

Chagford Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113408
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357341
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Toby Rubbra
Headteacher	Catherine Rees-Stephan
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons and observed eight teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, parents and carers, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of the governing body meetings, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed the views of parents and carers in the 96 Ofsted questionnaires returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Attainment and progress, especially in writing, and what this signifies in terms of the quality of teaching and the progress of different groups of pupils, including more-able pupils.
- The use of information from the school's assessment and tracking systems when planning further work for pupils.
- Provision for cultural education and its effect on building up pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management, especially that of the headteacher and the governing body, in bringing about school improvement. The effectiveness of leadership and management, especially that of the headteacher and the governing body, in bringing about school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average rural primary school situated in the heart of Dartmoor. Pupils are taught in five classes. Almost all are from White British backgrounds and all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The needs of this group of pupils include emotional needs, although the majority have learning difficulties. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's Reception Year class. The school holds several awards including the Healthy Schools status. There is on-site pre-school provision not managed by the governing body. The school has undergone a period of changes to leadership and management since the last inspection and has had two temporary headteachers prior to the present headteacher taking up the position in September 2010.

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. It has improved rapidly after a prolonged period of turbulence to leadership and management following the last inspection. It has an inclusive and caring ethos and prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their support for what they correctly believe is a good and improving school. 'This school is going from strength to strength,' and, 'We now have an excellent headteacher with real vision,' were typical of comments in the returned parents' and carers' questionnaires.

At the heart of this recovery is the clear vision and drive of an outstanding and enthusiastic headteacher. Since her appointment she has worked very effectively with her dedicated staff and members of governing body to create a caring environment within the school where pupils feel extremely safe and say that they really enjoy learning. She and senior leaders have also ensured that the school has rigorously and accurately evaluated its performance and implemented improvements where needed. As a result, the quality of education has improved. Staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team to ensure the school reaches the challenging targets it sets itself. This has been a key factor in improving the school's overall effectiveness and is an indication of the school's good capacity for future sustained improvement. Achievement is good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also the more able, make good overall progress. However, rates of progress vary in different year groups because of differences in the quality of teaching. Most teaching is consistently good or better and a majority of teachers make effective use of information about the progress of individual pupils when planning further work. However, not all teachers use this information effectively and there are occasions in a small minority of lessons when pupils are asked to complete work which is not well matched to their abilities and this affects their progress. Even so, by Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above average and inspection evidence, supported by school data, confirms that pupils are on target to do extremely well in the forthcoming national tests. However, while attainment in reading and mathematics is high, pupils' attainment in writing, while above the national average, is not as good.

◆ Pupils are keen to talk about what they like about school, especially the good range of popular extra-curricular activities. However, even the oldest pupils have little understanding of the multi-cultural nature of society in the United Kingdom. They find joining in conversations about the multi-cultural nature of the United Kingdom difficult through lack of experience and this remains a gap in their learning.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by the end of the summer term 2011, in order to make it consistently good or better in all year groups by:
 - ensuring that teachers always provide pupils with work which is well matched to their abilities.
 - ensuring that pupils use their basic writing skills more effectively in their extended pieces of work.
- By the end of the autumn term 2011, improve pupils' cultural awareness and understanding, especially that of the multi-cultural nature of modern society in the United Kingdom, by providing pupils with regular opportunities to increase their knowledge and experience of the wider society in which they live.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with many of the skill levels expected for their age, with the exception of writing, which is often less well developed. Even though pupils make good progress in developing writing skills as they progress through the school, it is noticeable that, by Year 6, a minority of pupils still find it difficult to use basic writing skills correctly when completing longer pieces of creative writing.

Pupils are very positive about school, although this is not fully reflected in their average rate of attendance which was affected significantly by recent adverse weather conditions. Pupils say they feel very safe and secure and are confident adults will always deal with any very rare instances of unkind behaviour quickly and fairly. They are aware of the importance of exercising regularly and eating healthy foods. Older pupils willingly take responsibility for looking after the younger ones. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. However, while aspects of their cultural development are in need of improvement, their spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and this is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and in their respect and care for others.

Pupils really enjoy lessons and say that teachers try to make learning interesting. They work well, both independently and in small groups. Their very good attitudes to work enable teachers to concentrate on helping those pupils who are experiencing difficulties in learning. This was the case in a mathematics lesson to Year 4 and Year 5 pupils when the class teacher had the time to help individual pupils complete their problem-solving tasks successfully because all the others were able to work well independently.

◆ Pupils are very proud of the role of the school council in ensuring the school listens to their views and pupils also believe they make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. For example, pupils take an active part in the annual 'Community Service Volunteers Make a Difference Day' each autumn. Their developing skills in literacy and numeracy, their good attitudes to learning and their good collaborative and independent skills are preparing them well for their future economic well-being.

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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	1
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum links different subjects together well in order to ensure learning is relevant, purposeful and enjoyable. The quality of pupils' work on display is of a good standard and provides clear evidence that recent improvement in the school's effectiveness is not just restricted to mathematics and English. Teachers and teaching assistants work enthusiastically together in order to make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Classrooms are colourful and well resourced and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards and other resources to enhance learning. The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of imaginative experiences in order to help broaden their understanding of the immediate world in which they live. It has been designed to make learning more meaningful while focusing on promoting the effective development of skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology. Pupils say that they like this approach to learning and also comment that when teachers mark their work they always give pupils ideas about how to improve. Even so, the quality of teaching, while good overall, varies throughout the school. Teaching observed in some classes, for example Year 6, was outstanding, but there were occasions in a minority of classes when work was not well matched to pupils' abilities and this restricted pupils' progress.

◆ The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding and this helps pupils make the best of opportunities provided by the school and is the basis for their good personal development. Parents and carers value the way the school looks after their

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children. 'I am more than happy with the outstanding level of care and support my child receives,' was a typical comment. Pupils say they are confident they will always be very well looked after. Very effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle into new routines and pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable receive excellent levels of well-targeted care and support and play a full and active part in school life. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils look forward to school visits to places of interest and meeting interesting visitors to the school. They appreciate the diverse programme of popular enrichment activities offered by the school which include a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs featuring artistic, sporting and musical activities. However, the curriculum does not offer regular opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the wider nature of modern society in the United Kingdom.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The good quality of leadership and management is reflected in the thoroughness of the school's self-evaluation and the quality of its development planning. The headteacher has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and has worked hard to ensure that all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. She has been well supported by the staff and by the members of the governing body, which takes its duties seriously and offers the school a good level of support and challenge.

The school has worked hard to improve its links with outside agencies and also with parents and carers. The headteacher and staff are always on hand to meet parents and carers, both before and after school each day. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements. This is reflected in the precision of the staff recruitment and vetting checks and the way in which the school regularly monitors and evaluates its policies and practices. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is ongoing and they are well aware of the importance of their role in protecting pupils.

◆ The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. It has built up effective links with the local community, which it uses well to develop pupils' understanding of the immediate world around them. However, pupils have only a limited appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community.

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The words of one parent and carer aptly summed up the good quality of provision in the school's Early Years Foundation Stage, 'I am delighted at how well my daughter has settled into school and with the progress she has made.'

Children enter the school's Reception Year class with most of the skills expected for their age, although their writing skills are often less well developed. They make good progress and get off to a good start during their first year at school. From the moment they enter the school, good leadership and management ensure a high priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development and to their welfare. Children are happy and feel very safe. Their behaviour is good and they appear eager to learn and quickly develop the skills needed to interact well with classmates and adults.

◆ The classrooms are large and colourful and provide stimulating learning environments for children. Teaching staff work effectively to ensure that learning is interesting and that lessons cater well for individual learning needs. Ongoing records of children's progress are used effectively when planning further work. Lessons provide well-structured opportunities for children to build up their understanding of the world in which they live, while at the same time prioritising improving skills in all areas of learning, especially writing. Children are provided with opportunities to discover how things work. This was evident in one lesson when a group of children enjoyed constructing model cars and were really pleased with themselves when they worked out how to make sure the cars moved in straight lines when they were pushed. However, although a secure outdoor area is used to help children build up the skills associated with outdoor learning and play, it is uninspiring and not up to the standard of the more enticing and imaginative Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms. The school is aware of the need to develop the outdoor learning area so that it complements the good indoor provision.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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

There was an above average response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire returns. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires, or who were spoken to by inspectors, held very positive views about the school and felt that the school was led and managed effectively. Almost all parents and carers believed that the quality of teaching in the school was good and helped children to make good progress. The vast majority believed that their children enjoyed school and were happy with their children's experiences. They believed that the school kept their children very safe and helped them to develop healthy lifestyles. Few parents and carers expressed any concerns, although a very small minority felt the school did not deal well with rare instances of unacceptable behaviour by pupils. Some individual parents and carers expressed specific concerns. For example, one believed their child was not making enough progress because of the large number of pupils in her class.

◆ Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the school dealt well with instances of unacceptable behaviour by pupils. Inspectors also judged during this inspection that children in classes with large numbers of pupils made good progress and that the school met the needs of pupils well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chagford Church of England Primary 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 130 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	57	37	39	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	52	45	47	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	46	48	50	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	40	45	47	8	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	48	50	45	47	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	45	49	51	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	53	41	43	4	4	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)	38	40	50	52	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	36	50	52	8	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	26	52	54	9	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	32	51	53	7	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	49	51	35	36	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	57	35	36	4	4	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chagford Church of England Primary School, Chagford, TQ13 8BZ

Thank you for welcoming myself and the other inspector to your school. You were all friendly and helpful and we soon realised why you really enjoy coming to school. We found it very interesting talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you all working hard in lessons. Your parents and carers believe that you attend a good school and we agree with them.

Here are some of the main things we found out about your school.

- Your school gives you a good start to your education and makes sure you make good progress in learning. ♦
- Your attainment is well above average in Year 6 and you achieve well.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you all get on well with each other.
- You are lucky to have such nice teachers who always try to make lessons interesting.
- Adults make sure you are very safe and really well looked after.
- Your teachers make sure you always know what you need to do to improve your work.
- Your headteacher, governors and staff have worked hard to improve the school.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to do the following things.

- Make sure that all the teaching is good or better and help you improve the quality of your writing so it is as good as your work in mathematics and reading.
- Help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from cultural backgrounds that are different to yours.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember you can all help your school to improve by continuing to work hard, especially at improving your writing.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron Lead Inspector

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