

Court-de-Wyck Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109223
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	309933
Inspection date	1 November 2007
Reporting inspector	David Curtis

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 on roll	
School	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Mortimer
Headteacher	Nick Riddiough
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
School address	Bishops Road Claverham Bristol BS49 4NF
Telephone number	01934 833070
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small village primary school with four mixed age classes, although in the mornings, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught as separate year groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, with one or two classes containing significantly higher proportions. Children start school with standards that are below expectations. The headteacher was appointed in January 2007. The school was given a Notice to Improve at its previous inspection and received an interim monitoring visit by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in May 2007.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has made rapid and significant improvement since its previous inspection. Following his appointment, the headteacher with strong support from staff, governors and the local authority (LA) has revitalised and transformed the school. As one parent wrote, 'Very visible improvements can be seen to have been made over the last year. Staff are more accessible, seem more motivated and know the children well. Classes seem more active and fun and the core ethos of the school shines through.' Pupils enjoy school much more as is shown by their good attendance, which two years ago was unsatisfactory. They particularly value the new school council, the support of peer mediators and being able to gain house points for good work and good behaviour.

The most tangible impact of the school's improvement is that pupils' achievement is now good and standards are broadly average, whereas a year ago both were inadequate. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and most reach the standards expected of them by the end of the year. Standards in Year 2 are much higher than they were and are now broadly average, although those in reading lag behind those in writing. This is partly because the teaching and assessment in 'guided' reading lessons does not ensure that pupils make sufficient progress within individual sessions. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are above average with those in mathematics and science broadly average. Across the school, pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are inconsistent because teachers do not set high enough expectations. However, when using information and communication technology (ICT) skills, pupils make very good presentations, including the use of multimedia. This example confirms that the school has addressed successfully the raising of standards in this subject.

Good teaching, together with a renewed and exciting curriculum, is the other key factor in school improvement. Pupils enjoy lessons and particularly value teachers' marking, which they find helpful in telling them how they can improve their work. Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is detailed and accurate. It is used successfully to set challenging targets. The significant increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in the 2007 national tests is testimony to how well assessment is used to move pupils on. Pupils enjoy learning through using and applying their key literacy, numeracy and ICT subjects in other subjects.

The school cares for its pupils particularly well and, as a result, their personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is good. Relationships are good and younger pupils feel that the older ones care for them especially well. Pupils know they need to stay fit and healthy and benefit from a good range of after-school sporting activities. Through their three houses, they make significant contributions to their chosen charities. Improvement to achievement and standards means that pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being is good. In lessons, there are a few occasions where pupils find it harder to work independently, especially when they are not clear about what they are expected to do.

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a really impressive start to schooling, which is recognised and valued by their parents. As one wrote, 'We are very happy with the way our daughter has settled and are happy

with her introduction to education.' Good teaching enables children to settle quickly into the day to day life of the school and to make good progress from the day they start. Teaching ensures a good balance of activities led by adults together with those which children choose for themselves. Day to day assessment of children's learning is particularly good. Parents value receiving the end of year progress books in which photographs are used to particularly good effect to show their child's progress. Children show good levels of concentration and independence, for example when making collars and leads for their 'cuddly dogs'. Equally, they play together happily in groups in the role play area. By the time they start Year 1, most reach the goals expected of them. However, in linking sounds and letters and in writing, boys' progress is satisfactory whereas girls make good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching of and assessment of guided reading in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils make better progress in these lessons.
- Ensure that when working independently, pupils understand exactly what work is expected of them.
- Improve the quality of handwriting and presentation of pupils' work in all classes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are broadly average. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved significantly over the last two years. Standards in reading still lag behind those in writing. This is partly because in some guided reading sessions, pupils practise low level handwriting skills on worksheets and, as a result, make no progress with reading. Standards have improved significantly in Year 6, especially in the proportions achieving the higher Level 5 because pupils reach the challenging targets set. The school has identified, and inspection evidence supports this, that in mathematics pupils still need to improve their mental arithmetic skills. Standards of ICT are good. Pupils use the Internet successfully, for example to research prices of camping equipment as part of an investigation in mathematics. Across the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as measured against the targets in their individual education plans. This is because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils reflect sensitively on issues concerning themselves, their classmates and those whom they support through fund raising. Pupils keep safe in school. From the Reception class onwards, they handle tools sensibly, for example in using scissors when cutting out. Pupils, including school council members and peer mediators, enjoy taking responsibility within school and carry out their duties seriously. Year 6 would like even more responsibilities. Pupils enjoy meeting visitors and going on educational visits. The recent trip to the local sewerage works generated good follow up work and much interesting discussion. Whilst most pupils really enjoy their learning, there are occasions when they find it harder to work independently, especially when work is undemanding or they are not clear as to what is expected of them.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their lessons and really value the teaching they receive. As one said, 'Teachers make lessons fun, they mark our work truthfully and they tell us how we can improve our work when they mark it.' Teachers' lesson planning is mainly good. A strength is the way in which they assess individual lessons and amend planning for the next lesson based on this information. Because teachers assess pupils' work more accurately than they did, their planning is tailored closely to individual needs. Pupils appreciate the time teachers give them as individuals to help them improve their work. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Teaching assistants work in successful partnership with teachers to support and extend pupils' learning, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In 'guided' reading sessions, teachers do not always assess the progress made by each pupil in that day's focus group nor do they use this information sufficiently well to plan the next session. Teachers are inconsistent in setting high enough expectations for pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has successfully revitalised its previously inadequate curriculum to make learning more enjoyable for pupils. As a result, pupils' achievement and standards have improved. Pupils really enjoy the way subjects are now linked and they see why it is important to use key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. One pupil said, 'Country dancing lessons really help me to see counting patterns in mathematics.' However, the school recognises that the curriculum is new and needs time to be established to maximise learning for all pupils. Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. The school uses the social and emotional aspects of learning [SEAL] programme effectively to support and develop pupils' personal development and well-being. Strong links with its feeder secondary school support pupils' learning in literacy, numeracy and in dance and drama.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school meets fully all requirements for child protection and safeguarding of its pupils. It provides good support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants give particularly effective support in lessons so that pupils can play a full part in learning. Pupils appreciate the role of the peer mediators in resolving issues in the playground. Younger pupils enjoy the help and support they get from older ones. Pupils receive good feedback on their work from teachers' marking and know that this tells them how they can improve their work. Targets are used successfully with pupils, although a few pupils need to go and look to see what they are, rather than recalling them immediately.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The significant successes of the past year show that the school has good capacity for further improvement. The school have moved forward quickly because all staff, governors and the LA

are clear about how well the school is doing and what needs to be improved. The driving force has been the headteacher whose sense of vision and drive for excellence has brought governors, parents and pupils on board the journey of school improvement. Engaging and involving stakeholders is a key strength of leadership and management in this school. Equally, the rigorous and detailed analysis of data and using this information to identify areas where pupils under perform and then to use this to set challenging targets to raise standards and achievement is a significant strength. Governors and the LA have supported the school very effectively. Governors hold the school to account more and have significantly improved their role as a critical friend to the school. Subject leaders are empowered to carry out their roles more successfully, especially in monitoring teaching and learning.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Court-de-Wyck CE VC Primary School, Claverham BS49 4NF

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you in lessons. A big thanks needs to go to the school council and those of you in Year 6 who gave up part of your lunchtime to meet us. I am delighted to tell you that you go to a good school. It is so much better than a year ago when you had the previous inspection.

These are the things which we thought were particularly good.

- You make good progress and the standard of your work is now as good as other children of your age.
- Your behaviour is good and you like the way peer mediators help you.
- You like the way teachers mark your work and tell you how you can improve it.
- The school gives you a good range of clubs to help keep you fit and healthy.
- Teachers and teaching assistants look after you well.
- All those who lead and manage your school are determined that you should do your very best.

There are a few important things that we have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to do to make your school even better than it already is. These are:

- to make sure that in guided reading you do proper reading activities and that teachers check more closely on the progress you make
- to make sure that teachers tell you exactly what you should be doing when you are working on your own or in groups
- you need to make sure you try harder with your handwriting and presentation, especially in your exercise books.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis Lead inspector

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David Curtis
Lead inspector