

Castle Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115569
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	357781
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Mo Roberts

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lloyd Warren
Headteacher	Su Broadhurst
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors and one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. They observed 11 teachers and 10 half-hour lessons as well as other partial lessons relating to the creative curriculum. Inspectors observed the school's general work, and looked at samples of pupils' writing as well as a range of school policies, including the school's development plan. They reviewed 68 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality and development of pupils' writing.
- The impact of the community cohesion policy on pupils' understanding of other cultures and the contribution pupils make to their community.
- The quality and outcomes of the Early Years Foundation Stage since the introduction of the new outdoor area.
- The work done to raise attendance levels.

Information about the school

In this slightly below-average-size school, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities. The main needs are moderate learning difficulties or behavioural and emotional issues. There is an above-average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and a small but increasing number of pupils from various ethnic groups. Pupil mobility is above average. The school has some pupils from the travelling community. There is a school-run breakfast club.

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 is a good school where every pupil is known and valued as a unique individual. Pupils' talents flourish because the well-ordered school community encourages pupils to consider their rights and to live up to their responsibilities. Their behaviour is good. They take an active part in the local community and were, for example, justifiably proud of the Fair Trade cafe that was run last year. Nevertheless, some older pupils display a somewhat limited knowledge of the various cultures of people living in Britain today.

The headteacher and the senior leadership team lead the school exceptionally well and are careful to weigh up the merits of any potential changes. Consequently, they have raised standards to above the national average in both English and mathematics. They have a clear focus on those pupils who need extra assistance, of whatever type, to reach their potential. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress thanks to the carefully tailored support they receive. Teaching is good, with teachers skilfully adapting the curriculum to make it exciting for their pupils. Assessment in the school is much improved and the detailed tracking of pupils' progress has underpinned a successful drive to raise standards even further in pupils' writing. Pupils' individual progress books are a delight to read. Children make a good start on their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and benefit enormously from the new outdoor provision which encourages them to be active learners.

Recently, the governing body has been through a substantial changeover period. Despite this it has maintained its role satisfactorily and is now poised for further training and development. This is to further develop its duty to help and challenge the school to become even better. One area for attention remains pupils' attendance levels; they are improved but remain stubbornly average rather than better. Overall, the school lives up to its inspirational motto and offers pupils the highest levels of care, guidance and support in everything they do. The rise in standards in Key Stage 2, the accurate school self-assessment and the drive of all staff demonstrate a good capacity for continued improvement. Parents and carers are rightly very pleased with the school and it is well summed up by one who said, 'The school is a wonderfully caring and nurturing community.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop pupils' experience and knowledge of the variety of cultures in modern Britain as well as the wider world.
- Train governors to ensure they can effectively help challenge and support the school in its quest to be outstanding.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Outcomes are good for all pupils and standards were significantly above the national average in reading and mathematics in 2010. The school analyses the pupil tracking data and acts swiftly to support any individual or group who appear to be underachieving. Those eligible for free school meals and those who travel for part of the year generally make the same good progress as their peers. This is also the case for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Younger pupils learn to listen well and to think about their actions in relation to others. Older pupils are encouraged to use sophisticated techniques to understand their own personality traits and how this affects their ability to work successfully in teams and groups. This gives them unusually good insight into what they need to be aware of when negotiating and making decisions. The pupils form a racially harmonious community but just occasionally a few, inadvertently, make stereotypical comments about other ethnic groups. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities towards the environment. They enjoy their education and know how to keep healthy and safe. School clubs, including sports, are popular and even younger pupils have 'had a go' at a variety of more unusual activities such as street dance. Older ones enjoy being buddies to the youngest and carry out monitoring and general duties that help the school run smoothly. At the moment the school community is very concerned about the possible closure of the local library and is working on the best ways to register their protest. Pupils' good skills in mathematics and reading as well as their experience of a variety of enterprise projects set them up very well for success in the next stage of education and life. Pupils are confident users of information and communication technology.

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 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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships between adults and pupils encourage pupils to learn well. Teaching and learning are almost entirely good right across the school. This includes curriculum areas such as physical education and music. In lessons pupils listen well and are keen to answer carefully graded and challenging questions. Just occasionally, younger ones are expected to sit for too long and then when asked to work independently or in groups tend to lose focus. Most lessons, however, are exciting, fast paced and highly engaging, such as a Year 6 lesson seen on how to improve formal complaint writing. The good use of humour and demonstration encouraged pupils to really delve into what was and was not effective in this type of writing. Assessment is well used right across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as other pupils in their classes. They have good support, often from the skilled teaching assistants for both their physical and emotional needs. Teachers ensure careful thought is given to the methods and type of extra support that helps most, and links with parents and carers are well maintained.

The school develops pupils' creativity and imagination effectively, such as the project using an artist's work as a basis for work on food and nutrition in Year 1. Enrichment opportunities through visits and visitors are appreciated and stimulate the pupils' ideas. Pupils particularly enjoyed their visit to the Cotswold Wildlife Park and other events that involve their parents and carers coming into their classes.

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

Exceptional care and attention support the welfare and well-being of all pupils. This results in good personal development, despite the difficult personal circumstances some pupils face. Pupils whose contexts might make them vulnerable have additional support from a mentor and links with the children's centre personnel are also very supportive. The school draws on a range of external agencies to provide well-targeted assistance. Children's safety is a very high priority. Child protection arrangements and safeguarding are good. Health and safety requirements are met, including in the breakfast club, which is a thriving and popular resource. After-school provision is available through trusted childminders with whom the school has worked over a number of years.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The able and dynamic headteacher has created a good consensus on the priorities for the school. This is clear in the recent work done on developing the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as on the overall pupil assessment and tracking procedures. Regular pupil-tracking meetings are used effectively to monitor pupil progress and plan, if needed, personalised responses, ensuring equal opportunities are well maintained and that there is no discrimination. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in what is achieved and there are good systems to reward them when they succeed, including for good attendance. The accommodation is accessible for those with disabilities. Safeguarding procedures are effective. The coordinator of English has helped staff to take good action to further improve standards in writing. Mathematics leaders are also to be commended as pupils exceeded the target for the subject in 2010. Governors support the school appropriately and have established a community cohesion policy which is working well in the local area, but they and the head are aware there is more to be done on the national and international dimension of this policy. Two new governors have very recently filled the last vacancies on the board. The headteacher and her leadership team are very successfully encouraging middle managers to develop their leadership skills and staff development is well prioritised to meet the school's identified needs. Aspirations are high and successfully drive school improvement.

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 leadership and management

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Both the rich provision, inside and outdoors, and the good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure children achieve well from their starting points. They settle quickly in the mornings and know the routines well. The excellent quality resources help children to make their own choices and to settle at one of the interesting tasks available. Concentration levels are good, including in their physical education lessons in the hall and in musical activities. The carefully planned outside activities stimulate and encourage thought as well as robust physical activity; staff successfully reinforced early counting outdoors with the use of a throwing game with bean bags and hoops. Children jumped with glee as they added up their scores! Assessments are effective, with just enough detail to show how each child's learning is developing in all six areas of learning. Teachers plan carefully for the next steps in learning for the group as a whole and for individuals, some of whom start with limited skills. The planning provides a good range of experiences for the widely different levels of maturity and ability in the class. A very good lesson on letters and sounds helped children to train their ears to listen carefully to the sounds in 'trip trap' as the Billy Goats crossed the play scene. Children relished participation holding stick puppets and joining in with the story. Teaching assistants help in recording assessments and are good at supporting learning and the personal welfare of any child with particular needs. Integration is exceptionally good. Parents and carers are encouraged to share news of successes children have at home and a good partnership is evident between staff and parents and carers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and the staff quickly and successfully fill any gaps in individual children's learning so the vast majority reach the age-related expectations by the end of the Reception Year. The school is considering further enhancing links with parents and carers through home visits and reviewing its practice through the introduction of a quality assurance programme.

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:	2
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

Although the number of questionnaires returned was slightly below average, the vast majority were positive about the school. A few parents and carers were concerned that the school was not effective in dealing with unacceptable behaviour and a similar number felt the school did not take sufficient account of parental suggestions. The inspectors did not find evidence to support either of these concerns. Several parents and carers emphasised the positive emotional experience of their children at the school. They gave the following praise for teachers for their approach to children and their work: 'the staff are caring, motivated and enthusiastic' and 'Teachers are always kind, caring and very professional.' Parents' and carers' comments concur with the inspection team's key findings, one writing for example that, 'Children are taught and encouraged to learn no matter what their abilities or limitations.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castle Hill 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	60	27	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	59	28	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	46	33	49	3	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	53	30	44	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	60	26	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	49	35	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	49	34	50	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)	18	26	42	62	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	40	41	60	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	41	35	51	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	31	42	62	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	41	38	56	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	62	25	37	1	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.

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.



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castle Hill Primary School, Brockworth GL3 4NU

I am writing to say how much I enjoyed visiting your school and seeing all the exciting things you are learning. Thank you to those of you who came to talk to me and the other inspector. We could see what a lot you have been learning and were glad to hear how safe you feel in school. We think your writing is definitely getting better. Please remember to learn your spellings. We thought last year's Year 6 did very well in their tests; especially in mathematics and reading.

We agree with you that you go to a good school that cares for you all exceptionally well. We are pleased that you all try hard and behave well. Your headteacher and all the teachers do a good job so you have plenty to do that is exciting and interesting. We thought the Reception class teachers and their assistants get the youngest children off to a good start in their learning.

I have asked your teachers and governors to do two things to help make your school even better. First, I said, 'Please make sure all the new governors get training so they can help the school get even better.' Second, I asked them to help you learn more about all the different people that live in Britain today. Please go on learning about peoples' rights and responsibilities in the wider world. I think you have made a good start with some of your projects on other countries, and the link you are waiting to make with the school in Rochdale will also help you. You can help your teachers by trying hard to be even better at coming to school unless you are feeling poorly. At the moment you just reach the national average for attendance. I do hope you will soon beat it! Best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

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