

Castleton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107962
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	377679
Inspection dates	6–7 February 2012
Lead inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Sanderson
Headteacher	Judith Norfolk
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kathryn Dodd

Derek Barnes

Edward Price

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 lessons involving 12 teachers and support staff. The inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed documentation, including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and a sample of pupils' work. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The inspectors analysed 98 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Most of the pupils at this slightly larger than the average-sized primary school are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school meets the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The Castleton Children's Centre, which opened in May 2008, is located in a separate building on the school site. This provision is managed by the governing body and was inspected at the same time but was not part of this inspection. A separate report for the children's centre is available on the Ofsted website. The nursery, however, which provides education for three- and four-year-old children, is located within the children's centre and was part of this inspection. The school has been accredited with several awards, including the Activemark, the Inclusion Chartermark, Investors in Pupils and it has achieved Advanced Healthy School status. It has also recently been accredited with the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard.

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	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. The exceptional way in which pupils are cared for and nurtured reflects the genuine warmth and care that radiates from everyone. The outstanding contribution of pastoral staff, together with the excellent partnerships fostered with external support agencies and parents and carers, mirrors the school’s unrelenting commitment to removing any barriers to learning.
- Achievement is good. From starting points that are well below those typical for their age, attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. This represents good progress. Recent initiatives aimed at improving achievement in writing are starting to pay dividends. Even so, the lack of engagement of a few boys and limited opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in other subjects hinders their impact.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make good use of outcomes from their assessments to plan and provide challenging tasks, to tailor their questions and to deploy effectively the high number of very skilled support staff. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, although overall children make good progress, it is uneven. In the nursery, provision is satisfactory rather than good because the activities do not always have a clear learning purpose and are not consistently well matched to children’s varying needs.
- Behaviour is typically good. Pupils, particularly those whose behaviour can be challenging, respond very well to behaviour management strategies, which are consistently well applied by staff. A calm and orderly learning environment is the result of pupils’ considerate, polite and respectful behaviour.
- By working effectively as a team, leaders and managers ensure that pupils’ skills and abilities are assessed regularly and accurately. They use this information effectively to evaluate the school’s performance and to pinpoint improvement priorities. Although collectively leaders monitor the quality of provision in most areas effectively their efforts to do so in the nursery, at present, lacks rigour.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, particularly in writing and for the boys by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills, including in other curriculum subjects
 - making sure that all the boys are fully engaged in lessons
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking.
- Improve the quality of provision in the nursery in order to accelerate children's progress to a consistently good rate by:
 - ensuring activities have a clear learning purpose and that they match closely to children's varying learning needs
 - making sure all adults question children's understanding effectively in order to identify their next steps more precisely
 - providing children with more opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills
 - improving the rigour with which leaders, managers and the governing body monitor the quality of provision.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good and attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. This view is endorsed by the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed and returned the questionnaires. In lessons, pupils behave well and enjoy their work, especially when discussing their learning together. In a Year 4 English lesson, for example, pupils worked extremely well collaboratively, reviewing an extract from 'Oliver Twist' and discussed how the characters might feel. Although most pupils are keen to learn and respond enthusiastically to teachers' questions or instructions, a few boys do not always choose to participate fully in lessons. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported in lessons because activities are tailored closely to their needs and they receive effective guidance from teachers and support staff. Warm and caring relationships between staff and children ensure that children quickly settle into nursery and feel safe. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage overall is good. Children enjoy learning and feel safe. In the Reception class, children particularly enjoy many lively and practical activities linked to a topic, such as 'traditional tales'. In the nursery, children are sometimes hampered when they sit as a whole group listening to staff for too long or when the activities they can choose for themselves do not have a clear learning purpose.

Although attainment in reading by Year 2 is below average, this represents good progress from their previous starting points. The well-established, systematic programme to teach pupils to read enables pupils to make good progress. As a result, pupils' attainment in reading in recent years has been rising. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 6 is also rising, and pupils make good progress to reach broadly average attainment. Older pupils demonstrate a real enjoyment for reading books. This, along with regular and focused small group work enabling pupils to practise their reading comprehension skills, contributes to

their good and improving achievement. Pupils' attainment in writing across the school lags behind reading, particularly for the boys.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good. Almost all parents and carers agree. Teachers' enthusiasm and positive relationships, coupled with effective management of pupils' behaviour and good use of interactive whiteboards, all make a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately. They use this information effectively to plan activities and to tailor their questions so that pupils of all abilities are challenged. Pupils have a good understanding of their learning targets and what they need to do to reach them. Even so, they are not always given enough time to respond to teachers' very detailed and thorough marking in their books. Outstanding teaching, such as that observed in Year 2 and Year 4, is characterised by fast-paced, skilful, challenging and well-targeted individualised questioning that keeps pupils continually on their toes and deepens their understanding. In a Year 2 English lesson, for example, pupils, including the boys, were fully engaged as they enthusiastically responded to the teachers' instructions to use actions to illustrate the verbs used in a story. These best practices are not yet consistently applied and as a result, occasionally a few boys opt to disengage from learning. In the nursery, teachers and support staff sometimes miss opportunities to assess children's small steps in achievement. This is because teachers' planning does not always make it clear what children of varying abilities are expected to learn from the activities on offer.

Effective teaching of linking letters with the sounds they make ensures that pupils make good progress in reading. Regular assessment is used effectively to organise pupils into small groups of similar ability and to ensure daily activities closely reflect pupils' individual needs. Staff are skilled at ensuring pupils are given on-going opportunities to hear, say, read and to write letters, sounds and words. Extra 'one-to-one' sessions delivered by a specialist teacher provides highly effective support for pupils at risk of falling behind. Teachers provide a good range of activities that enable pupils to talk about learning and work collaboratively. This, along with the effective implementation of the planned curriculum, contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils, as indicated in the returned pupils' questionnaires, agree that behaviour is typically good. Analysis of school behaviour records indicates that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. In the playground, pupils get on noticeably well together. A few boys do not always actively participate in some lessons. However, pupils say that lessons are seldom disrupted by inappropriate behaviour and, if they are, staff deal with it effectively and quickly. Pupils are clear about expectations of their good behaviour. This, along with on-going encouragement for pupils to take a pride in their efforts to try hard and reach their learning goals, contributes well to their good achievement. The very large majority of parents and carers also agree that behaviour is good. A very small minority expressed concerns that cases of bullying are not always dealt with effectively. Inspectors found arrangements to deal with inappropriate behaviour to be highly effective. Pupils say bullying rarely occurs but when it does it is dealt with very quickly. Pupils have great confidence in approaching staff with any problems or concerns and say they feel safe in school. They talk knowledgeably about how to keep safe beyond school. From a very young age, children are keenly aware of matters relating to road safety. Older pupils talk impressively about the potential dangers of using the internet. Pupils' attendance is average and is improving,

particularly for the poorest attendees. Punctuality is good. Almost half of the pupils attend the breakfast club which provides an enjoyable, healthy and supportive start to the day so that pupils are ready to learn.

Leadership and management

Making sure that pupils can achieve well in a very safe, caring and nurturing environment by removing any potential barriers to learning is the backbone of this school. The headteacher has successfully enlisted the full support of staff who readily acknowledge, 'how proud they are to be a part of a school that really cares'. She provides a very clear vision of where and how to improve achievement. An accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness stems from good procedures to track the achievement of individuals and groups of pupils. A concerted effort to promote equality of opportunities also helps to bring about improvement in achievement and is why for example, the gap between attainment in English and mathematics is starting to close. The school's capacity to continue to improve is good.

Leaders and managers regularly and rigorously monitor the quality of provision in most areas of the school. They use outcomes effectively to pinpoint necessary improvement priorities, adapt the curriculum, introduce new initiatives and ensure staff are well trained. Changes within the staffing and collective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage have contributed to the present lack of rigour in both reviewing children's small steps in achievements and monitoring the quality of provision in the nursery. Members of the governing body offer effective support. By visiting the school regularly, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and of the few remaining weaknesses. Even so, they do not yet play a full part in monitoring the quality of provision, especially in the nursery. Safeguarding procedures are good. Staff are trained effectively to protect pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and ensure all pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

The curriculum is good. It is carefully and continually reviewed so that learning is boosted when needed, such as in English. It ensures that pupils of varying abilities are continually challenged. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons and understanding of the world beyond their immediate community. This shows in pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities for pupils of all ages to practise their writing skills when they complete work as part of other curriculum subjects also remain overlooked.

In their quest to raise attainment, leaders forge outstanding partnerships with parents and carers. Questionnaires returned by a high proportion of parents and carers show that almost all would recommend the school to another parent or carer. Specialist pastoral staff successfully enlist the support of parents and carers in improving behaviour and attendance. Excellent partnerships beyond school also help to extend and enrich the curriculum in key areas, such as in art and music. Local businesses run 'Number Partners' and 'Right to Read' lunchtime clubs which enable pupils to use and apply their numeracy and literacy skills.

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.
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.



8 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castleton Primary School, Leeds – LS12 1JZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the team when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and finding out your views. You go to a good school. By Year 6, your attainment is similar to that expected for your age and you make good progress. We were particularly pleased to:

- see your good behaviour in lessons and around school
- find out you feel safe in school. We are also very impressed with how much you know about the possible dangers of using the internet
- find out that your attainment in English is improving
- see you enjoying playing mathematical games at lunchtime with representatives from a local business
- hear your wonderful, joyous and harmonious singing in assembly. It was very uplifting!

We have asked that some improvements be made. These are to make sure that:

- children in the nursery always make good progress
- your attainment in English, particularly boys' writing, improves further by making sure that you all fully participate in lessons, are given more time to look at your teachers' marking and by making sure you get more chances to practise writing skills.

You can help by making sure that you carefully read the comments made in your books by your teachers and use these to try to improve your work. You should make sure you always listen very carefully to your teachers' instructions and questions and that you always try your best in everything you do.

I wish you all the very best for a bright and successful future.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Dodd
Lead inspector

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