enhanced Healthy Schools Status, the Activemark and the Eco Schools award.

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 where pupils achieve well. There is a welcoming ethos where all are valued as individuals. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard and many paid fulsome tribute to the dedication of the staff. Their comments included, 'A wonderful atmosphere with a real community spirit,' and, 'A fantastic learning environment.' Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and behave well. A wide range of visits and visitors and extensive after-school activities contribute greatly to pupils' good academic progress and personal development.

Children make a good start in the Reception class, developing very good social, language and numeracy skills. Staff have warm relationships with children and support their learning well. The classroom provides a good range of stimulating activities, although the outdoor area is rather sparse and under-developed. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has risen significantly over the last few years and is now above average. This is due to the much improved quality of teaching. The accurate assessment of pupils' progress enables teachers, for the most part, to pitch work at the right level for different groups. A strong emphasis on ensuring that the more able pupils are sufficiently challenged in writing means that they are making great strides and producing high-quality written work across the curriculum. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics is above average, there is potential for the most able pupils to make more rapid progress.

Since the last inspection, every aspect of the provision has improved to good. This illustrates well the ambition and drive that the senior leadership team provides. Through well-informed self-evaluation, underpinned by the meticulous tracking of pupils' progress, the school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors are fully involved in monitoring the school's work and play their part in securing good outcomes for pupils. There is a strong commitment to staff development, and all staff are involved in determining priorities. These factors indicate that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the level of challenge in mathematics for the more able pupils by sharing the successful methods used in most lessons, including:
 - using the wealth of assessment information to pinpoint pupils' starting points and identify the next steps in their learning
 - setting tasks which fully challenge the more able pupils and ensure they have sufficient time in lessons to tackle them
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their very secure grasp of basic number facts to solve mathematical problems.

- Improve outdoor provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by providing better resources, especially for promoting their physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In most lessons there is a real buzz of enthusiasm. Pupils are ready to learn and have positive attitudes. As a result, they achieve well and their attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science is above average. There is no significant gap between the progress of the more able pupils in reading and that in writing. They take a great pride in presenting their work as neatly as they can. Pupils respond well to challenges. Year 2 pupils, for example, demonstrated their very good grasp of angles as they enthusiastically programmed a robotic toy to follow a specific path, avoiding obstacles on route. Their written work reflects the school’s well above average results in recent national tests. Pupils’ reading, writing and numeracy skills build up well as pupils move through the school. This is evident in their increasing quick recall of number facts such as multiplication tables, cubes and square roots, and in the high quality written work they produce in literacy lessons and other subjects. After learning about a child in a Victorian prison, one pupil in Year 6 showed skill in using language and empathy in a poem which included the lines: ‘I am an abandoned mansion, rotting away, A blown-out candle with wax tears dripping down my face.’ There were many similar examples of pupils’ skilful use of powerful imagery. Pupils’ ability to use their well-developed basic skills in different contexts is amply demonstrated in their writing but not as evident in mathematics. Some more-able pupils in particular lack confidence in applying what they know to solve mathematical problems. Pupils who find difficulty in communicating, because of their limited language skills, make good progress. The effective support provided for the few pupils experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties enables them, for the most part, to settle down to work.

Pupils’ keen knowledge of how to stay healthy and their enjoyment of physical activities and sports, are reflected in the school’s Healthy Schools Status and Activemark. Pupils feel safe at school and know who to go to if troubled or upset. Pupils much enjoy taking on responsibilities within the school and wider community, such as caring for the environment as part of their Eco School activities. They are justifiably proud of their leading roles in organising the charity events that have raised over £20,000 over the last five years. Taking on such responsibilities helps pupils to become mature and sensible young citizens who are well prepared for their next step in education. They have a well developed sense of right and wrong and enjoy the good range of activities that help develop their understanding of their own and others’ cultures.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
--	----------

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

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
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

A significant strength in pupils' learning and progress is the way in which pupils evaluate their own and one another's work against specific criteria. Teachers model this extremely well in their marking of pupils' work. When commenting on a pupil's 'news report' of the escape of Bill Sykes, the Year 6 teacher wrote, 'A shocking and persuasive article. Well done for including descriptive details, using quotes, brackets, speech marks, rhetorical questions and alliteration... could you use a pun in your headline?' Teachers generally use the information gleaned from pupils' work and the detailed tracking data to set work at an appropriate level for different groups. They draw effectively on the expertise of the well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants to support learning in the classroom and in small withdrawal groups. Most lessons move at a brisk pace but, in some, teachers spend too long on explanations to the whole class. This limits the time available for pupils to find things out for themselves or to record their ideas, and means that the more able pupils go over old ground unnecessarily, rather than tackling more demanding work.

The school's curriculum provides many memorable experiences that contribute to pupils' enjoyment, achievement and personal development. Particular strengths are in the wide range of activities that enrich learning. For example, following a museum visit, Year 4 pupils developed very good insights into the Tudor era and produced some high quality work. One wrote that Kathryn Parr was '...too scared to tell the truth – so wise'. Year 5 pupils learned first hand about erosion and deposition after walking alongside a local river. Pupils frequently practise, consolidate and extend their literacy and computer skills in their studies, often using them to produce informative and attractive information booklets. Opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in different contexts are more limited.

The pastoral care of pupils is a strong element of why pupils say they feel happy and enjoy their time in school. Parents and carers also expressed highly positive views. One wrote, 'All the teachers and assistants have got to know my son as an individual, which has enabled them to tune into his strengths and weaknesses.' Another commented, 'My children are happy and secure...the head and teaching staff are

approachable and enthusiastic.’ The inspection findings generally reflected these positive views, although, in a very small minority of cases, staff are a little insensitive when dealing with children who find it difficult to behave or participate.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. The assistant headteachers and senior staff are effective in demonstrating high-level teaching skills and in their subject leadership roles. There is a shared ambition and common drive for improvement. The governing body is effective in supporting the leadership team. Governors, some of whom are new to the role, increasingly gain first hand knowledge of the school through a series of visits focused on specific areas. Self-evaluation is accurate and ensures the leadership team has a good idea of strengths and weaknesses. As a result, planning is focused on the right priorities for improvement.

The school’s strong commitment to equal opportunities and addressing any discrimination is evident in the way that any discrepancy in the achievement of different groups is quickly identified and addressed. Community cohesion operates well within the school and local area. The school provides the full core offer for extended services and many clubs and activities are well attended every day after school until 6 o’clock. The school’s approach is being used as a model across the county. Strong links have been established with many overseas schools through participation in the Comenius project². The school is seeking ways to engage pupils with children living in diverse communities within the United Kingdom. Safeguarding procedures are well considered. There are checks of those who work in school, site security is well managed, and the location and transport arrangements for all visits are thoroughly checked. Parents and carers are unanimous in feeling their children are kept safe.

Links with neighbouring schools are beneficial in providing a forum for sharing ideas. Effective links with parents, carers and other organisations, including contacts with a range of external agencies, make a considerable impact on how well the school is thought of in the neighbourhood. This is evident in the local support for parent/teacher association events which have raised £50,000 over recent years.

² The Comenius project is funded by the British Council and seeks to develop understanding of the diversity of European cultures and languages.

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	2
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

Children generally enter the Reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding typical of the age group. They settle in very well and become confident and enthusiastic young learners. Children are well supported and engage with adults easily, developing good social, language and early number skills. By the end of Reception, children reach above average levels across all areas of learning.

The indoor rooms offer ample space for practical activities and are used effectively to promote all areas of learning. Adults keep a close eye on children’s development and emerging needs, and plan accordingly. They engage children in conversations, asking appropriate questions which encourage them to articulate their ideas. Some of this interaction is a little superficial, however, with missed opportunities to deepen children’s understanding.

Staff devise interesting activities which engage children. Following a visit to a local farm, for example, children enjoyed acting out the story of *Farmer Duck* using soft toys, modelling animals in clay and writing ‘thank you’ letters to the farmer. Children also gain valuable experiences and develop their understanding of the natural world through regular visits to a nearby wood. The outdoor area provides an adequate learning environment but contains a limited amount of equipment to stimulate children’s imagination or promote their creative and physical development. A systematic approach to teaching letters and sounds means that children make good progress in reading and writing. Children’s vocabulary is reinforced effectively indoors with many labels and displays of their early attempts at writing. This support is not so evident in the outdoor area.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is enthusiastic and manages the staff team well. Very good records are kept on individual children and external moderation shows that assessments are accurate. Much time is spent on observing children and

making notes, and the leader is aware that there could be a more effective balance between this type of assessment and interacting with children.

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

The very overwhelming majority of parents and carers are extremely happy with the school. A few raised some minor concerns which inspectors explored during the inspection and found no evidence to support them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Charlbury Primary 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	69	37	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	85	72	32	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	61	52	51	43	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	52	54	46	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	72	61	43	36	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	45	57	48	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	73	62	43	36	1	1	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)	67	57	43	36	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	53	54	46	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	63	53	45	38	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	50	51	43	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	89	75	27	23	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	86	73	31	26	1	1	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charlbury Primary School, Chipping Norton OX7 3TX

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting several of you in lessons, at lunchtime and when we attended assemblies. We enjoyed chatting to several of you, including members of the school council who were good at explaining how you feel about your school.

We found that your school provides you with a good quality of education. There are many good things about how the school helps you to develop as young people and in preparing you for your future. You understand how to keep safe and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. You make good progress and your attainment is above average. We particularly enjoyed reading your well-crafted and thoughtful stories, poems, and persuasive letters. It was great to see the care with which you present your work, such as your colourful, imaginative and informative work in history and geography.

You told us how much you enjoy school and we could see why. There are some really exciting and interesting things to do especially when you visit other places or invite visitors in to work with you. This helps to make sure that the follow-up work in class is interesting too.

To improve your school further, we have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- make sure that the work you are given is not too easy, especially for those of you who could cope with more challenging tasks in mathematics
- provide more resources in the Reception outdoor area to help the youngest children explore the world around them, at the same time developing their social, language, creative and physical skills.

You can help by contributing your ideas about what helps you learn. Thank you again for your help, and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**