

Castle Camps Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110784
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	378167
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2012
Lead inspector	June Woolhouse

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	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Manners
Headteacher	Kevin Sheehan
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

June Woolhouse

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited ten lessons taught by a total of five teachers. The inspector listened to pupils reading and looked at samples of their work. Parents and carers were met informally during the inspection. Meetings were held with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. The inspector looked at school documentation including its improvement plan, teachers' planning, tracking pupils' progress, procedures for safeguarding and local authority external evaluation of the school's provision. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and noted the responses to questionnaires from 73 parents and carers, 18 staff and 61 pupils.

Information about the school

Castle Camps is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of most primary schools. The school has met the current government floor targets for academic performance and has achieved National Healthy School status. A privately run nursery operates on the school site and is inspected separately. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes from the Reception Year to Year 5. Year 6 is taught as a single year group. The school has undergone significant staff changes and temporary absences since the last inspection. A full staffing complement has been in place since January 2012.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Castle Camps provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their attainment is average. Pupils with specific learning difficulties and the most vulnerable thrive in a fully inclusive and effective nurturing environment at the heart of the school's church ethos.
- Teaching is satisfactory and pupils are engaged and interested in their learning. Teachers' planning does not take sufficient account of the wide range of ability or pupils' levels of attainment in some mixed-age classes. This slows pupils' rates of progress, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Behaviour is consistently good because that is the expectation of the school and is reinforced consistently by good adult role models. Pupils confirm that if someone is 'silly' in class teachers intervene promptly and sensitively so that learning is not interrupted. Pupils also agree that they feel very safe and are happy at school. Their parents and carers are in overwhelming agreement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The headteacher's evaluations of teaching and learning are accurate. Systematic monitoring of attainment and progress, by new and talented school leaders, including the governing body, is at an early stage because of significant changes to personnel. Weaknesses in attainment and progress, especially in reading in Key Stage 1, have been identified and appropriate plans drawn up to improve provision. The curriculum is broad and practical, engages pupils and promotes enquiry and independence.
- Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the summer term 2012, increase the rate of progress in lessons so that it is consistently good or better, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - increasing all teachers' knowledge and understanding of assessment outcomes through continuing professional development so that they know the national expectations of what pupils should know, understand and be able to do in each year group and set targets accordingly
 - establishing a common planning format for teaching reading, writing and mathematics which identifies precise learning objectives and expected learning outcomes for all groups
 - teaching all pupils the core skills of literacy and numeracy on a daily basis and implementing a coherent reading programme in Key Stage 1
 - making full use of assessment information to match learning activities, especially in the teaching of early reading skills and the sounds letters make, to pupils' different capabilities as well as their ages
 - establishing a core programme of numeracy teaching that systematically develops and reinforces knowledge of number and basic arithmetic and calculating skills.

- By the start of the summer term 2012 improve the impact of leadership and management and the rigour of monitoring and evaluating learning by:
 - ensuring that all leaders and managers know exactly the requirements of their roles and responsibilities in respect of key stage, subject and other curricular areas and are held accountable for the outcomes through regular management of their performance
 - ensuring that the school improvement plan incorporates measurable targets and precise success criteria against which the governing body can evaluate the extent to which the school is overcoming its weaknesses
 - training all staff in the skills of observing and evaluating teaching and learning so that together they can improve their teaching and accelerate pupils' progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Reception Year with fewer skills than expected for their age especially their personal, social and literacy skills. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage they achieve below the expected levels representing satisfactory progress. Provision has improved greatly in the past two years which shows in the consistent improvement in children's all-round learning, recorded annually in their profiles. They are on track, based on the work they produce in very informative individual learning journals and their responses to direct teaching, to reach the expected levels by the end of this academic year. Regular communication between

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the school and parents and carers effectively supports all-round learning as well as early reading skills. There were several enthusiastic comments from individual parents confirming this.

For the past three years attainment in Key Stage 1 has been significantly below national averages overall, and declining in reading and mathematics. This can be accounted for to a large extent by several changes of staff, the impact of falling rolls and a change in the attainment profile of pupils entering school. Compelling evidence provided by the school and confirmed during the inspection showed the negative impact on learning by staff changes and discontinuity in learning for these pupils. Attainment in writing started to improve after the last inspection because it became a school priority but a significant number of pupils still did not reach the expected national standard in reading because of inconsistent planning, teaching and assessment. Teaching and learning have improved, although not enough to eradicate this under-achievement and not all pupils' progress was sufficient in lessons observed. Those with special educational needs and the more able made less progress because activities were not carefully matched to their needs. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are reading at the expected levels now and some are on track to achieve the higher levels by the summer, a result not achieved last year. The lower attaining pupils have not yet established, well enough, the strategies that will enable them to work out new words in their reading books, which slows progress, inhibits understanding and their ability to work independently.

Pupils reach the expected levels of attainment in English and mathematics and their achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. For the past three years this group of pupils has started Key Stage 2 in line with expectations. Progress in reading is good and attainment is above national averages. The more able achieve as well as they should. The majority of lower attaining pupils also achieve two levels of progress over the key stage. Progress in the other year groups is beginning to accelerate, particularly at the beginning of the key stage, where consistently good teaching and planning are matched to the range of pupils' needs. The legacy of under-achievement in Key Stage 1 is being reduced.

Early identification and carefully tailored support for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs help them to attain broadly the same levels reached by pupils in similar circumstances nationally. The few pupils whose first language is not English and those who are eligible for free school meals are now identified through the school's newly established tracking system and recent data show they achieve as well as their peers.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory but varies in quality across the school. A proportion of good teaching was observed during the inspection and in these lessons pupils made good progress and demonstrated exemplary behaviour. Good teaching resulted from planning that was well-matched to individual needs with a recap from the previous lesson to set the scene. Pupils know what they must complete by the end of the

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lesson and are given time to assess their work. This was the case in a good numeracy lesson where the teacher's clear explanations of how to collect and display data, accompanied by good quality resources, resulted in pupils working successfully and independently in ability groups. Teaching assistants were well-deployed to support groups or individuals and progress was carefully monitored by the teacher. Pupils were challenged to consider the quality of what they were producing and high expectations of both presentation and their conduct contributed to successful outcomes. In a lively phonics lesson for younger pupils, the teacher's skilful integration of all literacy skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening, contributed to successful learning and enjoyment. Pupils learned the letters for the day and also applied this phonic knowledge to write their sentences.

At present there is variation in the quality of teachers' planning. The range of ability is not sufficiently well catered for in mixed-age classes resulting in under-achievement, particularly in Key Stage 1. The programmes of study for literacy and numeracy are not consistently applied so there are too few opportunities to reinforce these basic and important skills on a daily basis. The teaching of phonics in Key Stage 1 does not follow recommended best practice as outlined in national advice. There is some lack of precision in defining exactly what learning objectives are being planned for. Pupils do not have clear statements of success to which they can refer and assess what they have learned. In addition, assessments are not as accurate as they need to be to inform what teachers should plan next. The accuracy of assessments has improved this year through regular discussion and moderation of judgements but is not fully embedded in the practice of less experienced teachers.

Teachers use interactive whiteboards and computer software effectively to enliven lessons and present good quality information, for example through graphs and text. Learning is deliberately practical and first-hand which increases its relevance and provides opportunities to apply literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, ICT. Older pupils make more progress in this aspect because their skills are better established than those of the younger pupils.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning were seen in the vast majority of lessons. Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to do well. The emphasis on care and consideration for others is reflected in the good collaboration that takes place in group learning. Older pupils look out for younger ones and this contributes well to a harmonious family atmosphere, fundamental to the school's ethos. 'There is no bullying in this school' asserted the school council and this was confirmed later by less confident pupils. A few pupils think that behaviour in lessons could be even better and this is justified when teaching is satisfactory rather than good. All parents and carers who expressed a view agree that the standard of behaviour is good.

Pupils feel very safe at school and all necessary policies and procedures are in place to ensure this continues. Parents and carers also agree that this accurately reflects their children's feelings including the very few occasions when unacceptable

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behaviour verges on bullying. There is a clear behaviour policy with progressive sanctions that older pupils can explain. There have been no exclusions for at least three years. Pupils' good behaviour is reflected in improved attendance and punctuality. Attendance is above average and there are no persistent absentees.

Leadership and management

Inspection grades are lower than in the last report but the headteacher and governing body are fully aware of the reasons for this decline. They have successfully intercepted this problem through a concerted effort to recruit permanent teachers to all classes as quickly as possible. A new senior leadership team was installed in January, 2012, and the headteacher has finally been able to delegate key stage and subject responsibilities to others. New governors have quickly appraised themselves of the school's weaknesses. Their training in data management means they understand how to monitor and evaluate attainment and progress with confidence. The school development plan is comprehensive in its aims but imprecise as a tool to evaluate pupil progress and the quality of provision. A new, comprehensive tracking system provides information on pupils' termly attainment and progress and informs the school of areas for improvement. It ensures that individuals are now identified if they begin to fall behind and assures equality of opportunity for all learners. Staff have benefitted from further professional development and are becoming more informed about pupils' expected attainment and progress and their responsibilities to plan accordingly. There is a shared vision amongst all staff and the governing body to improve the quality of learning and together the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is broad and delivered well through themes, for example, The Rain Forest. The quality of display is testament to the breadth of learning through all National Curriculum subjects, especially in art and design, investigations, environmental studies and information and communication technology, ICT. The school has achieved the National Healthy Schools status. Visits locally and further afield, visitors into school and extra-curricular clubs enhance pupils' learning and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's Values Education programme is particularly successful in promoting tolerance and understanding of other people's views, culture and beliefs. Procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.

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.



13 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castle Camps Church of England (Controlled) Primary School, Castle Camps, CB21 4TH

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and helping me with the inspection. You explained really clearly what happens in lessons and how the school helps you to behave so well. I was impressed with the way you cooperated with each other in class and discussed how to improve your work. I enjoyed your Golden Book assembly and especially your really tuneful singing. Thank you also for completing the questionnaires because that gave me a chance to consider what most of you thought about important aspects of school. It helped me when I was writing the report, especially the part about your behaviour and feeling safe.

Castle Camps is a satisfactory school at present and the inspection report will help everyone to see what they must do to improve so that it becomes a good school and eventually one that is outstanding. These are some of the things that the school does well at present.

- Children get off to a good start in the Reception Year and enjoy their learning.
- You feel safe and secure in school because everyone looks after you very well, and encourages you to take care and be responsible for each other.
- You work well together in lessons and listen to each other as you complete your work.
- Your attendance at school has improved and very few pupils are absent now.
- You enjoy after-school activities and the visits you go on as part of your topics.

Some things now need to be improved and I hope you will do your part to make sure this happens.

- I have asked the headteacher to make sure teachers plan work that is just right, not too hard and not too easy, for everyone in your classes.
- I have asked the headteacher and your teachers to make plans that will increase the amount of progress you make each term and each year.
- Finally the headteacher will make sure all the teachers learn more about how to assess how well you are learning so they can plan what to teach you next and give you lots to interest and challenge you.

I hope the rest of the year is successful and you work hard to learn as much as you can at Castle Camps. This is an important part of your preparation before you go to your next school.

Yours sincerely

June Woolhouse
Lead inspector

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