

# Carterton Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 123015             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Oxfordshire        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 380569             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 12–13 October 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Keith Sadler       |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 214  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Ron Bach   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mike Curtis  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 23–24 March 2009                                     |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Burford Road<br>Carterton<br>Oxfordshire<br>OX18 3AD |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01993 842502   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01993 840964   |
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|---------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 3–11               |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 12–13 October 2011 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 380569             |

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 15 lessons led by 11 different teachers and practitioners. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff, pupils in Key Stage 2 and from 29 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

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

- Inspectors analysed pupils' progress in mathematics.
- They determined what the strengths in the quality of teaching are and how well teachers use assessments to match work to pupils' learning needs.
- Inspectors evaluated the impact of improvements in the curriculum to strengthen pupils' basic skills.
- They looked at how well teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage planned activities to meet the needs of both nursery- and reception-aged children.

## Information about the school

Carterton is an average sized primary school. Most pupils live near to the school and it draws about a third of its pupils from service families based at RAF Brize Norton. Mobility is higher than average because many pupils arrive and leave on a regular basis. Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are a few from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is about half the national average. An above-average proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have either learning or social and emotional difficulties.

The Early Years Foundation Stage currently consists of two classes. Each class has nursery-aged children for half the day and reception-aged children for the whole day. The school has gained the Sports Activemark.

**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

Carterton provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has a number of strengths. Under the guidance of the newly established senior leadership team, it is making inroads into a pattern of some underachievement. The school has been successful in accelerating pupils' progress. As a result, attainment in English is now average though it is weaker in mathematics. There is a clear trend of improving progress that is evident in most classes, particularly in Key Stage 2. In mathematics, although pupils' calculation skills are average, they do not always apply them sufficiently well in practical problem-solving and this slows their progress. In English, attainment is above average in reading. However, in writing although pupils' presentation and spelling skills are strong, their attainment is hampered by weaker use of punctuation and grammar.

The inclusive and caring environment nurtures pupils' personal and social skills well, leading them to develop a secure sense of right and wrong. Good quality care, guidance and support ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families are supported well. In addition, it has helped to boost learning, with parents and carers unanimously agreeing with the pupils that they are kept safe and enjoy school. Pupils behave well; their attitudes to school and learning are positive and attendance is above average. The partnership with parents and carers is good and the school provides a cohesive community in which pupils' understanding of life in other countries, particularly across Europe, is strong.

Most pupils make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Where teaching is good or better, such as in the classes in Years 5 and 6, progress is accelerated dramatically so that pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. However, where teaching is not so strong, such as in Years 1 and 2, progress is slower. In most classes, pupils' behaviour is managed well, there are good relationships and this aids learning. The systems to check how well pupils are doing are improving though teachers do not always use prior assessments sufficiently well to pitch activities to meet the varying learning needs present in each class. Well-founded school-wide agreements ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what is being learned and what is expected of them in lessons. However, while marking helps pupils with their next steps effectively, pupils are not clear always about their longer-term targets. For example, although yearly targets for mathematics are pasted into the front of pupils' books, these are too vague to be of value to them. The pace of learning is consistently brisk where good and better teaching is in place though in less successful lessons teachers spend too long

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introducing topics and this slows progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve in line with their peers. This is because the teaching is suitably tailored to their needs and because the school works effectively with parents and carers and outside agencies to remove barriers to learning.

Senior leaders are committed to improving both achievement and the quality of provision. The monitoring of teaching and learning is good. A comprehensive range of evidence is used well to enable the school to accurately assess its current position and support the good quality improvement plan. The recent advances in teaching and learning, when linked to pupils' continuing good personal development, demonstrate that there is satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

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

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Remove the inconsistencies in teaching and accelerate progress to consistently good levels by ensuring:
  - pupils are clear about their next steps in learning
  - teachers always use assessment information to make sure tasks are challenging and match pupils' differing learning needs
  - the pace of learning is not slowed by teachers spending too long introducing tasks.
- Raise standards in mathematics and writing by ensuring that:
  - pupils' application of basic mathematical skills in practical tasks is improved
  - pupils' use of grammar and punctuation is improved.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

3

Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons. Currently, progress and attainment are much stronger in reading than in writing because there has been a consistent approach to the teaching of reading which is secure across the school. Recent innovations, based around a more structured approach to the teaching of writing, are starting to have a positive impact on progress and this has led to a greater percentage of pupils meeting age-related expectations. This was evident in a good quality Year 3/4 literacy lesson in which the pupils were preparing their writing for a task focusing on their toys coming to life. Because the teacher helped the pupils to strengthen their vocabulary by using powerful verbs and adjectives, they produced good quality sentences and story starters. In mathematics, a history of underachievement is being tackled well so that currently a number of pupils in Year 6 are already working at the expected level for pupils at the end of the school year.

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Pupils enjoy school and they appreciate the care provided by all the staff. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'Our school is health and safety friendly. We all feel safe because we have teachers who protect us.' Pupils thoroughly enjoy physical exercise, as shown through the school gaining the sports Activemark, and they have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet. They particularly enjoy taking on responsibility such as through the influential school council, or making cakes for sale for charity. Older pupils are proud of the way they buddy younger ones and listen to them read on a weekly basis. Pupils new to the school say that they are welcomed and helped to learn school routines well by their classmates. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils become mature and responsible young people who are prepared appropriately for their move to secondary school and life beyond.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 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        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

## How effective is the provision?

There has been a good response from staff to the initiatives and programmes of support to improve teaching. In consequence, many lessons seen during the inspection were of good quality. Here, relationships were strong and with a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms. Typically, staff are ever mindful of pupils' relatively weak speaking and listening skills and hence they provide many effective opportunities for pupils to discuss questions raised from presentations and for pupils to work in pairs or collaboratively. This was the case in a good quality Year 5/6 literacy lesson in which pupils were studying Kensuke's Kingdom. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the challenging activity of agreeing two characters' feelings from the text. They noted these down and each group displayed their best examples, reviewing the

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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text well to find evidence to justify their examples. Pupils’ interpersonal skills were good and they collaborated and made good progress in their learning.

The curriculum has been developed securely to provide an appropriate range of activities to support learning and to promote pupils’ good personal development. It is more creative than previously and a wide range of themes and topics have been devised. These build successfully on pupils’ interests and are enriched well by a variety of visits out of school. Better links are now being made between different subjects to ensure that pupils’ literacy and information and communication technology skills are now developing well as part of topics. However, mathematical skills are less well catered for. The school has responded well to introducing national initiatives for reading and mathematics. The investment in individual and small-group support from a programme known as Every Child Counts is having a positive impact on the achievement of pupils who find learning more difficult.

Good levels of support are provided for pupils who experience difficulties and this helps these pupils to access all that the school offers. Particularly close attention is paid to those that have emotional and behavioural difficulties by provision of regular small-group nurture support. A large group of parents and carers thoroughly enjoyed working with their children as they learned together, preparing a picnic. The staff emphasised the importance of hygiene and safety with knives. Links with support agencies and health professionals are good and contribute well to the school’s provision.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 3        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>2</b> |

## How effective are leadership and management?

The newly formed leadership team has quickly established a common purpose. Staff morale is high and teamwork is strong. While in the past teachers have not always been held to account sufficiently well for the progress that their pupils make, this is not now the case. This has resulted in improvements in the tracking of pupils’ progress and, in particular, the refining of regular pupil progress meetings which the headteacher holds with each teacher. Records of recent monitoring show that teaching is improving because senior leaders are supporting staff well. There are good procedures to coach and model effective teaching. One such example is the work one assistant headteacher has been doing to introduce the new approach to writing while another has effectively supported reading.

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The governing body’s effectiveness is satisfactory. It is well informed, supportive and vigilant in ensuring that statutory regulations are met. However, although members of the governing body make visits to the school, these are sporadic. Hence, at present, they are over-reliant on the headteacher and senior staff for information and this limits their responsibilities in holding the school to account. Nonetheless, all child protection and staff vetting procedures are robust and the school uses recommended good practice. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and staff work hard to enable all pupils to access what the school offers. However, although all pupils achieve at the same satisfactory level, inconsistencies in quality of provision in the mixed-age classes leads to some unevenness in rates of progress.

The effectiveness of the promotion of community cohesion is good. There are strong links with the local community, not least through the Carterton Youth Council by which members of the school council meet on a monthly basis with the town mayor. Pupils have been instrumental in supporting the development of many of the town’s facilities and amenities. They have an excellent opportunity to develop their understanding of the international dimension through advantageous links with a number of schools across Europe. This has resulted in pupils and staff visiting these schools and pupils from Germany, France, Italy and Sweden visiting Carterton. Pupils regularly exchange emails and are currently involved in a joint science project.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>3</b> |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities at lower levels than those expected, particularly in their personal and social development. Because there are good induction procedures, children settle quickly and well and soon become secure in the routines of the classrooms. This is aided by them sharing a class with the



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reception-aged children who enjoy looking after the younger ones. Because provision is good and the staff in both classrooms ensure that there is a positive and inclusive atmosphere, children make good progress in their learning. Rightly, the staff place a particular focus on strengthening children’s speaking and listening skills. This was evident when a practitioner questioned children well to encourage extended answers when a group were excited about making birthday cakes. ‘I really like birthday cake and it is not long to my birthday now’, commented one child. Staff, mindful of the need to accelerate children’s social development, provide a good range of activities that require the children to cooperate, such as preparing the dinosaur cinema during the inspection. Although progress is good in all areas, it is only a minority of children that reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year.

Children are able to sustain concentration well in independent tasks and play because they enjoy the good range of activities prepared for them. Staff are particularly adept at ensuring that activities match the needs of the different ages of children in each of the classes. This is aided by thorough assessments which are used well to determine future activities. The thoughtful development of the environment establishes good opportunities to promote learning both indoors and outdoors. Staff also provide a good balance between activities that the children initiate for themselves and those that are directed by adults.

Safety and security have been a clear priority for staff and high quality resources are well organised to provide good learning opportunities. Engagement with parents and carers ensures good partnerships to support all aspects of children’s learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| 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**

A much lower proportion of parents and carers completed the questionnaire than is normally found. To complement this low number, inspectors spoke with parents and carers on three separate occasions to elicit their views. Both those that completed the questionnaire and those that spoke with inspectors said that they were pleased with what the school offers their children. They were unanimous in saying that their children enjoyed school and that they were kept safe. There were no areas of significant concern raised.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Carterton 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 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 214 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 21             | 72 | 8     | 28 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 19             | 66 | 10    | 34 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child’s progress   | 11             | 38 | 15    | 52 | 1        | 3 | 1                 | 3 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 11             | 38 | 15    | 52 | 1        | 3 | 1                 | 3 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 15             | 52 | 13    | 45 | 0        | 0 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school helps me to support my child’s learning  | 15             | 52 | 12    | 41 | 0        | 0 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 14             | 48 | 14    | 48 | 1        | 3 | 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) | 12             | 41 | 13    | 45 | 1        | 3 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school meets my child’s particular needs  | 13             | 45 | 13    | 45 | 1        | 3 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 10             | 34 | 15    | 52 | 2        | 7 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 14             | 48 | 12    | 41 | 1        | 3 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 10             | 34 | 13    | 45 | 2        | 7 | 1                 | 3 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school   | 18             | 62 | 10    | 34 | 0        | 0 | 1                 | 3 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.  |
| Grade 2 | Good         | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.  |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.  |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

### Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 43  | 47   | 10           | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 46   | 42           | 6          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 36   | 41           | 9          |
| Sixth forms          | 15  | 42   | 41           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 30  | 48   | 19           | 3          |
| Pupil referral units | 14  | 50   | 31           | 5          |
| All schools          | 10  | 44   | 39           | 6          |

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul> |
| 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.**



14 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Carterton Primary School, Carterton, OX18 3AD**

I am writing to thank you for your help when we came to visit your school and also to tell you what we found. We really enjoyed our visit and talking with you about your school and your learning.

Yours is a satisfactory school which means that some things are done well and other things could be improved. You told us that you enjoy school. Your parents told us that you are happy and feel safe and we agree with them. Your behaviour is good and you have positive attitudes that help you in your learning. Your teachers try hard to make lessons interesting for you and most lessons are good. But in some lessons the work is too easy for you, particularly those of you who find learning easy and this means that you do not achieve as well as you could. You told us you really enjoy all the trips and visits that you make and also the exciting topics you study. We know that those of you in Years 3 and 4 are enjoying finding out about the American Indians.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to take some action to make sure that improvements continue. We have asked them to make better use of their assessments of your work to provide you with tasks that challenge you. We have also asked your teachers not to spend too long introducing lessons because this sometimes slows your learning. Thirdly, we have asked that teachers always check that you are clear about the next steps in your learning. Finally, we have asked that your attainment in mathematics and writing is improved. In mathematics, we have asked that you get more opportunity to practise your calculation skills in practical mathematics tasks. In writing, we have asked that your skills in grammar and punctuation are improved.

We hope that you continue to enjoy school and learning.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler  
Lead inspector

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