

Castleford Half Acres Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108238
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	356328
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Andrew Clark

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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Judy Box
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Briggs
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2008
School address	Temple Street Castleford West Yorkshire WF10 5RE
Telephone number	01977 723010
Fax number	01977 723008
Email address	headteacher@halfacres.wakefield.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed eight teachers. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan and pupils' progress and attainment data. The inspection team analysed 75 completed questionnaires from parents and carers as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The level of skills of the children as they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The progress made by the more able pupils in mathematics.
- The rigour of the senior leadership team in driving improvement.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The school has achieved Healthy School's Status, Artsmark Silver and Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The school is led by an interim headteacher who was appointed to the school after the last inspection.

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. Parents, carers and pupils are proud of their school and appreciative of the work of all staff. 'Everyone works hard to ensure the environment is a fun, exciting, interesting and a safe place to learn.' typifies the views of the majority of parents and carers. The headteacher and her leadership team are ambitious for the pupils to succeed and are sharply focused on school improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The procedures to evaluate the quality of the school's work are robust overall, although occasionally the monitoring of lessons focuses too much on the quality of teaching rather than the pupils' learning. The governing body is well informed and provides challenge and support to the leadership team. Pupils' achievement, personal development and the quality of provision and leadership are good and, as a result, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Pupils of all abilities make good progress because lessons are engaging and largely matched well to individual needs. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average overall. Standards in science are above average although in mathematics they are relatively lower than those for other subjects, especially for the more able. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. They take pride in their work and present it well, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils feel safe and valued. All groups of pupils take advantage of the many opportunities for physical activities and their understanding of healthy lifestyles is good. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to school life and the wider community through the work of the school council, peer supporters and a very wide range of other responsibilities.

The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of role play, quizzes and information and communication technology (ICT) to motivate and inform. Very occasionally, however, teachers do not match work closely enough to pupils needs and the pace of the lesson is too slow. Teachers make good use of overarching themes, such as 'Black History Week', and of a wide range of visits, including several residential ones, and visitors to make work meaningful and fun. The pupils' learning is further enriched by good opportunities to participate in modern foreign languages, sporting and musical events. The pupils contribute to the planning of the curriculum through the school council and are very aware of the impact it has on their lives, 'School opens you up to adventure and teaches you to be independent.' is typical of their views.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress pupils make in mathematics, particularly the more able, by:
- – regularly setting precise targets for pupils to achieve and using marking to help pupils improve their own work in mathematics

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- – using links with other subjects to provide opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills.
- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently as good as it can be and hasten pupils' progress to higher levels by:
 - – making all lessons fast-paced and closely matched to the needs of all pupils
 - – closely monitoring and evaluating the quality of pupils' learning in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are eager to learn and enjoy their lessons because of the relevant and exciting curriculum. They are curious about the world and have well-developed investigative skills. Pupils take pride in presenting their work well. They set written work out neatly and write imaginatively. Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally well below those typically expected for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6 their attainment is average overall. The results of national tests and assessments reflect this. Pupils of all abilities make good progress overall. Achievement in writing has improved well since the last inspection through intensive programmes of work and good links with other subjects. Pupils make good use of individual and group targets to improve their own learning and to increase their knowledge in literacy. This is less well developed in numeracy. A few pupils, particularly the more able, do not achieve their full potential in mathematics. Opportunities to independently use and apply their mathematical skills through other subjects are underdeveloped. Progress is good for boys and girls over time. The school takes strong steps to break down any barriers to achievement. As a result pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is also because teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations for these pupils and encourage them to work independently.

Pupils' eagerness to be involved in all the school offers underpins their good learning. They take their many responsibilities seriously, for example, as councillors and peer supporters. They are very proud of their outstanding involvement in developing the curriculum and in many initiatives to improve the school. For example, in creating and developing the 'Fit Trail'. The pupils' work with 'Generation X' and the Over 55's club makes an excellent contribution to the life of others in the community and to their own personal development. The 'Positive People' club encourages and supports the more vulnerable pupils to play a full life in the school. Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, tolerant and thoughtful towards others, helped by thought provoking assemblies and good opportunities to explore personal and social issues.

The pupils feel safe. They trust the staff to care for them and are well informed about how to avoid unsafe situations in and out of school. Their attendance is average but rapidly improving. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and this is reflected in their involvement and success in many physical activities such as swimming, links with professional rugby and football clubs and inter-school sporting tournaments. Studies of multicultural history and of life in the local area make a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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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	1
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?

The quality of teaching and the use of assessment is good overall. Teaching is sometimes outstanding. Relationships and the management of behaviour are consistently good. The purpose of lessons is shared extremely well with pupils and they are regularly engaged in improving their own work, especially in English. Teachers make good use of ICT to inform, motivate and challenge pupils. Teachers' fast-paced questions and high expectations for pupils to work together help them think deeply about their work. Very occasionally, work is not matched closely enough to the pupils' individual learning needs to support the highest rates of progress, especially for the more able. The good use of role play encourages pupils to organise their ideas and communicate them to others. Teaching assistants provide sharply focused support to meet pupils' needs, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers make good use of marking, especially in English. This practice is less well embedded in mathematics where comments to show pupils how they can improve their work are less helpful.

The curriculum is broad and exciting. Well planned programmes of work ensure fast progress in literacy and, more recently, in numeracy. Pupils' learning skills are promoted through meaningful links between subjects. However, pupils do not often apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. A wide range of visits, visitors, and activities before and after school bring learning to life and contribute to many aspects of the pupils' personal development. The regular residential visits throughout Key Stage 2 are greatly

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valued by pupils. The music and wider opportunity programmes raise pupils' aspirations. The regular use of ICT in all subjects is well established and supports pupils' development of workplace skills. The school promotes pupils' awareness of sustainable development through its gardening club and wider use of the outdoors. Initiatives such as for healthy living, especially cookery, links with businesses and the regular home/school projects also enrich pupils' lives.

The school takes good care of all pupils. The high standards of record keeping and monitoring contribute to the safe working environment and ensure good standards of behaviour and improving attendance. The school has good systems to support the more vulnerable pupils through the work of the special needs coordinator and liaison with local authority support agencies. The school provides strong educational opportunities for parents and carers to enable them to support their children's learning.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The interim headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff, drives the school forward with a clear sense of purpose. There has been a smooth transition through a period of change, which included several new teaching staff. This is because there is a strong determination amongst all those involved in the school, which is constantly focused on well-founded, long-term goals. As a result there is a good level of consistency in all the school's work and staff morale is high.

Senior managers work closely as a team. Staff are reflective and take good advantage of professional training opportunities to develop monitoring and evaluating skills. However, some lesson observations concentrate more on the activity of the teacher rather than the learning outcomes of the pupils. This limits their effectiveness in ironing out the few inconsistencies in teaching and learning. The quality of record keeping in all aspects of the school's work is thorough and contributes well to good procedures for keeping pupils safe. Staff and governors are well trained in child protection procedures and there are clear and well understood roles and responsibilities. The governing body is supportive and well informed. In particular, it holds the school to account well through the intensive work of the Standards and Assessment Committee. The school promotes equality of opportunity and understanding of diversity successfully for pupils and staff. Community cohesion is good. The school plays a central role in its local community, especially through work with the elderly and a number of local businesses. Good links have been developed with families in different circumstances both in Britain and abroad.

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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	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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When the children start school their skills are generally well below those typical for their age. They get off to a strong start. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. By the time they start Year 1, standards are close to average and rising over time. There are good induction systems to support children and to quickly settle them in to the Nursery. Good links with parents and carers and effective relationships with the local Children's Centre and pre-school settings contribute to the children's smooth start.

Good welfare arrangements and very positive relationships ensure that children feel safe and secure. There are fun and imaginative programmes to help children make good progress in early reading and writing. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those that children can choose for themselves, which contributes well to their personal development. Children are proud of their work and eager to show what they can do. They enjoy exploring the range of stimulating learning activities. Resources are of high quality and fully accessible to children. Many opportunities are provided for children to use their early writing and numeracy skills. The use of assessment to improve children's learning is good, and parents and carers feel well informed about their child's progress. The school recognises the need to further develop the outside area and plans for this are in place. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and her team have clear roles and are constantly seeking ways to improve the provision further. They identify strengths and weaknesses well and act effectively upon them. As a result the Early Years Foundation Stage is well placed to continue to improve.

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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

Almost a third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. This is a broadly average response. The vast majority are wholly supportive of the school and its leadership and express no significant concerns. They are particularly positive about their children's enjoyment of school and their behaviour. The findings of the inspection team reflect their views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castleford Half Acres Community 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	69	22	29	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	68	23	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	61	26	35	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	64	22	29	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	46	61	27	36	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	57	28	37	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	49	36	48	0	0	1	1
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)	38	51	29	39	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	56	30	40	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	49	34	45	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	44	35	47	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	51	34	45	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	67	23	31	2	3	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



8 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Castleford Half Acres Community Primary School, Castleford
WF10 5RE**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed talking to you. These are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You attend a good school.
- You feel safe and appreciate the good care that all adults show to you.
- You behave well and are polite and friendly.
- You told us that you enjoy the clubs you take part in and know how to live healthily and take part in many sporting events.
- You make an excellent contribution to the way that the school is run through taking on responsibilities, such as school councillors and peer supporters.
- You are also proud of the support you have given to children in other countries through your fund-raising and assemblies.
- You make good progress and reach average standards.
- A few of you could make even better progress in mathematics.
- Teachers make learning fun and most of your lessons are good.

To help your school become even better, I have asked your headteacher and the governing body to:

- help you improve your work in mathematics
- make all lessons as good as they can be.

You can help by always trying your best and continuing to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Clark

Lead inspector

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