

Cherry Hinton C of E VC Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110801
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	356818
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Sudworth

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Zandra Davies
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Beardon
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2008
School address	High St Cherry Hinton Cambridge
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, one of whom spent just half a day in the school and looked at safeguarding. Inspectors spent half their time in classes and observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons of differing duration taught by seven teachers. They held meetings with two governors, the headteacher, other staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, for example, that relating to safeguarding, curriculum organisation, pupils' work and information about pupils' progress. The 30 questionnaire responses from parents and carers were analysed and also staff responses.

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

- How effective are the arrangements for the progress of the significant number of pupils who speak English as an additional language?
- What is the school doing to increase the percentage of pupils who reach the higher level in reading?
- What are the most important reasons for the consistency of overall results over the last few years and the good progress that the pupils seemed to make?

Information about the school

This is a broadly average-sized infant school with seven classes, including the Nursery which has two part-time sessions. Children begin the Nursery in the term following their third birthday dependent on available places. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The current percentage of pupils designated as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than in most schools and the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is just over twice that nationally.

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. Pupils achieve well in reaching above average standards by the end of Year 2. Their good progress has been consistent over several years because of the staff's hard work, the careful monitoring of the progress of each pupil and their commitment to the pupils which ensures that they do their best. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special needs and/or disabilities also make good progress. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are delighted that their children attend the school. As one writes, 'My daughter is learning at an amazing rate in a safe and warm environment. But even more importantly for me my daughter loves school and learning.' Pupils enjoy their education and speak of the teachers providing 'fun stuff' and of themselves learning 'lots of tricky mathematics'. They are proud of their school and talk enthusiastically of their new vegetable garden and the extra activities in which they take part. Pupils have a good appreciation of safe and healthy living. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

The care that the pupils receive is outstanding. Staff work effectively together as a team and there is a deep commitment to the school and its children and their parents and carers. They ensure that all pupils and their families are known well. They provide a very pleasant and secure learning environment in which the pupils are confident to engage with the adults and to do their best. The Christian ethos comes through in the close ties with the church and in the practical support that they provide for others. Pupils donate shoe boxes filled with presents for needy children in the run up to Christmas and engage in other charity events.

Good teaching supports pupils' above average attainment. However, while verbal feedback is provided to pupils on their work, marking is not as good as it could be. Staff do not note down praiseworthy comments regularly enough for children in their books nor point out sufficiently well aspects of the pupils' work which could help them to improve. Occasionally marking is not up to date and staff do not yet share the next steps in pupils' learning well enough with pupils or parents. There is room for improvement in pupils' handwriting and in the amount of writing they compose for themselves. The school's increased attention to guided reading, using a range of books, is leading to a better focus on comprehension and strengthening pupils' understanding of the reading process.

Self-evaluation is good and the school knows itself well. The school is well led and managed and the governing body is involved effectively in strategic development and the identification of areas for improvement. The record of good results and progress, the commitment of the staff and pupils' continuing good progress indicate that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' handwriting skills and adopt measures which will lead to improvements in the amount that the pupils write when they compose stories.
 - Improve the quality of marking so that:
 - pupils understand the things that they have done well and where they could make improvements
 - marking is up to date
 - pupils' immediate targets and also next steps in their learning are indicated and shared with their parents and carers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment on entry is below that expected for their age but by the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. Pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities have attained better than the national picture for this group of pupils because the school acts quickly to find out the reasons for their difficulties and provides extra support when pupils are first noted to be struggling with their work.

The school provides good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Consequently they achieve well in learning to speak English. They are immersed in the language and provided with a buddy who speaks that same language whenever possible. The teachers also provide lots of visual materials to help pupils understand English and the purpose of the activities. The school's generous allocation of well-trained adults to support all children is a key feature in the good progress that the pupils make. The school's good focus on teaching letter sounds and blends helps pupils' reading development significantly.

Pupils' handwriting is not as neatly formed as it could be, given other progress, because the staff have not been sufficiently demanding of quality in this aspect nor consistent in their approach to it. The school has taken effective measures to increase the percentage of pupils who reach the higher level in reading by raising the profile of books in the school. However, the format of the pupils' writing exercise books constrains the amount that the pupils write. Imaginative introductions to lessons often grip the pupils' interest and secure their progress. In a Year 2 science lesson about electricity, the teacher opened an e-mail from a bear from outer space which did not have electricity to read at night. They eagerly sought to make a bulb light up with circuitry equipment to help the bear.

Pupils behave well and enjoy school. They feel safe 'because we have got good teachers'. They also have a good awareness of what they should do to keep themselves safe when out of school, such as holding an adult's hand when crossing the road. They know that they should not eat too many sweet things but eat fruit and vegetables and exercise regularly to maintain healthy lifestyles. Several pupils cycle or walk to school

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and regularly take part in sport. Members of the school council meet regularly and suggested the site and arrangement of the tyres on which they play in the school activity area. Pupils get along well together and think of others, although they do not gain an insight into the needs of local groups sufficiently well, such as the elderly. Attendance has improved remarkably in the past year from a well below average figure.

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
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' good relationships with the pupils foster mutual respect and lead to positive learning attitudes. Pupils make effective use of their time in lessons and are cooperative, which contributes to their good progress. They take part well in paired discussions with other pupils to share ideas or to plan a piece of learning. Lessons are well prepared and taught as teachers show good subject knowledge. Their good use of modern technology, such as electronic screens to present the learning visually, keeps the pupils focused. They give pupils good opportunities to use computers in specific aspects of their work. The variety of approaches and the good use of learning resources secure the pupils' attention. Assessment is satisfactory. While the pupils' progress is monitored

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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regularly to ensure pupils are on track, marking does not help the pupils enough to know how they can move forward with their learning. Staff are not consistent in their expectations of handwriting quality.

Good attention is paid to the basic skills, although pupils do not write extensively enough for their age. The curriculum is planned well in different subjects. Pupils experience a good range of learning opportunities and the emphasis on first-hand experiences, for example to the country park and the zoological museum, assists the pupils' understanding. The good range of extra-curricular activities supports the children's interests and contributes to their healthy life styles. The good attention to personal, social and health education ensures that the pupils develop caring attitudes and respect for each other irrespective of ethnic background or other difference. Special weeks add variety to the usual routine, such as book week or a specific curriculum focus.

Pastoral care is excellent and every child is valued. The school provides a very welcoming and caring environment. The very close ties with the church support the school's Christian tradition. The Vicar regularly takes assemblies. The designation of one of the staff as a family worker and her involvement with hard to reach families is testimony to the school's very caring ethos. Families are contacted quickly if a pupil does not attend school without notification. The very close links with other agencies, if a pupil is having emotional or learning difficulties, ensure that help is sought quickly. Transition arrangements between classes within the school and with the junior school are very thoughtfully undertaken. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are constantly on the school's 'radar'. Child protection is very good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

Staff and the governing body work well together and also with parents and carers. The school is well led. The school's website and the coffee mornings provide effective communication links and keep parents regularly updated about a range of matters, but not about their children's targets and next steps in learning. Governors' regular visits and meetings keep them well abreast of the school's strengths and areas for development and fully involved with the staff in the strategic development of the school. Together with the staff's regular analysis of the pupils' progress, this ensures that the school is constantly driving forward, seeking to improve further and ambitious for its

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pupils. The governing body both challenges and supports the school and policies are systematically reviewed. Hence, the school development plan priorities are the correct ones. The school keeps itself well informed of safeguarding matters and ensures that child protection arrangements are secure. There is good attention to site safety and security.

Both senior staff and subject leaders monitor teaching and learning through a variety of methods, including lesson observations and pupils' work analysis. Findings from these are shared with staff so that improvements result. Pupils have equal opportunities both in their work and in the extra activities and all groups of pupils are considered in the work of the school. For example, pupils who speak English as an additional language receive extra support so that they quickly become conversant with English. The school's good link with an inner city school supports the pupils' understanding of the way that others live. The pupils raise money for different charities to help them appreciate the needs of others, although there has been no formal audit of community cohesion in order to formulate a plan for its further development. Financial management is good.

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

Effective teaching enables the children to make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from a below expected point on entry overall. By the end of Reception, the children's attainment is close to that expected, sometimes above and strong in their personal and social development in which they make very good progress. The excellent focus on language is especially supportive of pupils who speak English as

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an additional language. Staff's promotion of a broad and interesting range of experiences promotes independence, cooperation and an enthusiasm for learning. Staff value the uniqueness of each child and there is a strong family atmosphere with children from different cultures and backgrounds playing and working very well together. Children are encouraged to look after themselves and their personal hygiene and also to be considerate of each other and work safely together. The curriculum provides well for the different areas of learning with a very good balance of formal teaching and activities that the children choose themselves. There is good attention to making the activities equally appealing to boys as well as girls in the role play areas. Nursery children all enjoyed taking a ride in the space rocket, for example. However, outside activities are not organised as well as those for children indoors. The wealth of opportunities for mark making provide a good prelude for writing. Staff take on board well the children's ideas when planning activities such as their idea of silver hats for wearing in the space rocket. Routines are well established and the provision well led.

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

Only a small proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. These express very positive views about the school. They praise the staff, with some commenting that the staff are its biggest asset. Parents and carers appreciate the Christian values taught and the friendly atmosphere. A few comments spoke of what could be improved. These included better information about what is taught and the pupils' targets and progress towards these. Inspectors found that parents and carers could receive improved information about learning. While some information is put on the website, some parents and carers who do not have Internet access cannot access this information. Inspectors found that targets for improvement could be shared more effectively and also made more clear to pupils themselves. Overall, however, parents and carers are rightly very pleased with the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cherry Hinton Infant 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 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	70	9	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	57	13	43	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	27	19	63	3	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	33	18	60	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	47	15	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	30	19	63	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	30	21	70	0	0	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)	7	23	17	57	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	23	18	60	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	33	18	60	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	30	18	60	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	43	15	50	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	37	19	63	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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 November 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Cherry Hinton Infant School, Cambridge, CB1 9HH

Thank you for your kind welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed the time that we shared with you. Thank you also for talking to us about your school and letting us see your work. You attend a good school. The teachers take excellent care of you. You told us how you like your teachers and how much they help you. Your parents and carers are happy that you attend Cherry Hinton Infant School. There are lots of good things about your school. You behave well and know how to keep yourselves safe. You all get on along so well together and look after each other. You also make good progress in your work and you do lots of interesting things.

We have asked the school to do two things to make the school even better.

Help you to improve your handwriting and the amount that you write.

Improve the marking of your work to help you to understand and remember how you can do even better.

You all can help by thinking hard about what you write to make it more interesting and by writing as neatly as you can.

Thank you once again for your help when we visited. We wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Sudworth

Lead inspector

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