

Carr Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108321
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	356340
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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	331
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Martin Gannon
Headteacher	Mr Callum Kidd
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons and observed 13 class teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, analysed 129 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at development plans, pupils' progress and attainment data, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, school policies and procedures, scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the School Improvement Partner. The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following.

The quality of teaching and learning and its effectiveness in accelerating pupils' progress and raising achievement, particularly for groups of pupils in Key Stage 2.

-The extent to which leadership and management at all levels are demonstrating the capacity to bring about and sustain a consistent pattern of improvement.

Information about the school

Carr Hill is a larger than average community primary school serving the surrounding estates. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a few who speak English as an additional language. Close to two thirds of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A much higher than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. The school has gained the Artsmark Gold award and Healthy Schools status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding school in which pupils are exceptionally well cared for as they thrive in the happy, nurturing, family atmosphere. Their good progress and enjoyment of learning are the result of skilled, enthusiastic and often inspiring teaching. At the centre of the school's continuous improvement since the last inspection is the drive and ambition of the headteacher, astutely supported by the governing body. All staff share senior leaders' aspirations. Parents are totally supportive and the comments, 'We chose this school because we liked the leadership and management, its inclusive ethos and the focus on the whole child', and, 'My child is maturing into a well-rounded individual', sum up their views.

Most children start school with skills well below those expected for their age, frequently with weaknesses in their speech, language and number skills. Typically, attainment by the end of Year 6 is average. Overall, this represents good progress, although occasionally the rate of progress can vary a little, especially in mathematics and science when pupils do not always apply their skills as effectively as they might. Excellent teaching challenges pupils' thinking and exploits the many memorable learning experiences. Progress is not outstanding because not all opportunities are taken to exploit writing skills in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because support and intervention are precisely targeted and effective. The total commitment to ensuring all pupils progress equally well, including the potentially vulnerable and those from challenging circumstances, is evident in all activities. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are taught to show consideration and respect for each other and adults from the moment they start school. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and remain healthy and fit. Their behaviour and relationships are exemplary. As one older pupil remarked, 'All the people are nice in this school.' Pupils' improving attendance enables them to get the most out of what the school offers.

Senior leaders have a realistic view of school strengths and areas for continued improvement. Decisive action taken to strengthen senior and subject leadership is having a positive impact on the quality of learning. Robust systems to check pupils' progress and gaps in their learning inform planning really well. Excellent collaboration with partners greatly enhances provision and the highly effective engagement of parents and carers adds to the strong sense of belonging. As a result, there is a good and continually strengthening capacity to sustain the excellent outcomes for pupils. Consequently, the school offers excellent value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the rate and consistency of pupils' progress to enhance achievement and boost attainment in Years 1 to 6 by:

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- ensuring all opportunities are fully exploited to build on the different skills of writing
- making certain all activities allow pupils to apply their skills to solve problems, particularly in mathematics and science.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy the many interesting first-hand learning experiences that enable them to become confident learners. As a result, all pupils progress equally well. Inspection evidence shows that pupils needing extra help and support or extra challenge are quickly identified and well-matched support and intervention enable them to achieve well. By the end of Year 6, pupils typically reach average attainment after making good progress through the school. Positive action to 'iron out' inconsistencies, for example enhancing the writing skills for all groups of pupils, is adding to the rate of pupils' progress. Pupils' attainment is on course to rise further with an increasing number of pupils on track to achieve even higher levels as a result of greater challenge in lessons. Although the excellent teaching extends thinking skills, opportunities are occasionally missed to augment pupils' problem-solving skills for all ability groups in mathematics and science.

The outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the pupils' exemplary behaviour, the respect they show each other and adults and their enjoyment of school life. Learning and play, in the classroom or at social times, are harmonious and tension free. Pupils have an excellent grasp of the benefits of keeping active and eating sensibly. This is reflected in achieving the Healthy School's status. They are proud of their contribution to school decision making helping to secure further improvements and the support for charities such as 'Help for Heroes'. Although their attendance is average, it is improving as a result of the thoroughness with which persistent absence is pursued. All pupils are well prepared for the future because of their extremely well-developed life skills and improving basic skills.

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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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

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?

Outstanding teaching and often imaginative approaches inspire pupils to achieve well. Expectations of what is expected in the classroom are high and staff use resources and new technology expertly to bring learning to life. In a very few lessons, assessment information could be used to even greater effect to add to the demands and trigger extra higher level thinking. As a result, pupils' skills are continually improving because staff give them the confidence and self-belief to practise their skills, think for themselves and explain their ideas. Pupils are given explicit guidance as to how to improve the quality of their work.

Excellent use is made of themes to link subjects together to provide more interesting activities, for example sorting out the wingspan data of birds before constructing a graph. The exceptionally strong focus on personal development is reflected in the wide and varied enrichment programme, such as ordering an Indian meal in a restaurant or meeting their local Member of Parliament at the Palace of Westminster. Extremely well-thought-out approaches to transition from Reception to Year 1 enable pupils' learning to be seamless.

Outstanding care, guidance and support make certain that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds can achieve success. Excellent links with an extensive range of support agencies ensure that pupils can get the best out of what the school offers. For example, the close working with the adjacent Children's Centre enables families to access unbroken support from early years. Inspection evidence reveals remarkable examples where

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personalised approaches allow individual pupils to constantly develop and improve their skills.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly effective leadership of the headteacher has been fundamental to the school's continuous improvement. He has ensured that all staff share the responsibility of improvement which has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. The imaginative range of real-life learning experiences provided for pupils is carefully planned to capture interest and enable all to achieve well. As a result, there is now a more even pattern of progress and rising attainment despite year-on-year cohort variations. The scrutiny of the pupils' progress is meticulous and informs lesson planning well. Excellent relationships with the local community, support agencies and local authority services add to the momentum to sustain good achievement. The exceptionally positive relationships with parents and carers add to the very strong sense of family. Despite the constraints of an old building, all teaching areas are vibrant and stimulating. There are good procedures to keep pupils safe with all requirements met. Child protection practice is especially robust. A rejuvenated governing body demonstrates a good grasp of the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. They are increasingly involved holding the school to account in positive ways. Community cohesion is promoted exceptionally well to encourage respect and understanding of other beliefs and cultures through the many excellent links it has with the local community and a network of schools locally, nationally and internationally. A great deal of thought and care is taken to make certain all pupils share the same positive experiences. This reflects the school's commitment and sensitivity to equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

All children settle very quickly and happily in their often mixed-age sessions. Staff work diligently to ensure all children participate purposefully in learning activities. Their personal, welfare and learning needs are identified prior to arrival which enables all children to get a flying start and progress confidently. Children make excellent progress developing their personal skills as they become familiar with routines and share experiences with their friends. Despite the absence of direct outside access, all children are encouraged to initiate their own learning, with staff following, prompting learning and adding thought-provoking questions. Outside they are able to practise their skills, for example using a spray, roller or brush to create water patterns on boards and explore and investigate in their garden. From often low starting points, children make good progress working towards the learning goals expected of them by the time they reach Year 1.

Welfare requirements are exceeded to ensure all children are safe and secure. Observations are thorough and assessments accurate, although opportunities to exploit each child's 'learning journey' are sometimes missed. Children enjoy excellent relationships with their staff and each other because staff make their expectations clear and their guidance is positive and helpful. Parents and carers are given first-class support to help them encourage their children's learning. The ongoing improvements in provision, such as the recent classroom relocation, the planned new outdoor area, added to the highly successful partnerships with families, reflect the positive drive and aspirations of leadership and management.

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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

Over one third of parents and carers returned the questionnaire which expressed their views of the school. These views were totally supportive and extremely positive about all aspects of its work and all felt that their children are safe and happy in school. The inspection fully endorses the positive views expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Carr Hill 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 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 331 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	97	75	31	24	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	92	71	34	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	86	67	42	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	66	42	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	94	73	32	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	89	69	38	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	63	48	37	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)	76	59	48	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	85	66	41	32	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	76	59	49	38	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	56	53	41	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	91	71	35	27	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	96	74	32	25	0	0	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.



10 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carr Hill Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE9 5NB

I want to thank all of you for the extremely friendly welcome that you gave us when we inspected your school. We found the time we spent talking to you, your teachers and other adults extremely enjoyable and rewarding. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and your keenness to learn. The school provides an outstanding quality of education because you have a talented headteacher and staff, and a committed group of governors. They are all keen for the school to continue to improve. They all take exceptional care of you. As a result, you clearly feel safe and enjoy especially friendly relationships with your staff. It was very apparent you understand how to stay safe and healthy. You can be proud of your good progress and rising achievement and attainment.

It was evident from your comments that you appreciate the way your staff make your learning fun, challenging and interesting. Some excellent use is made of the many links your school has with the local community, support agencies and the local network of schools. Your parents and carers told me just how highly they value the enjoyment you get from school and the patience and hard work of your staff.

We have asked senior leaders to look at ways of speeding up the progress of pupils in Years 1 to 6, particularly with your writing and your use of skills to solve problems in mathematics and science. This will help boost their achievement and attainment.

You can play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can. Thank you for helping with this inspection. I hope your school will continue to improve.

I wish you all a very bright future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Clive Petts
Lead inspector

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