

Orchards Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133782
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	366790
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Martin Cragg HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Mason
Headteacher	Helen Williams
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2009
School address	Cherry Road Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 3NP
Telephone number	01945 583799
Fax number	01945 461313
Email address	office@orchards.cambs.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Inspection number	366790

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 assesses 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 0300 123 4234, 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 documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 14 lessons involving 14 teachers. They held meetings with a small group of parents and carers, pupils, staff, a representative of the local authority and the chair of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at the schools' latest assessment information, records of monitoring, improvement plan, policies and minutes of the governing body. No questionnaires were issued to parents and carers as this was initially a monitoring visit.

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

- How much progress has the school made in tackling the issues raised in its last inspection report?
- Do different groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make consistent progress across the school?
- How effective are leaders and managers at all levels in monitoring performance and raising achievement?

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. One third of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and most of these speak English as an additional language; this proportion has increased since the last inspection and is high. Most come from Eastern European countries and many have arrived recently. A high percentage of pupils joins or leaves the school during the school year. One third of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Nearly 30% of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is also above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. When the school was inspected in December 2009, it was deemed to require special measures.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school has improved considerably since its last inspection and is now satisfactory. It has several good features. Teachers provide good-quality care for all pupils, including those with a range of complex needs. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are eager to learn and enjoy lessons.

The headteacher and deputy headteachers set a very clear direction for the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses based on regular and rigorous monitoring of performance. Staff take accountability readily for performance in their areas. As a result of clear improvements in attainment, pupils' progress and attendance, especially this year, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

The school's improvement is demonstrated by:

- pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 which, while remaining below average, is improving rapidly, especially in English
- pupils across the school making progress which is satisfactory and often good
- good behaviour in lessons and around the school, supported by attendance which is improving rapidly
- teachers using their good subject knowledge to set clear objectives for learning and match work to pupils' different capabilities
- rigorous systems for assessing pupils' progress and identifying those who require additional support
- clear and helpful feedback to pupils on their work
- a curriculum which increasingly enthuses pupils, provides opportunities for them to work practically and benefit from a range of activities beyond the classroom
- effective support for pupils with a range of needs, based on a strong awareness among all staff of the need to keep children safe
- concerted work to engage parents and carers and encourage them into school
- decisive and effective leadership at all levels.

Attainment is improving rapidly across the school because teaching has improved and much is now good. Where teaching is most effective, teachers have begun to emphasise key concepts and share key vocabulary, especially to help those pupils who are learning English as an additional language. In the best lessons, teachers use a wide range of questions to develop the quality of the pupils' answers and give pupils time to think before

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

answering. Also, they use small group work effectively to consolidate pupils' learning and develop their collaborative skills further. However, although many teachers use these approaches, the impact is not consistent from class to class. The school has implemented a wide range of strategies to promote and improve attendance such that other schools now visit to see this practice. However, despite the school's efforts, absence is too high for a small number of families, often because of extended holidays or prolonged periods of illness.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further in English and mathematics by:
 - developing pupils' understanding and use of subject terms
 - adopting strategies routinely to consolidate language learning for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Develop greater consistency in the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers, regularly:
 - use a full range of questions to extend pupils' thinking and ability to explain their ideas
 - use group work effectively to consolidate pupils' understanding.
- Reduce persistent absence further by working with parents and carers to:
 - secure understanding of the importance of full attendance and a prompt return to school after illness
 - avoid extended holidays in term time.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment is below average, but improving strongly and pupils' progress is satisfactory and improving securely, especially this year. Children join the school with knowledge, understanding and skills which are low in comparison to those found nationally. Many children have particularly weak language skills. In 2010, attainment at the end of Year 2 was low in English and below average in mathematics. The school's assessment information indicates that current Year 2 pupils are on track to improve markedly on these results, especially in reading and writing, though attainment is likely to remain below average. In 2010, attainment of Year 6 pupils was low, especially in English. The school's assessment information indicates that current Year 6 pupils are on track to improve these results significantly, especially in English, potentially reaching the national floor target for the first time. Although attainment is likely to remain below average, this represents strong improvement. Current Year 2 pupils are making good progress overall. Current Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress from the end of Year 2 and good progress in this school year. This pattern is common to all groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall and good progress this year. Those learning English as an additional language, including those who join during the year, make

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

at least satisfactory progress. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than their peers because of good care and effective intervention.

In lessons, pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress because of improved teaching. Pupils enjoy their learning and show positive attitudes to work. Increasingly, they persevere when work is challenging and they enjoy solving problems, such as devising mathematical reasons for why something is the odd one out in a group of values or shapes. Mostly, they work well together, using time for discussion purposefully and cooperating effectively, for example when researching information on websites.

Pupils say they feel safe at school and have a good awareness of potential dangers they might face in their everyday lives. Bullying and racist incidents are rare and pupils are confident that any incidents are managed effectively by staff. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most pupils respond well. Pupils are courteous towards adults and their classmates. They are aware of the importance of taking regular exercise and following a healthy diet. They participate with great enthusiasm in the frequent opportunities for exercise provided by the school. They are proud of their school and eager to contribute by taking responsibility, for example, in fundraising or by being a member of the pupil council. Attendance, although it remains low, has improved significantly this year. Pupils understand the importance of attending regularly and value the rewards that this brings. They apply their basic skills readily, working through problems successfully in mathematics and science. Pupils celebrate the wide cultural heritage that fellow pupils bring to the school. They enjoy singing, various forms of music and the arts.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
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?

Teaching has improved markedly. There is now much good practice, but it is not consistent across the school and so pupils' progress is satisfactory, though it continues to improve. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly. Work is matched carefully to pupils' differing abilities, with different tasks and materials providing challenges at appropriate levels for all. Teaching assistants provide effective support in small groups and also by prompting pupils when teachers introduce learning. Teachers use a good range of activities, including information and communication technology, to interest pupils. Teachers focus strongly on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, increasingly emphasising key vocabulary to help pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

Teachers use assessment in their planning to identify pupils who require additional support or intervention. Intervention programmes to develop literacy, reading and numeracy skills have helped to raise achievement. Teachers ask pupils regularly to assess their own learning. Teachers' marking is thorough and comments are focused on learning objectives. Teachers provide pupils with clear guidance on what they need to do next to improve their work, giving clear examples.

The curriculum meets pupils' learning needs well. One teacher in Years 4 to 6 takes groups for either English or mathematics, formed according to pupils' abilities. The practice is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Teachers exploit opportunities for

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

pupils to apply their basic skills in different subjects, for example by making calculations during a study of Japan in geography. The school provides also a good range of additional activities, educational visits and visitors to the school which broaden pupils' experience and enhance their learning. Pupils enjoy themed days based around local agriculture, story-telling assemblies using popular fiction, visits to places of interest, and improving outdoor areas by planting gardens and setting up scarecrow sculptures.

Care, guidance and support are significant strengths of the school, underpinning the improvements in progress that pupils are making. Staff are very knowledgeable about the personal and learning needs of every pupil. Communication with parents and carers is very effective, especially when any problems arise or pupils show any sign of falling behind. The work is augmented by the very successful work of the school's well-being team. Staff are particularly aware of the needs of those pupils who, at times, because of circumstances, might be vulnerable. Support for these pupils is tailored carefully to meet their needs and enable them to learn.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has built the confidence and aspiration of staff successfully. With the deputy headteachers, she sets high expectations for staff and pupils. Leaders with different responsibilities are confident and take responsibility for their areas, monitoring performance and steering developments. There is a regular and rigorous cycle of monitoring progress, including detailed tracking of pupils' performance, which enables an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Plans are well focused and challenging. Senior staff set realistic yet challenging targets and these are close to being achieved in attendance and pupils' progress, leading to substantial improvement in key areas of the school's performance. The headteacher has an accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school and other leaders are beginning to take on responsibility for monitoring provision in their areas. Recent training has improved practice in using teaching assistants to support individual pupils and encouraging talk to aid learning.

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and is well organised. Members of the governing body visit the school to check on particular aspects of its work and increasingly hold senior staff to account. The governing body has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas of development. Parents and carers receive regular information and are invited to open lessons and storytelling assemblies. There are effective links with local schools and the community which have broadened opportunities for pupils and encouraged their

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

development. Very good links with external agencies support those pupils who may be vulnerable and enable them to be successful in school. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination strongly. It is a harmonious community where children respect each other and show interest in different cultures and backgrounds. No group of pupils achieves significantly less well than any other. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. There is a strong and welcoming atmosphere in the school which ensures that pupils feel secure. Pupils participate in town concerts and the school organises curriculum days and careers events which other schools visit. Links with schools and communities beyond the locality are in the early stages of development.

Arrangements for safeguarding are good, with policies and practice meeting all requirements fully. Staff are well informed about child protection issues and very aware of the need to identify and respond to any issues. As a result, intervention is prompt and effective, catering particularly well for pupils who may be vulnerable. Collaboration with other agencies in respect of safeguarding is very effective.

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	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry is low in all areas of learning. Throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress. By the time they move into Year 1, attainment is still low in relation to the national average. Even so, many children make good progress in communication, language and literacy and in their social and emotional development. Progress in other areas of learning is satisfactory. Pupils make faster progress in the Reception Year. Children learning English as an additional language often make good progress and are supported well.

Teaching is satisfactory, as is the quality and use of assessment. However, there are times, especially in the Nursery, when the pace of children's learning slows. This is mainly

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

because the children have not acquired the learning skills that enable them to progress independently and to make decisions for themselves. There are planned opportunities for children to work independently or to co-operate in small groups and to make decisions about working outside or indoors. However, the intended learning outcomes are not always identified sufficiently in planning. Leaders have established effective provision for teaching letters and the sounds that they make and recent changes have improved the quality of the learning environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

As this was originally a monitoring visit carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, no questionnaires were issued to parents and carers. The parents and carers who met with an inspector were positive about the school and recognised the improvements made recently. All knew exactly how their children were performing in school. Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Orchards Church of England Primary School, Wisbech, PE13 3NP

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, meetings and at breaks. Your views helped us to find out about the school.

Your school has improved substantially in the past two years. It now offers you a satisfactory education and has several good features. As a result, we have removed it from special measures. Your good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning helped us to make this important decision. You told us you feel safe and get on well with each other in school. Last year, the results of Year 6 pupils improved in mathematics and the school's information shows that the trend will continue this year, including in English. Although the results are on track still to be below average, the progress made by Year 6 pupils this year is good. This is also true in many other classes across the school, especially in the Reception Year and Key Stage 1. Teaching is improving and it is often good. Your teachers set you work that matches your ability and give you clear feedback on how well you are doing and what you need to improve. You enjoy the range of activities in lessons as well as the trips and special events. Staff know you well, take good care of you and provide good support to you if you have any problems.

We asked the school to improve some areas of its work. These are:

- improve your work further in English and mathematics by concentrating on important vocabulary, especially to help those of you who do not speak English as your first language
- use questions and group work better to help you secure your understanding and develop ideas
- improve your attendance even more by avoiding holidays and days off ill during term time.

We are confident that your school will continue to improve. You can help by continuing to do your best in lessons and by keeping your attendance high. We wish you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg

Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.