

Horsington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123763
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340420
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Smith
Headteacher	Ian Rumbelow
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2006
School address	Horsington Templecombe Somerset BA8 0BW
Telephone number	01963 370358
Fax number	01963 370117
Email address	office@horsington.somerset.sch.uk

Age group	4–11 years
Inspection date(s)	12–13 October 2009
Inspection number	340420

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 2009



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, including small group teaching, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's most recent self-evaluation form, the school development plan, pupils' work, the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, the detailed records held on vulnerable pupils, including a close scrutiny of the individual education plans for those with additional educational needs, minutes of governing body meetings and school policies, especially those relating to safeguarding of pupils, and the reports from the local authority and the school improvement partner. The questionnaire responses from pupils, staff and 64 parents were read and analysed.

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

- Achievement across the school, especially in mathematics and that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The impact of those leaving the school or joining it during Years 3 to 6.
- The impact of the recent changes on the way pupils' progress is assessed and its impact upon teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- How the improved accommodation and outdoor area for the Early Years Foundation Stage is impacting upon provision for, and the achievement of, children in Reception.

Information about the school

Horsington Church of England Primary is much smaller than most schools. Pupils come from a near by local town and several neighbouring villages. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed class alongside some Year 1 pupils. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The vast majority of pupils are White British, with only around 3% from other ethnic groups. Although the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school during their school career is broadly average, most of these occur during Years 3 to 6, with many occurring in Years 5 and 6. More pupils than usual have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and some have complex needs. The school has received many awards recently such as the Healthy School Award, Artsmark Silver and Activemark.

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 school makes good provision for the academic development of pupils. The school is at the heart of the local community. Its undoubted strengths lie in the excellent provision that is enabling pupils to make outstanding progress in their personal development and grow into mature and confident young people, well prepared for the future. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy and their behaviour is excellent. Pupils were keen to say how much they enjoy school. They particularly like the recent additions to the outdoor area, which they feel are absolutely fabulous. Visits to places of interest and the many visitors to the school make learning stimulating and fun for pupils. The school works very closely with parents to support their children's learning. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to both the school and local community, showing a very strong understanding of their own local culture, but their understanding of the wide range of cultures in Britain is a comparative weakness. Extremely strong partnerships with external agencies provide high quality support for vulnerable pupils, especially those with more complex or medical needs.

Children get off to a good start in Reception because of good teaching and an exciting curriculum. Nevertheless, currently children have too few opportunities to develop their writing and this holds down achievement in this aspect. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and standards are currently average when pupils start Year 3. For several years progress had slowed in Years 3 to 6 and standards had fallen. Robust action by the school has reversed this and the trend in the past two years has been one of improvement. Pupils now make good progress to reach above-average standards by the end of Year 6. This good progress is particularly strong in English and science but is not as consistent in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall, although on occasions this too lacks consistency. Overall, pupils' achievement is good.

Inconsistencies in the way in which targets for pupils' learning are set results in some inconsistencies in rates of progress. Individual targets for pupils in mathematics are not always broken down sufficiently into small achievable steps. This inconsistency is also the case with regard to targets for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although the work of skilled teaching assistants ensures that these pupils make good progress.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. Standards have risen over the last two years as a result of well-targeted action such

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

as the strategies to improve pupils' writing. High quality budget management and innovative thinking have enabled excellent improvements to the learning environment. The school has a wealth of information on how well individual pupils are attaining in each year. Nevertheless, the school has identified in the school development plan that this information is not sufficiently well organised nor recorded in a way that enables senior leaders and teachers to see easily how well the school is doing. The school is clearly demonstrating an ambition to improve further, as evidenced by the moves to review the curriculum to make it more inspirational and the improvements to assessment procedures. Action has already started on most of the areas for development identified in this report as a result of the good quality leadership and management. Standards are continuing to improve, demonstrating that the school clearly has a good capacity to bring about further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the systems for presenting and analysing the assessment information on pupils to allow managers and leaders at all levels to have better access to the information in order to have a more accurate overview of school performance that allows them to challenge areas where performance is comparatively weaker.
- Ensure more rigorous use of assessment information to set targets in small steps that are consistently matched to each pupil's needs, especially in mathematics and for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Provide better opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop their writing skills in order that their progress in language matches their good progress seen in other areas of the curriculum.
- Make better provision within the curriculum for raising pupils' awareness of the rich variety of cultures to be found within Britain.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Standards attained at the end of Years 6 in national assessments are often affected by the impact on such a small cohort of movement into and out of the school. As a result, academic standards attained vary from year to year. Nevertheless, the underlying trend over time is one of improvement. Pupils' learning is improving as a result of the improved teaching and this in turn is enhancing their enjoyment of learning. Challenging whole-school targets have been set for pupils in English but those in mathematics are not challenging enough. Nevertheless, in many lessons, especially in Year 6, progress in mathematics is starting to approach that in English and science. For example, some more able Year 6 pupils in a mathematics lesson made excellent progress in their understanding of fractions as a result of extremely good teaching. The most able were working at a very high level because of high teacher expectations and very good support from a teaching assistant. In English lessons observed, most pupils made good progress because they were challenged

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

well and set tasks with small achievable steps. Inconsistencies remain, especially in mathematics, where the pace of learning seen was sometimes too slow and pupils were not always clear enough about the next step in their learning. Good standards in history were observed and good quality displays of art showed clearly why the school was recently received the Artsmark Silver Award.

The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their enjoyment of learning is due in no small part to the very effective work of the teaching assistants, despite the lack of consistency in the quality of learning targets set.

Pupils say confidently that they feel very safe in school. They say that there is no bullying in the school and they trust the adults to deal with any that might occur. Pupils demonstrate great maturity in the polite and courteous way they speak with visitors. They make an excellent contribution to school life by taking on a wide range of responsibilities such as preparing for assemblies, organising the playground games equipment or deciding on school charities. Older pupils look after younger ones well. Pupils’ very secure understanding of how to stay healthy and keep fit is evident in the enthusiastic way they take advantage of the many opportunities for physical activity in the school grounds and after school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local community, for example in the way they help with organisation of the village fete which is held at the school or take part in church services. Pupils’ spiritual, moral and social development is excellent but their cultural development, although good, is a comparative weakness. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and show respect for themselves and for others. They say that they feel valued. They have a good understanding of the cultures in some other countries through visitors to the school and other links. However, pupils’ understanding of the rich diversity of cultures to be found in Britain is more limited.

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	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will	2

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

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

contribute to their future economic well-being	
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good overall and is improving further, as teachers review their practice and benefit from good quality professional development. For example, achievement in English in Years 1 to 6 has risen because teachers have improved the way they teach writing, after professional development in assessing pupils' progress in writing. However, although improved, this is not yet consistent across all classes. Teachers have identified the benefits of this type of assessment, especially the way in which it enables them to plan work that targets the next steps in pupils' learning. This has not yet been implemented to the same extent in mathematics, which is why improvements in mathematics have lagged behind those in English. Teachers make good use of a wide range of strategies to make learning interesting and stimulating for pupils. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is well established in teaching and is used effectively to support learning in many instances, although, again, this use is more consistent in English than mathematics. In many lessons teaching assistants make a very strong contribution. Their work in keeping pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities included in lessons is particularly effective.

The broad and balanced curriculum makes learning enjoyable and makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development. The school is seeking to build upon the existing strengths to develop a curriculum that they describe as 'inspirational'. This has already started. The incredible learning environment provided in the school grounds is extremely popular with pupils and enables stimulating and motivating activities to be planned across a wide range of subjects. In particular it enables good opportunities for environmental science, art, design and technology and physical activity. Pupils enjoy music and have very good opportunities to learn a wide range of instruments. They are enthusiastic about the wide range of sports activities possible, as shown by the high attendance at after-school clubs. The school has identified that fewer opportunities exist for developing pupils' mathematical skills across the curriculum. Teachers have also recognised that although they are developing links with schools in other countries through ICT, too few opportunities exist in the curriculum to support pupils' cultural development. Different strategies to address this are being explored, including the possibility of links with schools in more culturally diverse parts of Britain.

This school excels in the pastoral support that it provides. All pupils but especially vulnerable pupils are extremely well cared for. Excellent links with outside agencies ensure high levels of support for those pupils with complex physical or medical needs. Pupils' progress is tracked and recorded but the school acknowledges in its current school development plan that it needs to make better use of this information

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

to guide and support pupils to achieve higher standards.

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 senior staff and governors have high expectations for the school and a real commitment to ensuring continual improvement. Good quality systems are in place for evaluating the quality of teaching. High expectations are communicated well to all staff. Within this small school all teachers have a range of subject responsibilities and work together effectively as a team to develop areas identified as weaker than others. Consequently, outcomes for pupils are improving steadily. Subject management is good, although assessment information is not presented in a way that gives leaders a consistently clear enough picture of how achievement in one subject compares with another. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school is very good, for example, at ensuring that those with additional physical or medical needs are fully included in all activities. Community cohesion is now being promoted well, with the school making great efforts to ensure pupils improve their understanding of other cultures within the national community. Links with other countries have been developed and involvement in the local community is very strong and well established.

The governing body is effective and supportive. Governors visit the school regularly to observe its work and meet with staff and pupils. Parental views are sought and listened to. There is a very strong whole-school awareness of safeguarding issues and governors are rigorous in ensuring safeguarding requirements are met. They monitor pupils' personal development very well. They are well aware of the academic standards but the limitations on the way data are presented and analysed mean that they do not always have a totally clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in attainment to support them when setting whole-school targets. Budget management is extremely good and consequently the school has been able to enhance its provision regarding accommodation and playground facilities. Despite this, governors are not resting on their laurels. Detailed plans are already in place for further improvements to the accommodation to support teaching and learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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	1
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	1
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

Parents rightly value the start that children get to school. Very strong links with the many pre-school groups ensure a smooth transition. Well-established routines and strong links with parents help children who are new to the school to feel really secure and cared for and ensure they get a good start to their education.

The strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that the needs of the children are met well and the provision for their welfare is exemplary. Children feel really secure and cared for. The strong teamwork between teacher and teaching assistants ensures children achieve well from starting points that are in line with those expected for their age. Children start Year 1 well prepared for learning and with above-average standards in most areas of learning. The exception is children’s writing skills, which are more limited because some activities allow too few opportunities to develop writing. The new and exciting outside area provides wonderful facilities. Teachers are skilled at ensuring a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play. This enables all children to grow in confidence and build securely on their previous experience. The well-organised and attractive environment is used effectively to support a stimulating curriculum that provides a good degree of challenge to children. Whole-class activities are planned well but, occasionally in some whole-class sessions, there is not always enough encouragement for all children to take opportunities to choose their own activities or move freely between indoor and outdoor activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. The expertise and skill of the adults and the good systems for checking on children’s progress ensure that all individuals are gently, but effectively, challenged to achieve well.

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 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

Most of the parents who returned questionnaires also made written comments. They were very positive and many parents said they are very happy with the school, using terms such as, 'fabulous', 'very approachable teachers', 'detailed knowledge of each child within the first few weeks of term', and 'teachers know the children very well and respect their individuality, curriculum rich and taught with enthusiasm'.

A small minority of those who wrote in were concerned about behaviour. Inspectors investigated this and found that the school is aware of this and that the concerns mainly related to pupils no longer in the school. Inspectors do not share the concerns expressed by parents. Behaviour is managed very effectively. The school has extremely high expectations of behaviour and pupils' behaviour is excellent.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Horsington 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 111 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	81	12	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	89	7	11	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	64	22	34	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	73	14	21	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	81	12	18	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	77	13	20	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	84	10	16	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)	44	69	15	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	73	16	25	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	61	18	28	6	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	73	13	20	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	91	6	9	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	84	10	16	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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



14 October 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Horsington Church of England Primary School, Templecombe BAS OBW

Thank you for making us so welcome and talking with us when we came to visit your school. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and the mature way in which you discussed your school.

Yours is a good school. It has some outstanding features. Here are some of the things that we liked:

- You get off to a good start in the Reception class. This prepares you well for learning as you move through the school. By the time you get to Year 6 you achieve better standards than most schools, especially in English and science.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy because the school gives you such good guidance.
- The school looks after you really well, especially those of you who have medical or physical needs.
- The teaching is good and teachers make learning enjoyable and fun for you. We can see why you like coming to school and have so few days off.
- You make a huge contribution to the life of the school and the local community.
- The school is well run by the headteacher and staff. The governors (the other adults who help to run the school) manage the money really well and have made very good improvements to the buildings and playground. The outdoor area is incredible. We can see why you enjoy it so much.

To help the school get even better we have made a few suggestions for improvements to help you learn better. We have asked the school to:

- Make sure those of you who find learning difficult always have smaller targets that show clearly the next steps you need to achieve in your lessons.
- Make sure also that these smaller targets are always set for all of you in mathematics too. You can help make sure your targets are right for you by saying when you find work too easy.
- Give those of you in Reception more opportunities to write.
- Find more ways to help you learn about all the different groups of people in Britain.

Yours faithfully
Stephen Lake
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](tel:08456404045), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.