

Clarice Cliff Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124008
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	359562
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Denise Shields

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	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Stephen Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Gill Latos
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons or part lessons and these included the observation of 17 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including pupils' past and present work, assessment and tracking information, monitoring and evaluation records, and additional evidence of the support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Inspectors also looked at whether the school meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. A representative sample of questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and the 180 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- Whether pupils' attainment is high enough in mathematics.
- The extent to which more-able pupils are challenged in English and mathematics.
- Whether the new senior leadership and management arrangements are effective and enable the school to secure improvement.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average sized primary school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. A below average proportion of the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages and about half of these speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. An above average proportion of pupils are assessed as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy School status, Communication Friendly status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold and Activemark.

Since September 2010, the headteacher has been seconded to work part of each week with the local authority. During her absence, the deputy headteacher undertakes the role of acting headteacher.

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. The school's excellent partnerships with an extensive range of organisations have a significant impact on pupils' social and emotional well-being and their all-round education, and help to broaden their horizons and lift their aspirations. As a result, pupils' confidence, self-esteem and life-skills improve. Outstanding care, guidance and support are at the heart of everything the school does. Those pupils whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent help and encouragement, as do their families. Consequently, from the Nursery onwards all pupils feel safe, are happy and ready to learn. Pupils are proud of their school and respond well to the secure and friendly relationships that exist. A typical view reported by the overwhelming majority of pupils is, 'Adults care about us, they always help and cheer you up if you are sad.' Pupils' awareness of their school community and immediate locality is developed well; however, they have few opportunities to gain an awareness of wider national and global communities. As a result, their understanding of cultural diversity within society is underdeveloped. Attendance is average. The school works successfully to continually improve attendance and this robust focus has brought about less absenteeism.

Pupils' achievement is good. The rich curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning. The extensive range of activities beyond lessons is greatly enjoyed by pupils. Teaching is good. A number of outstanding lessons were observed during the inspection. Consequently, pupils make good progress during their time at Clarice Cliff. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is average in English and mathematics. However, fewer pupils than average attain higher levels in these subjects because tasks do not always challenge the more-able pupils enough.

At all levels, leaders and managers are effective. Senior leaders have very successfully embraced their revised roles and responsibilities. Consequently, when the headteacher undertakes her role with the local authority, progress to secure school improvement does not slow. Self-evaluation is thorough and carefully linked to future development planning. Priorities for improvement are clearly focused and rigorously pursued. This has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and personal development. Pupils' progress is tracked rigorously and so there is a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing. This is a key factor that enables leaders to identify and quickly tackle any potential underachievement. Areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. As a result, the school demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the achievement of the more-able pupils in English and mathematics by ensuring that teachers plan tasks that provide them with a greater depth of challenge.
- Improve pupils' understanding of cultural diversity within society by ensuring that they have more opportunities to engage with groups from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, both nationally and globally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils say that they enjoy learning and that their lessons are fun. Most are well motivated and show good levels of concentration. The large majority of pupils work enthusiastically with a partner or in groups and this is helping them to become confident learners. Behaviour is good and, when teaching is inspiring, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils comment that they learn a lot in lessons and they are not afraid to ask for help if they need it. Almost all pupils, even the very youngest, are keen to help and support each other. This has a positive impact on their achievement and enjoyment of learning.

Children enter Nursery typically with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Pupils' learning and progress are good because of the good teaching they receive. For the most part, in English and mathematics the more-able pupils are given tasks that are more difficult than their peers. However, these do not always have sufficient depth and challenge to stretch them and enable pupils to attain the higher level. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the sensitive guidance they receive from the teaching assistants. Taking account of children's starting points on entry to the Nursery class, and the range of pupils' differing needs and abilities, their achievement is good.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development has a positive influence on their behaviour and the good relationships they form with each other and adults. However, they do not have a strong enough awareness of cultural diversity in British society and the world beyond. Pupils make a good contribution to the local and school community. They willingly take on a good range of responsibilities, for example as play leaders. Pupils state confidently that their views are listened to and acted upon and that they are able to contribute to the school's improvement. For example, pupils' views are sought and acted upon when the school considers curriculum issues. The vast majority of pupils have a good knowledge of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles. The school successfully equips pupils with good life-skills, increases their self-confidence and develops their enjoyment of learning. These strong personal qualities, together with their average basic skills, prepare them well for their next stage of learning.

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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	3
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	2
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	3
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?

Almost all lessons are lively and adults use praise well to build pupils' confidence and esteem. In the very best lessons, teachers capture pupils' attention through the use of very well chosen resources, practical tasks and imaginative drama and role-play activities. Pupils comment that these help them to learn more rapidly. Often, a good range of strategies is used to fully engage pupils. For instance, pupils talk in pairs, work in small groups or have quick-fire question and answer activities to question each other: this successfully promotes speaking and listening. For the most part, the interactive whiteboard is used effectively to involve pupils and enhance their learning. Sometimes teachers talk for too long and the pace of the lesson is rather pedestrian and so pupils' enjoyment of learning slips. In the main, teachers' planning makes effective use of good quality assessment information to ensure that the needs and abilities of all groups of pupils are met. Sometimes, however, work for the more-able pupils in English and mathematics is not sufficiently demanding. Pupils comment that marking and their learning targets help them to understand how well they are doing and how to improve their work.

The curriculum is carefully adjusted to meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Some pupils make huge leaps in their learning due to the good range of well-targeted 'catch-up' and support programmes; for example, those to improve pupils'

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engagement and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils have good opportunities to practise their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Those to boost their mathematical skills are increasing. Well-planned and carefully tailored provision is made for the personal, social, emotional and health education of pupils. Pupils greatly enjoy the exceptionally wide range of activities beyond lessons.

Exceptionally high levels of care, guidance and support are provided throughout the school. Special emphasis is placed on knowing all pupils individually. There is excellent help for individuals, including for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has led to impressive improvements in their attendance, learning, behaviour and self-esteem. The school works exceptionally hard to encourage parents and carers to ensure their children attend school regularly. This relentless focus has brought about steady improvement. Arrangements are good to help pupils move from year group to year group and then onto secondary school.

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 capable deputy headteacher carries out her role as acting headteacher effectively. She is supported well by able senior and middle leaders and managers.

Good communication with the headteacher ensures she maintains a clear oversight of the school. As a result, the focus on moving the school forward does not diminish when the headteacher is away on secondment. Systems to monitor and evaluate the school's work and to track pupils' progress are detailed and robust. Information is shared widely and so everyone has a clear picture of the school's performance and what needs to be done to secure improvement. When concerns are highlighted, effective action is taken to address them. For instance, the school recognised that attainment in mathematics was not as strong as that in reading and writing. Initiatives introduced to deal with this have been successful, including the introduction of different methods to teach the subject and revisions to the curriculum. In all classes attainment has risen and achievement has improved.

The knowledgeable and effective governing body holds the school to account. They are fully involved in shaping the future direction of the school and monitor the quality of provision well. The school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety, and child protection: any concerns are swiftly acted upon and very well-targeted support and guidance put in place for individuals. A particular strength is the quality and range of the regular risk assessments that are carried out.

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Good arrangements promote equal opportunity and help the school to tackle any discrimination. A notable strength is the inclusion of pupils who have experienced difficulties at other schools. They often succeed at Clarice Cliff when they have failed to thrive elsewhere. The school is well aware of the need to increase the achievement of the more-able pupils. The promotion of community cohesion within the immediate local area is strong; the school successfully bridges the two communities which it serves. However, pupils have limited opportunity to develop an understanding of the wider national and global communities. Excellent partnerships, particularly with external agencies and other schools, help to raise the quality of pupils' learning and support their personal and social well-being extremely well.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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

Children are warmly welcomed into the vibrant learning areas. Good links with parents and carers ensure children settle quickly into school routines. Children are safe and cared for exceptionally well. As a result of consistently good teaching and learning, children make good progress. In all classes, adults take every opportunity to engage children in conversation and this develops their spoken and imaginative language well. Throughout the phase, high priority is given to developing children's personal and social skills. As a result, children have trusting relationships with adults, behave well, play happily together and enjoy learning. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children meet the expected levels for their age in personal, social, communication, language and literacy skills. This lays a secure foundation for their future learning. In all other areas of learning, children are slightly below the expectations for their age. Indoors and outside, planned activities provide a good balance between those that children can choose for themselves and those led by an adult. However, sometimes when children initiate their own learning, adults do not seize the opportunity to take learning forward. On these occasions,

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children's progress is slower. Regular assessments of children's achievements are carefully recorded and used well to plan the next steps in their learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. All adults work together enthusiastically and effectively as a team. Leaders have an accurate view of what to do next and this informs clear plans to develop the phase further.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
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

Inspectors received a slightly above-average response to the inspection questionnaire. Most of the parents and carers indicate a positive view about all aspects of the school's work. Inspection findings support these positive views. A few parents and carers consider that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour nor take their suggestions and concerns fully into account. Through their extensive review of the school's records, observations, and discussions with pupils and staff, the inspectors found the school has effective procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and efficient systems for seeking and acting upon parents' and carers' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clarice Cliff 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 180 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 460 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	107	59	67	37	2	1	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	110	61	66	37	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	87	48	84	47	7	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	47	79	44	11	6	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	87	48	80	44	7	4	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	79	44	81	45	11	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	44	88	49	6	3	3	2
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)	70	39	90	50	3	2	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	74	41	90	50	4	2	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	38	88	49	10	6	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	34	90	50	13	7	6	3
The school is led and managed effectively	75	42	85	47	6	3	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	49	74	41	2	1	6	3

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.



4 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clarice Cliff Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 3DP

Thank you for helping with the inspection of your school. You were all very friendly and helpful. Clarice Cliff is a good school and some aspects are outstanding. These are some of the things we found out.

- You told us that adults take excellent care of you and help you learn about healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. We agree.
- You all behave well, look after each other and try hard in your lessons.
- You told us you have lots of exciting activities after lessons, interesting visits and visitors, and these help you learn many new things. We agree.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You make good progress and by the time you leave school at the end of Year 6 you reach the same standards in English and maths that most children your age do. Nearly all of you told us your lessons are fun and you enjoy learning. We could see that. Some of you told us that your work is not always hard enough. We have asked your school to ensure that more difficult work is given to those of you who learn more quickly.
- You told us a little about different people's cultures and traditions. We have asked your school to find ways to help you learn much more about the different ways people live, and their different beliefs, in other parts of the United Kingdom and the wider world.
- The headteacher and all other staff work closely with the governing body to carefully plan what needs to be improved.

Thank you again for helping with the inspection. Please keep trying your best at all times.

Yours sincerely

Denise Shields

Lead inspector

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