

Castleford Park Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108234
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	356327
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr William Clift, MBE
Headteacher	Mrs Kathy Levey
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
School address	Medley Street Castleford West Yorkshire WF10 4BB
Telephone number	01977 722995
Fax number	01977 603392
Email address	headteacher@park-jun.wakefield.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed 11 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body and staff, and talked with pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 77 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- How well pupils' attainment and rates of progress are improving.
- How well higher-attaining pupils achieve.
- Whether teachers use assessment information, marking and targets to provide high expectations and challenge.
- Whether apparent strengths in provision secure improved outcomes for pupils.
- Whether leaders and managers drive and secure effective improvement.

Information about the school

This school is of larger than average size when compared to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. A larger than average proportion of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy School status and Activemark.

The school has undergone significant staff changes over the past two years.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Castleford Park Junior School is a satisfactory school. Good care, guidance and support for pupils, coupled with comprehensive safeguarding procedures, ensure pupils feel safe and secure in school. Parents and carers confirm this. Pupils learn well about how to live healthily and they enjoy making a good contribution to the school and wider community. The above-average attendance levels of a very large majority of pupils reflect their own, as well as their parents' and carers', commitment to school. Parents typically comment, 'I have found the school very good. My children enjoy it.'

Pupils of all groups and abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn and progress at an equal and adequate rate. From broadly average starting points, by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is average and continuing to rise in English and mathematics. The school's inclusive approach ensures that there is appropriate individual learning support for pupils of all abilities, including higher-attaining pupils and those with particular gifts and talents. In particular, a greater proportion of higher-attaining pupils now exceed the levels expected for their age.

The governing body is a catalyst for change. It provides increasing impetus for leaders, managers and staff to focus on achieving more rapid gains in pupils' attainment and on accelerating the progress pupils make. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching result in a mix of good quality and less effective lessons. Senior leaders and the governing body know which elements need to develop and the pace of improvement is gaining momentum, although not rapidly enough. This is partly due to staff turnover but also because the leadership is not forcing a fast enough pace of change and leaders' roles do not always make best use of their individual expertise. School self-evaluation is broadly accurate and is leading to improvements in areas of previously identified weaker practice such as the quality of teachers' marking. However, self-evaluation is over-optimistic in some areas. The school demonstrates satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

A themed approach to the curriculum is developing. Currently, many of the planned activities do not sufficiently engage pupils' interest and so they are too passive in lessons. Some pupils spend too long before actively participating in their learning. They say that they 'sit and listen too much'. Staff encourage parents and carers to become increasingly involved in pupils' learning. Some initiatives such as healthy cooking are extremely popular and help families to learn more about how to cook a range of diverse and nutritious meals.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - increasing the proportion of good and better teaching
 - ensuring lessons have a good balance of speaking, listening and practical activities
 - enabling a brisk start to independent or group work in lessons so that pupils complete a greater volume of work
 - engaging pupils readily in lessons by matching activities more closely to their interests and abilities.
- Ensure leaders and managers accelerate school improvement by:
 - maximising the impact of expertise within the senior leadership team on the work of the school
 - monitoring rigorously any agreed improvement initiatives in order to measure their impact on pupils' outcomes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are calm and polite in lessons but many are too passive. This is because the activities do not always interest them enough and the strategies employed by teachers do not require pupils to speak or interact sufficiently. Pupils say that 'sometimes we get bored in lessons because we sit and listen a lot.' They are most engaged when participating in science experiments and other practical activities that add more relevance to their learning. At times, pupils take too long to start their paired, group or independent work. As a result, they do not complete as much as might reasonably be expected of them. Pupils achieve, enjoy and behave satisfactorily. Most conduct themselves well in the playground and at lunchtimes. Even so, without direct supervision, a minority of pupils, often the oldest in the school, lack the self-discipline and maturity to complete tasks with the minimum of noise and disruption to others. Pupils understand their targets well and know the levels towards which they are working. They are usually reliable about checking teachers' developmental comments in their books and responding to these.

All groups of pupils learn at a similar rate and make satisfactory progress. A larger proportion of pupils are now working at and beyond the levels expected for their ages. For instance, more pupils in Year 6 who are higher-attaining pupils are expected to reach higher levels in their work this summer. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as their peers due to the effective support programmes, skilful staff and willing volunteers who work with them.

Pupils' attendance is above average and most arrive on time. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and enjoy sporting activities, for which they have won a fair play award. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. For instance, young leaders in Year 5 are trained to coach physical education to Year 1 pupils in local infant schools. Pupils say, 'we like each other here'. There are good examples of generous peer support. For instance, they take turns to play games with pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language, showing word cards and offering praise and encouragement

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when the pupil draws the right image in response. However, their awareness of diversity in Britain is not strong.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

Teachers work hard to engage pupils in lessons but their strategies are not always successful. This is because the planned activities do not always interest and engage pupils effectively enough. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching result in satisfactory outcomes for pupils overall. In the best lessons teachers clearly explain to pupils what they will be learning and they plan a series of brisk activities that generate enthusiasm and strong responses among the pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils thoroughly enjoyed working on a theme park project, calculating expenditure, profit and loss. There is now greater challenge provided to meet the needs of higher-attaining pupils and more reach higher levels in their work. In more ordinary lessons teachers talk for too long and incorporate too few opportunities for pupils to respond or to engage in practical activities. Teachers' expectations of how much work pupils will produce during independent activities are sometimes too low. Teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers liaise well to ensure they provide appropriate support for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language.

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The developing curriculum is creating links between different subject areas. However, there is a lack of exciting activities, particularly in literacy, to fully engage pupils and add relevance to their learning. A good range of residential and day visits, coupled with visitors into school, enrich the curriculum and support the development of pupils' skills. For instance, walks into Castleford help pupils to understand more about its Roman origins. A petition instigated by pupils to retain a local historical house has generated interest from the local council offices and local press.

Pastoral care, guidance and support are strong. Pupils say, 'all the teachers are kind, even the ones you don't know very well.' For instance, very effective one-to-one work with the most vulnerable pupils ensures that they engage well in their individual learning programmes and integrate successfully into school life. Secure partnerships with local infant and secondary schools ensure that pupils quickly settle in and successfully move on to the next phase in their learning. The school promotes regular attendance and good levels of punctuality very well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has found it difficult to embed more fully and rapidly new initiatives and so firmly establish best practice due to significant staff changes and long-term absences going back many months. Stability is now improved. The relatively new senior leadership team works satisfactorily to embed ambition and drive improvement. However, some skills are not used to best effect within the current structure of the leadership team and this inhibits the pace of change. Nonetheless, the drive for improvement continues to be a key focus for the whole staff who are keen to embrace change and develop their individual practice. A greater emphasis on how well pupils learn in lessons is helping to improve the overall quality of teaching. However, the leadership does not always monitor with sufficient rigour the impact of new strategies and so their impact is variable. There is a trend of improvement in key areas which demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

The governing body is increasingly influential in all aspects of school life. In the past year there has been a growing recognition that the governing body lacked sufficient expertise to help the school to initiate change. Additional membership has reinvigorated the governing body so it now provides a good range of expertise to challenge and support the school. The governing body adopts recommended good practice with regard to safeguarding across all areas of the school's work. Health and safety, child protection and safer recruitment are well addressed by the school. Firmly-established links with support

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agencies ensure pupils' specific needs are well met. Administrators ensure that the school runs smoothly day to day. Good site supervision ensures the school is secure and well maintained. Conscientious lunchtime assistants and kitchen staff help pupils to enjoy healthy and sociable lunchtimes.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination effectively. Careful analysis of need ensures that appropriate support is provided for all individuals and groups of pupils. Senior leaders analyse the school's context and the school is a cohesive community. It welcomes diversity, although there is limited evidence of its success in promoting community cohesion beyond the immediate locality.

Parents and carers are generally appreciative of the school's work. Home-school communication is effective and embraces new technologies. The school deploys its resources satisfactorily, achieves satisfactory outcomes for pupils and provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Views of parents and carers

A slightly lower-than-average number of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. Most who did respond appreciate what the school provides for their children. They typically comment, 'there are some fantastic teaching staff' and 'teachers make my children more confident.' A small minority raised concerns about the way the school helps them to support their children's learning, the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, the effectiveness of communication between home and school, and the progress their children make. A few also expressed concern about how well the views of parents and carers are heard. Inspectors investigated these concerns through discussions with the headteacher, staff and pupils, and through observations in school. Inspectors found clear procedures to address issues relating to behaviour, and pupils

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confirmed that these procedures are followed by teachers. A range of well-established communication systems between home and school are in place. Parents' and carers' views are invited through school surveys and at parents' meetings, as well as directly to the headteacher, the governing body or through other staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castleford Park Junior 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 275 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	35	45	58	4	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	33	43	41	53	3	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	25	40	52	13	17	4	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	29	38	49	12	16	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	19	25	46	60	6	8	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	23	39	51	15	19	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	29	41	53	12	16	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)	19	25	41	53	7	9	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	25	48	62	6	8	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	26	37	48	11	14	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	25	40	52	12	16	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	21	27	36	47	10	13	6	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	30	40	52	9	12	3	4

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



19 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castleford Park Junior School, Castleford, WF10 4BB

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed listening to your views about school and were impressed with how many of you come to school regularly and on time – keep it up!

We judge that Castleford Park Juniors is a satisfactory school. Your headteacher, staff and governing body do some things well. For example, you told us that all the adults take good care of you, keep you safe and help you to live healthily and we saw this too. Those of you with particular needs receive appropriate support. You learn to be positive citizens and are successful at helping others in the community and further afield. You make satisfactory progress in your learning and attain average standards in your work.

We have asked the adults to do a number of things to help bring about further improvements in your school. In particular, we want them to raise your attainment in English and mathematics and to speed up the rates of progress you make in your learning. We also want them to check more closely how well the school is improving in all areas and the impact of any changes they make on speeding up improvement. You can help by being even more enthusiastic in lessons, getting on faster when you work independently, and trying as hard as you can to do your best work at all times. You could also let your teachers know what topics particularly interest you so that they can include these in their plans.

We send you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes

Lead inspector

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