

Clipston Endowed Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122013
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380385
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2012
Lead inspector	Jenny Batelen

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gail Courtney
Headteacher	Emma Mercer
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2009
School address	High Street Market Harborough LE16 9RU
Telephone number	01858 525261
Fax number	01858 525114
Email address	office@clipston.northants.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	18–19 January 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jenny Batelen

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent time observing teaching, which included visiting nine lessons and observing six teachers. The inspector heard some pupils read from Years 2 and 6. She also held meetings with pupils and staff, including senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including policies, the school development plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress. She observed pupils' behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures. The inspector analysed 83 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and serves the immediate community and surrounding rural areas. While most pupils are from White British backgrounds, there are a very small number of pupils from other ethnic heritages and include those who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average and includes a range of pupils with moderate learning needs. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below average and includes specific learning difficulties. Pupils throughout the school are organised in mixed-age classes. There have been several staff changes in recent years and the school reorganised from five to four classes in September 2011. The school has achieved National Healthy Schools status, bronze level Eco School and Get Set Network awards. The governing body manages a breakfast club in the school. The school meets the current government floor standard for academic performance.

Stepping Stones Pre-school and Oak Tree After School Club are located on the same site but are not managed by the governing body and therefore are subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school where pupils’ achievement is good. The school is a very friendly, welcoming place and good quality safeguarding underpins the pupils’ sense of security and enjoyment of learning.
- The headteacher and senior leaders provide strong leadership and, along with the governing body, accurately identify the priorities that will further improve the school.
- Pupils make good progress. Skilled teaching of phonics enables pupils to build up successful strategies for reading. The focus on writing means that standards in writing are rising. Pupils’ skills of using and applying their mathematics are being developed with evident progress in their use of mathematical language.
- Pupils behave well around school and in their lessons. Consistent strategies to help pupils manage their own behaviour ensure that pupils who find this difficult are supported to make the right choices. Pupils are confident about feeling safe and knowing how to keep themselves safe.
- Good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs enables these pupils and those with English as an additional language to make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Teaching throughout the school is good. Tasks set take account of previous learning and are appropriately challenging. Pupils receive feedback about their work, but this is not always clear about how well they have done and how they can further improve their work.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the progress pupils make and in the development of their personal well-being.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils enjoy sharing the work they have done, often involving the use of information and communication technology. However it is not always explained to parents and carers how the learning in class will help their children complete the task.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise standards in English and mathematics further involve pupils more in their own learning by ensuring that marking and feedback clearly explain to pupils how well they have done and what they must do to improve.
- Strengthen parents’ and carers’ engagement in their children’s learning by

providing:

- clarity on the relationship between previous learning in class and the task set for homework
- opportunities for parents and carers to give feedback on homework tasks.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skill that are broadly in line with those expected for their age, although their skills in communication, language and literacy and in calculating are often lower than in other areas. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly language skills, and enter Year 1 with skills that are slightly above the national average. This start to their learning is built on well and pupils leave the school in Year 6 with standards that are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Parents and carers comment on how well prepared their children are for the next stage in education and the standards pupils achieve corroborate this. Progress throughout the school in the past two years has not been consistent, caused by staff mobility, particularly in one class. Some parents and carers expressed concerns about this and noted that their children had not made good enough progress. However, the school has addressed the difficulties and there is strong evidence of good progress now being made in all year groups, both from school assessment data, pupils' work and lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from skilled phonics teaching that ensures that most are reading at the levels expected for their age and some are fluent and competent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. All pupils talk with enthusiasm about the books they are reading. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the clear identification of their need and the support to help pupils tackle their tasks, whether individually, in a group or in the whole class. The very small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress and are confident users of written and spoken English. They acknowledge the help they have received from staff and pupils.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and most parents and carers agree that their children are taught well. Lessons are well-planned, using information from regular and accurate assessments to ensure that tasks set will enable pupils to make progress in their learning. Pupils are enthused and excited by their learning and keen to demonstrate their knowledge and learn new skills. This was clearly demonstrated in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5 as they practised and improved their written methods for addition. Pupils confidently spoke about their method, used skills they already had and responded to the teacher's explanation of the next step in order to develop these skills further. Clear steps to success are given in each lesson and pupils confidently use these to focus on what they must achieve in their lesson. Pupils have opportunities to assess their own and others' work and teachers give regular feedback. However, this feedback is not always clear about how well pupils have done and what they must do to improve and as a result opportunities to

consolidate and make increased progress are lost.

The learning environment in classrooms and around school gives strong support to pupils' learning. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 were able to refer to the display of 'time words' and the 'punctuation pyramid' to help them write instructions for making a clay pot. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have many opportunities to play and develop their own learning from the stimulus provided by adults both indoors and outdoors. Children enjoyed developing the planned activity of ordering shoes by size to include also the sound they made. Pupils speak positively about their homework and the links to their class work. In some classes there is a good system for ensuring that parents and carers understand what their child has learnt prior to this homework and what the expectations are. This is not consistent across the school and as a result some parents and carers do not feel that the school helps them to support their child's learning.

Teaching makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Other adults in classes, including volunteers, give strong support to groups and individuals. Teaching assistants are very well-deployed and a particular strength is the use of skilful questioning that enables pupils to gain confidence and so make progress. Pupils work well independently, in pairs and in groups, and as a result they cooperate well together. They have opportunities to reflect on their work and use their imagination and creativity in a range of subjects. Pupils are clear that they enjoy their learning and were enthusiastic in talking about their work and the progress they are making and they are confident that teachers will always help them. They enjoy the chances to make decisions about what they should learn in the curriculum topics. They also understand how the different subjects link together and appreciate how their teachers make these links.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well throughout the school. The recently updated behaviour policy has ensured that there is a consistency of approach from all adults and as a result pupils have clear guidance at all times to enable them to make the right choices regarding their behaviour. Behaviour in lessons is mostly good, but there are a few instances where pupils with challenging behaviour need particular strategies for this to be managed in order to ensure minimal disruption to the lesson. Some parents and carers express concerns about the behaviour in some lessons, but also acknowledge the focus there has been on behaviour and feel that there are improvements. The breakfast club, managed by the governing body, gives a healthy and calm start to the day for those pupils who attend and ensures that they are ready for learning. Pupils are very positive about their behaviour and feel that everyone gets on well together. Pupils say that there is no bullying, although a few parents and carers have concerns about this. The pupils' view tallies with the fact that the school has no recorded incidents of bullying and inspection evidence found no evidence of bullying. Pupils say they feel very safe. They are confident that adults will help them if they have a concern. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using modern technology.

Leadership and management

All leaders and managers clearly identify priorities that will improve the school further. There are action plans for specific priorities and as a result of these there is good evidence of increased pupils' progress. Senior and middle leaders are involved in professional development that is having an impact on the development of different subjects and of staff understanding the progress pupils are making. As a result, the school has a good capacity to make further improvements. Staff say how much they enjoy working at the school and they share a common passion and enthusiasm to enrich the pupils' learning and well-being. They are appreciative of the support and mentoring that are available to all members of staff. The governing body has a wide range of skills that enable members to give the school good challenge, as well as support. They involve themselves in the life of the school and, as a result, have a good understanding of the priorities and how well they are being addressed.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well, including those who may need support to access all aspects fully. Planning is based on themes and pupils speak of the 'surprise' they have at the beginning of each topic as they find out what they will be learning and are able to make suggestions themselves. Teaching assistants contribute well to the curriculum by sharing their own personal skills in the teaching of subjects such as physical education and personal, social and health education. Music teaching is enhanced by visiting instrumental teachers and there is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs that further enrich pupils' experiences. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have pride in their school community and are able to influence decisions. There are strong church links and an active involvement in the local community. Pupils' awareness of the needs of others and learning to respect diversity is encouraged through curriculum experiences, links with a community in India, fundraising and the celebration of other faith festivals. There is no discrimination and equal opportunities are promoted well. The governing body regularly seeks the views of parents and carers and responds to their worries and concerns and most parents and carers recognise this. Some parents and carers feel that more information regarding homework and the opportunity for them to give feedback on how well the homework was managed would help them to give further support to their children's learning. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and parents and carers have no concerns about their children's safety.

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Clipston Endowed Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Market Harborough, LE16 9RU**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. Thank you also to those of you who returned questionnaires about your school. I enjoyed joining in your lessons and assembly, talking to you and sharing books with you.

Yours is a good school and, as a result, you make good progress in your learning. There are many good things about your school.

- You behave well, you help each other and you have a good knowledge and understanding about how to keep yourselves safe.
- You listen carefully to your teachers and work hard in your lessons.
- All the adults in the school care a lot about you and make sure that you are very safe and well supported.
- You enjoy the topics you study and how the subjects link together.
- The adults who manage and run your school work hard to make sure you have the best opportunities to achieve well.

There are two things we have asked the school to do to make it even better. These are:

- to help you do even better in English and mathematics by being more involved in deciding how well you have done and what you must do to improve your work further
- to explain how your homework follows on from the lessons you have had in school and to give your parents and carers a chance to say how well you managed your homework.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard, making sure you know how well you have done and how to make it even better and doing your homework well.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Batelen
Lead inspector

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