

Carlyle Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112755
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	378552
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Young
Headteacher	Carolyn Stops
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed seven teachers and a nursery nurse. Inspectors observed 11 lessons and two school assemblies, and held discussions with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. They looked at pupils' books and viewed a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 87 parents and carers, and 21 members of staff, were analysed.

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

- Is the rise in standards being maintained and are all groups making equally good progress?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to plan lessons that challenge all groups of pupils?
- How effectively are middle leaders supporting the school's drive for improvement?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized infant school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Almost half of the pupils are of White British heritage. The rest are mostly of Indian or Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. A few are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average; the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Some of the school's recent successes include the achievement of Healthy School status, together with the Intermediate International Schools, Eco-schools and Activemark awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Carlyle Infant School provides a good and improving standard of education for its pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the school's very supportive and caring ethos. This helps children settle quickly when they start and underpins their good personal development, particularly their spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and their positive attitudes toward learning make a significant contribution to their good progress. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well and pupils participate in regular physical exercise and demonstrate an increasing understanding of the importance of diet to health. They willingly accept the many opportunities to take responsibility and make good contributions to the school and wider communities. Shared values influence every aspect of school life and pupils feel safe because staff know them really well. This is recognised by parents and carers. Virtually all of those who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school and their children's experience. As one wrote, 'This is my second child through the school and I think it is fabulous.'

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage adapt quickly to the daily routines and enjoy the range of activities on offer. Their confidence grows and they make good progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above average. Standards of reading, writing and numeracy have risen because staff are successfully implementing a number of well considered cross-curricular strategies to support pupils' learning in these key skills. However, the development of their information and communication technology skills is more restricted because computers are not used fully to support and enhance learning. Also, staff recognise that the topic-based curriculum does not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to extend their creativity and so further accelerate progress.

The good achievement of pupils of all backgrounds is due to predominantly good teaching, underpinned by effective use of assessment information to plan learning tasks that match pupils' needs and to check their progress. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, the marking does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning. The school has rigorous procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, often as early as in Nursery and Reception. This enables the pupils to receive the extra support they need to accelerate their learning as soon as possible. One notable aspect of the school's care for individual pupils is the support provided for any who may be in vulnerable circumstances to ensure that they keep up with their classmates. Attendance is average but it is adversely affected by families taking holidays during term-time.

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The headteacher has successfully developed a strong sense of teamwork and ambition amongst new and existing staff. Increased responsibility is being given to staff with coordinating roles for monitoring the quality of provision and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility, and all are responding to these responsibilities with enthusiasm. A well structured school improvement plan, based on accurate self-evaluation, together with a record of raising attainment means that the school is well placed to build on its strengths, and has good capacity for continued improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more focused use of assessment to accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - the marking of pupils' work gives clear guidance on what they must do in order to improve
 - pupils respond to the advice given.
- Enrich the curriculum by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils' creative development
 - ensuring pupils have greater access to computers and more planned opportunities to apply and develop their information and communication technology skills.
- Raise attendance by emphasising to parents and carers the adverse impact on learning of absence through family holidays taken in term time.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Although there is variation from year to year, children enter the school with skills and understanding that are broadly at the levels expected for their age. All groups of pupils achieve good outcomes. The rising trend in standards over recent years reflects the effectiveness of successful action taken to tackle weaknesses identified through self-evaluation. Classroom observations, the work seen in pupils' books and school assessment information show that most of the current Year 2 pupils are making good progress and are on track to achieve the targets set for them. Pupils enjoy their lessons, respond well to interesting and challenging activities, and demonstrate their ability to work effectively both independently and collaboratively. This was exemplified in a Year 2 literacy lesson where pupils worked enthusiastically in pairs as they developed their ideas for a short story through role-play. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are carefully assessed. They are sensitively supported, with good challenge in class, and receive specialist individual or small group support from teachers or skilled teaching assistants.

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Pupils say that they fully trust the adults in the school, and know that someone will help them if the need arises. Pupils’ very good learning habits are complemented by strengths in their personal, social and emotional development. Throughout the school, they act responsibly and are kind and polite. Pupils speak enthusiastically of their responsibilities, including being on the school council or acting as mini-leaders in the playground. They appreciate the different languages, traditions and faiths in the school and all get on well together. When pupils leave the school, above average basic skills, together with confidence in working together and using their initiative, ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have secure subject knowledge, plan their lessons well and explain work clearly. As a consequence, pupils undertake tasks with confidence and know what they are expected to do and achieve. Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide effective support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or in the early stages of learning English. In the very best lessons, assessment information is used precisely to guide the planning of learning tasks. Pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning is used to extend pupils’ thinking. This was seen in a Year 1 numeracy lesson, where pupils consolidated their understanding of number bonds to 10. Whilst most teaching is good, some lessons include weaker elements. For example, the pace of learning occasionally dips because teachers take too long introducing learning, which gives pupils too little time

¹ 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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to apply their learning and skills independently.

The topic-based curriculum is successful in making meaningful links between subjects, while maintaining a suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy. This enables pupils to develop their reading, writing and numeracy skills in a purposeful context, and contributes well to pupils’ good attainment and progress. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend learning through a wider range of planned opportunities for pupils to create, to explore and to investigate. Pupils benefit from a well-attended range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils’ enjoyment, as do trips out of school.

Parents and carers are justifiably pleased that their children are well looked after in this nurturing family community. All adults are very well informed about the needs of pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable and there are striking examples of the way the school helps pupils to overcome significant barriers to their learning. Staff monitor pupils’ well-being and progress carefully, and intervene sensitively and effectively with very well judged support when needed. The school’s procedures to encourage good attendance are appropriate, but are not yet fully effective in raising levels.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is led and managed well, as reflected in the very positive questionnaire responses from parents and carers. The clear direction provided for the school is driven by the headteacher's determination to raise standards even further. The strengthening of the work of middle leaders is contributing to this drive for improvement. Targets for all groups of pupils are both realistic and challenging, and consequently good progress is made towards them. Good links with external agencies support the individual needs of pupils from a range of backgrounds. This is an essential element of the school’s effectiveness in combating discrimination. It also ensures the promotion of equality of opportunity so there are no significant gaps in attainment between any groups of pupils. All are fully included in everything the school has to offer, and make equally good progress.

The school benefits from the support and challenge provided by the governing body. Its members are well informed about school performance through monitoring visits and detailed reports from the headteacher. They have worked well with staff to

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ensure that safeguarding procedures are of good quality, and that all are well trained in these matters. As a result the school has the confidence of parents and carers. Staff work closely with outside agencies, families and carers to help pupils achieve well. The promotion of community cohesion, based on a firm understanding of the school's particular social context, is good. The impact can be clearly seen in how well pupils relate to each other and understand different cultures. Through links with schools in other countries and other activities, pupils gain increased understanding of the interdependent nature of the global community. This is recognised in the achievement of the International School Award.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly on entering the Nursery or Reception because of the well-organised induction arrangements and good adult care and support. As a result, children feel safe and enjoy their learning. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon begin to share, to learn and to play together. They achieve consistently well throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. The stimulating curriculum, combined with good teaching and assessment, contributes well to the children's progress. Activities are matched well to the needs of all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children at an early stage of learning English also make good progress and join in fully with all activities.

There is good teaching of early reading and writing and the children's skills are enhanced through solid teaching of sounds and letters. The safe learning environment and enjoyable experiences foster a love of learning. A good balance between the staff directing and guiding children and the provision of opportunities to explore and work independently contributes well to the children's preparation for

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Year 1. The broad range of activities encourages the children to take responsibility and extend their personal skills by choosing what to explore and learn for themselves. Currently, staff are rightly focusing on extending outdoor learning to accelerate children’s progress in the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. Good leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage has resulted in a cohesive team of staff who work together well. They use their knowledge of how young children learn to ensure good progress in all areas of learning.

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

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed positive views about almost every aspect of the school. There were no particular trends in the very few negative comments received by inspectors. Many respondents wrote additional comments indicating their strong support for the school and the direction it is taking. Typically, one wrote, ‘A really good school with high standards.’

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Carlyle Infant 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 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	76	19	22	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	69	26	30	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	52	60	34	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	59	35	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	68	27	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	53	61	31	36	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	61	30	34	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)	43	49	31	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	49	56	36	41	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	53	33	38	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	51	36	41	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	61	29	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	61	70	23	26	1	1	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	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 8 April 2011 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.



24 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carlyle Infant School, Derby, DE23 3ES

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school, and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you, and you were really helpful. We enjoyed listening to your singing in assembly and seeing how much you celebrated each other's success.

You receive a good education and reach above average standards at the end of Year 2. You enjoy school, listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. Your good behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons you are making such good progress. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked that when they do this they give you clear guidance on what you need to do in order to improve. You can help yourselves to make even more progress by trying hard to follow the good advice you are given. You can also help by making sure that you attend school regularly.

You understand the importance of being healthy, eating sensibly and taking part in physical activity. Your teachers plan a good range of visits and after-school activities that broaden your experiences. You told us how much you enjoy your topic work and we have asked them to give you more opportunities to use your imagination when you are working, and also more opportunities to use computers. We were impressed with how much you all do to help the school. Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy.

Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. You can play your part by continuing to enjoy school and always trying to do the best you possibly can in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas
Lead inspector

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