

Clifford Bridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number103668Local AuthorityCoventryInspection number355422

Inspection dates13-14 July 2011Reporting inspectorCarol Worthington

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 220

Appropriate authority The governing body

ChairSue JeffsHeadteacherGerald UnionDate of previous school inspection13 May 2008

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by eight different teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. Discussions were held with three groups of pupils from Key Stage 2. Many other pupils were spoken to informally. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' attainment, tracking of their progress and samples of their work in books. All safeguarding documents were scrutinised. Inspectors analysed 108 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, those completed by 98 Key Stage 2 pupils and by 12 staff.

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

- Inspectors investigated whether the school's strategies to improve writing in Key Stage 1 have been effective.
- They looked at how well literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are being developed through the newly established thematic curriculum.
- Inspectors gauged the impact of the reported good outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage on attainment, progress and behaviour in Key Stage 1.
- Inspectors looked at how well school leaders promote community cohesion and prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.

Information about the school

This average-sized primary school is in an urban location. The majority of pupils are of White British origin, with an average proportion from minority ethnic groups. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is small. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is below average. Most of these pupils have moderate or specific learning difficulties. A large number of staff have been absent due to sickness in the past year, and consequently there have been frequent changes of staff in some classes.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing and governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The main reasons for this are that the school's leaders have not secured the improvements in teaching, learning and assessment that were identified as necessary at its previous inspection. The quality of teaching has deteriorated since then. It is inadequate because staff do not get clear direction on how to improve, nor the training and support to enable them to do so. Consequently pupils are making inadequate progress. Staff morale is very low; school leaders have not taken steps to embed ambition, or effectively driven improvement. There is a lack of cohesion within the school community. School self-evaluation is weak. A significant proportion of parents, carers and staff expressed a lack of confidence in the school's leadership and inspectors found that it is inadequate. Although the school's systems for vetting adults who come into contact with children are robust, there are several instances where the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements have not been meticulously carried out. A few pupils said they did not feel safe because issues they had identified had not been dealt with some months later. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are therefore inadequate. The monitoring of teaching and learning indicates inflated perceptions about the effectiveness of teaching methods, with too little account taken of their impact on learning. Tracking of pupils' progress has improved, but the data produced are not used effectively to set challenging targets, identify weaknesses and put in place effective measures to secure improvement. This tracking data presents a more positive picture of progress than was observed during the inspection.

Marking and assessment are weak, and are not used effectively to plan work to meet the needs of the range of pupil abilities present in all classes. More-able pupils are not challenged by the work they are given, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities often find work too difficult. Not enough thought is given to the size of groups necessary for their needs to be met; many are far too large. Lessons are fragmented; teachers strictly follow the allotted lesson times, even if it means moving on before pupils' learning has been checked. The curriculum is dull, with few activities to excite pupils and develop in them a love of learning. It is heavily based on English and mathematics, with far too little time devoted to science, the humanities and creative subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are not developed through the wider curriculum in ways that pupils can both see the relevance of to their own lives and enjoy. Information and communication technology is rarely used. Teachers have not had sufficient training to use the interactive whiteboards to extend learning and these are not reliably maintained.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The unvalidated 2011 Key Stage 2 national test results are broadly average and similar to those of previous few years. Boys' attainment is lower than that of girls. Overall satisfactory progress masks the slower progress made by boys. In Key Stage 1, attainment was low in writing in 2009 and 2010, and a similar picture is indicated by teachers' assessments in 2011. This shows that strategies to improve writing have not been successful. Virtually all pupils currently in Year 2 started Year 1 with writing skills that exceeded the expectations for their age. While girls have maintained these standards, boys have not. The standard of their writing is below average, indicating that they have made inadequate progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils have historically made good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and started Key Stage 1 with literacy and numeracy skills above the age-related expectations. They have left Year 6 with broadly average attainment in English and mathematics, indicating inadequate progress for some time.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered, and they continue to develop the good social skills that are established in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many, however, are dispirited by the lack of challenge and opportunity. Their behaviour was observed to be never less than satisfactory. In several lessons, pupils' compliant behaviour was a major factor in preventing disruption when it was clear that they had too little work to be getting on with. On one occasion, when faced with really challenging work, their behaviour was excellent. Nevertheless, nearly half of the pupils who completed a questionnaire said that they do not feel that behaviour is good in their school. There are few opportunities, except for the school council, for pupils to contribute to the life of the school. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds get on very well in school, but get little opportunity to gain first-hand experience of the wide ethnic mix in the United Kingdom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that the monitoring and evaluation of all safeguarding procedures are kept up to date and carried out meticulously
 - providing ambition for success, embedding it and securing a drive for improvement which is shared by all staff
 - ensuring monitoring and evaluation of provision are effective and result in improvement in pupils' progress and particularly in their attainment in writing at Key Stage 1
 - improving school cohesion by raising the morale of staff and pupils and involving parents and carers more in their children's education
 - making links with other communities which will enable pupils to gain first-hand experience of the wider cultural mix in the United Kingdom and further afield.
- Raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers receive high quality professional training and support, especially in teaching writing at Key Stage 1
 - improving the use of marking and assessment to plan work which challenges all pupils, including the more-able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- improving opportunities for pupils to become involved in their own learning and aware of the goals they need to set to achieve challenging targets
- ensuring that teachers receive effective training on the use of their interactive whiteboards and other aspects of information and communication technology as needed.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - ensuring it meets the national requirements for all subjects
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through the wider curriculum
 - working towards the development of a curriculum which excites and motivates both girls and boys to succeed by its relevance to life and provision of memorable experiences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils enter the school with skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age. They usually make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is not maintained in Key Stage 1, however, where the standard of writing is low. Pupils in Year 2 found correcting punctuation difficult when copying out sentences which had deliberate mistakes. Some were unable to appreciate the concept of 'shape' poems, because of weak reading levels. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, but there are some differences between boys and girls. Pupils in Year 6 made extremely slow progress when writing 'story beginnings', but girls persevered and achieved better work. All pupils were expected to do the same task, irrespective of ability. In mathematics, this resulted in some boys 'switching off' as they found the single task too difficult. When pupils were presented with material that they found motivating, for example, a 'Lunar Theme Park' challenge in mathematics, they responded well, and their numeracy skills developed well as they calculated the profit and loss in the cost of the park attractions. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress in that lesson, because teaching assistants explained the task well and encouraged them to discuss their strategies before attempting it. This is not always the case, however, because groups for these pupils are often too large for their individual needs to be met. Consequently, they make inadequate progress. This is in contrast to recent years, when pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have made at least satisfactory progress from their starting points, and their attainment has exceeded that of similar pupils nationally.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, but limited by too few opportunities to contribute to their own learning and the life of the school. They are keen to come to school to learn and make progress. They attend regularly and punctually. Their active playtimes and knowledge of healthy diet enable them to understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, but they have a limited range of sports clubs and the minimum time for physical education. The lunchtime arrangements do not encourage older pupils to act as role models for manners and behaviour. Pupils respond very positively to the relatively few sporting, artistic and cultural opportunities, and gain satisfactory insight into beliefs and values of other cultures from the religious education curriculum. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds get on well with each other and know that they share common values.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Their personal attributes and broadly average attainment prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stages of education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning		
Taking into account:	3	
Pupils' attainment ¹		
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4	
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3	
Pupils' behaviour	3	
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3	
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to	3	
their future economic well-being		
Taking into account:	3	
Pupils' attendance 1	J	
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?

Although there are some good lessons, too much teaching is inadequate and results in inadequate learning and progress. The school's evaluation of teaching is wide of the mark because it does not take enough account of its impact on pupils' learning. A major weakness lies in the inadequate use of assessment to plan work to challenge pupils of all abilities, so frequently all are given the same task. Many pupils said they would like harder work. Teachers do not plan enough motivating tasks which encourage pupils to work both independently and with others in groups. Computers, including the interactive whiteboards, are rarely used, and never to their full potential. Marking is weak, and not used to involve pupils in their own learning.

The curriculum is rigid and the thematic element scarcely developed. Far too long is spent on fragmented literacy and numeracy sessions. The pace of moving on from one session to another is relentless, with the consequence that pupils hardly ever have time to discuss, share or evaluate their learning at the end of a lesson. Pupils' books show, and they themselves say, that they very rarely do some subjects, for example, design and technology, art, or science. The strong focus on literacy has not resulted in enough improvement in writing at Key Stage 1; basic skills are seldom developed by relevant and

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motivating opportunities in the wider curriculum. The school provides a satisfactory timetable of extra-curricular clubs, but these are not regularly well attended.

Care, guidance and support are inadequate because some aspects of safeguarding are not as rigorously monitored and evaluated as they should be. The quality of pastoral care is satisfactory, however, and provision for pupils and their families facing challenging circumstances is good. However, the school does not ensure that all pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities receive the fully targeted support they need, either in class or in withdrawal groups. Procedures to advise and guide pupils when they leave school are satisfactory, though induction for children starting Nursery is a strongly positive feature.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have not been successful in taking steps to motivate the whole staff in a shared enthusiasm and ambition for improvement. The quality of teaching and learning has deteriorated because initiatives have been introduced, but teachers have not been given sufficient guidance and training to carry them through successfully. Monitoring has not consistently been followed by evaluation of the impact of initiatives on pupils' learning and progress.

The governing body is ineffective because it has too little impact on the direction of the school. It has not challenged the school to address the weaknesses in writing in Key Stage 1, nor to produce an action plan to address the high level of dissatisfaction evident in the school's 2010 parents' questionnaire. The views of children, parents and carers on safeguarding matters are not taken into account sufficiently. The school does not have significant partnerships with other schools which enhance the curriculum, although partnerships with care agencies are good.

Pupils from a variety of ethnic heritages get on well with each other in the school. The school does not provide equality of access to the curriculum for all its pupils, since their wide range of learning needs is not sufficiently well provided for in many lessons. There are gaps between the attainment of girls and boys in Key Stages 1 and 2 in most years, and evidence from teachers' assessments and unvalidated national test results suggests differences remain in the current year. Despite evident differences, no action has been taken to rectify matters.

The school is not a cohesive community because there is so much dissatisfaction amongst staff, pupils and some of their parents and carers. The school's work makes little effective

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contribution to promoting community cohesion. For example, few opportunities are provided for the school to unite in sporting events or take part in activities in the local community. There is no evidence that the school's leaders and the governing body have fully analysed the religious, ethnic or socio-economic factors which make up its context. The school does not plan or evaluate its contribution to community cohesion either within or beyond the school, so pupils do not have sufficient first-hand experience of the wide cultural mix in the United Kingdom, nor an informed insight into global cultures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement		
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	4	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination		
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion		
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4	

Early Years Foundation Stage

Historically, children have made good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the end of Reception their attainment has been consistently above that expected for their age. This year, assessments show that children are attaining above expectations, but not as far above as in previous years. There has been considerable disruption because of the absence of the phase leader and progress has not been consistently good throughout the year. Nevertheless, staff have maintained procedures satisfactorily despite insufficient support from the school's leaders. Staff have monitored and evaluated their own work and provided a secure and welcoming environment for children to enjoy and learn.

Children develop their personal skills through a wide variety of friendship groups formed during play activities involving the two classes. They co-operate well in activities such as building a wall. However, these activities present little opportunity for children to develop their early writing and number skills in a practical situation. Literacy and numeracy sessions are as regimented as in the rest of the school, interspersed with free play. Information and communication technology was used appropriately to display images to the whole class in the Nursery, but there is little evidence of children's spontaneous use of the interactive whiteboard or other computers.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Children's behaviour is good, and they settle attentively on the carpet when required, eager to discuss their learning. Teaching is satisfactory, with some effective teacher-led activities. There is a satisfactory range of stimulating independent activities, both indoors and outdoors, including sand, water and role play, which children greatly enjoy. Creative activities, such as colouring a hidden octopus, are sometimes directed too much by adults. Boys in particular enjoyed developing their physical skills when riding tricycles and other wheeled vehicles.

The safeguarding and welfare of all children is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents and carers, who are generally pleased with their children's enjoyment and progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3	

Views of parents and carers

There was a larger than average return of questionnaires. Most parents and carers who responded believe that their children are safe in school, but are not so happy with their children's progress, or information about it. Inspectors found the school provides information about progress as regularly as most schools, but agree that some pupils' progress is too slow, particularly in Key Stage 1. A significant minority of parents and carers do not feel that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. This was also a prominent feature of pupil and staff questionnaires. Inspectors did not see any unacceptable behaviour and the school's behaviour book had very few entries. There have been no exclusions. Over a quarter of parents and carers feel that leadership and management of the school are inadequate, and several added written comments about this. Inspection evidence indicates that leadership and management are inadequate.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clifford Bridge 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 108 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements		Strongly Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	48	48	44	2	2	5	5
The school keeps my child safe	54	50	50	46	1	1	2	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	26	61	56	17	16	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	26	58	54	13	12	9	8
The teaching is good at this school	28	26	59	55	8	7	8	7
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	27	56	52	13	12	6	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	30	58	54	11	10	2	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)	36	33	57	53	4	4	4	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	22	62	57	18	17	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	18	61	56	12	11	10	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	15	65	60	12	11	9	8
The school is led and managed effectively	21	19	53	49	15	14	15	14
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	31	57	53	9	8	8	7

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

	Overall effecti	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)					
Type of school	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 o	f a pupil in their	learning,
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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: 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.

■ 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.



15 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clifford Bridge Primary School, Coventry, CV3 2PD

Thank you very much for being so friendly when my colleagues and I visited your school recently. It was very helpful for us to talk to you and see your work. We found that your school is in need of improvement because you are not making the amount of progress you should. In order to improve this quickly, we have arranged for the school to receive extra help, called 'special measures', to put things right.

The main things that must be improved are the progress you make in lessons and the standard of your writing. We have asked your teachers to make changes in the way they assess your learning, and school leaders to keep a regular check on your progress. These will be checked by inspectors who will visit your school regularly to make sure things are improving.

We were pleased to see that you come to school regularly and your behaviour is satisfactory. You learn how to keep yourselves safe and healthy, and get on well with each other. You told us you would like more interesting and challenging work to do, and we agree with you. We also think you could take on more responsibility in your school and local communities, and eventually, make new friends in schools in other parts of this country and abroad.

All the adults in your school want it to improve quickly and I am sure you do too. You can all help a great deal by always doing your best written work and working with your teachers to improve your progress. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington Lead inspector

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