

Clifford Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124654
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380948
Inspection dates	1–2 March 2012
Lead inspector	Lindsay Hall

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Dyer
Headteacher	Steve Wood
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2008
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	1–2 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lindsay Hall

Additional inspector

Matthew Heasman

Additional inspector

Ruth Frith

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 22 lessons, taught by sixteen teachers over nearly eleven hours. Six of the lesson observations were done jointly with senior leaders. Meetings were held informally with parents, carers and pupils, the chair and vice chair of the governing body and a wide range of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including: the tracking of pupils' progress; evidence from the school's lesson observations; pupils' completed work; procedures relating to safeguarding and children's welfare; and the headteacher's reports to governors and school development plans. Inspectors also listened to pupils read in Year 2. They analysed 152 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, together with those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Clifford Road school is larger than the averagesized primary school, and is situated in the heart of its community. In its Early Years Foundation Stage, the school has a Nursery class that accommodates up to 26 children on a part-time basis. The two Reception classes have recently introduced an annual intake. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are below average. Few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school has met the government's current floor standard for primary schools, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Pupils benefit from an independently run before and after school club, called 'Crash', which is inspected and reported on separately. The school has National Healthy School status.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key 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 or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- The school is not satisfactory because: pupils underachieve in English; teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils reach the levels expected for their age; and leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing some of the essential improvements needed since the previous inspection.
- Achievement is inadequate. Children make a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with skills typical for their ages. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is average in mathematics but significantly below average in English. This represents inadequate progress from pupils' starting points. In English, while most pupils read well, their attainment in writing is low.
- Teaching is inadequate because it leads to pupils underachieving. There are pockets of good teaching but this is not sufficiently widespread to ensure that pupils make sufficient progress, particularly in their writing. This is because pupils are not always given sufficient time to complete writing tasks in English lessons; their basic skills are insecure and expectations of their written work in other subjects are not high enough. Where teaching is weaker, marking is not helpful to pupils and assessment information is not used to inform lesson planning. In turn, the work set does not match the learning needs of pupils of different abilities. There is no common approach to planning lessons across the school and plans do not have enough detail about what the pupils are to learn.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. The school has a caring, supportive ethos and pupils mostly behave well around the school, showing respect and consideration for each other. However, teachers' expectations of behaviour in the classroom are inconsistent and occasionally time is lost in lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and this shows in

the way they develop a clear sense of justice and fairness.

- Leadership and management are inadequate. Systems for monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching and learning have been ineffective and are not sufficiently rigorous. The curriculum fails to meet the needs of all pupils

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and ensure that all pupils make at least the expected progress in English by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - improving pupils' skills in constructing sentences, punctuation and spelling
 - ensuring all teachers have similarly high expectations of the presentation of work and developing a whole-school approach to the teaching of handwriting and correct letter formation
 - increasing the opportunities for writing at length in English and across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that teaching is consistently good or better and eliminate inadequate teaching by:
 - ensuring that assessments are accurate and used effectively to plan work that challenges and matches closely the needs and abilities of all groups of pupils
 - developing a whole-school approach to planning lessons, and ensuring plans include clear learning objectives and are consistent across year groups
 - developing and implementing a whole-school marking policy, ensuring that target setting and marking procedures consistently give pupils a clear understanding of their next steps for learning
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating pupils' work and the quality of teaching across the school, putting the emphasis on pupils' learning, and increasing teachers' accountability for the progress made by pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels by:
 - reviewing and revising the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team so that it is more effective in driving school improvements
 - developing a rigorous approach to assessing attainment in reading and writing so that data used for tracking pupils' progress are reliable and accurate
 - developing the role of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, and holding leaders to account.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The majority of children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages. They make

satisfactory progress by the time they leave their Reception class and achieve age-related expectations in most areas of learning. Early skills in mathematics are particularly strong, although writing lags behind other areas of learning. There is a systematic approach to the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) and children have started to blend letters and build simple words. However, there are too few opportunities for children to apply their phonics and practise early writing skills.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics is satisfactory and their attainment is average. However, pupils do not make sufficient progress in writing, and these weaknesses in writing continue into Key Stage 2. While attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 6 is broadly average, and has improved over a three-year period, standards in writing have not improved quickly enough. The proportion of pupils making the expected progress between Key Stages 1 and 2, especially the higher attaining pupils, is significantly below the national figure in English.

In lessons and in written work seen during the inspection, pupils demonstrated weak skills in sentence structure, punctuation, spellings, letter formation and handwriting. The lack of these skills, together with insufficient opportunities to write independently and at length both in English lessons and in other subjects, contribute to weak progress and standards in writing in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Approximately half the parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Nearly all agreed or agreed strongly that their children make good progress. A similar proportion considers that the school helps their children develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. This is not reflected in the inspection findings.

Scrutiny of the school's data suggests that while there are minor variations in attainment between different ethnic groups, boys and girls, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, there is no particular pattern over time.

Quality of teaching

The quality of the teaching of reading and mathematics seen during the inspection was satisfactory, giving pupils the confidence needed to tackle their work. However, scrutiny of pupils' written work, and low attainment in writing at both key stages, indicate inadequacies in the teaching of writing over time.

More generally, teachers do not use day-to-day assessments of pupils' learning well enough to help them plan lessons. Plans do not show clearly what children will learn or how the curriculum will be adapted to match the needs of all learners. Consequently, in the less successful lessons, the work is too easy for some pupils and it is too hard for others. Some finish work early while others have to wait for help. Often, time is wasted in lessons, which reduces the amount of progress pupils that pupils can make.

There are examples of good and outstanding teaching in the school but the better teaching is neither frequent nor widespread enough either across the school, or in specific subjects, to enable pupils to make good progress and to achieve well. In the

better lessons, teachers have high expectations and ensure that activities are matched well to pupils' abilities. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Key Stage 1, for example, pupils were well challenged and fully engaged, combining coins of different value to solve money problems. They enjoyed their learning and made excellent progress.

The quality of marking is variable. Much of the pupils' work seen was not marked. Where marking is effective, praise and constructive comments are used to help pupils understand the next steps of their learning. The use of individual targets to help pupils improve their work is not established in all classes.

Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to practise their skills in reading. In writing lessons, however, too much time is sometimes spent on teaching the strategies that pupils should use to produce exciting stories and less time is given to putting good ideas down onto paper. Throughout the school, in English and in other lessons, the over-use of worksheets restricts opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their writing skills.

Pupils, parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about teaching. Although teaching makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and relationships between adults and pupils are warm, it is not yet consistent enough to enable all pupils to make enough progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school's caring ethos contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are welcoming, considerate and polite in lessons and as they move around the school. Racial harmony is good and most pupils show respect and understanding for one another. One pupil explained, 'You have to put yourself in others' shoes and know how they're feeling.' Another pupil said, 'You have to look after others, how you would like to be treated.'

Attendance is above average and pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. Pupils are aware of the difference between playground arguments and bullying and are confident that if they had a problem, it would be dealt with immediately. Nearly all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire believe that behaviour is good and that their children feel safe.

The curriculum helps pupils to consider moral issues and understand about different types of bullying. It provides many opportunities for them to learn about how to keep themselves and others safe. Older pupils have a good awareness of health and safety issues, including the misuse of drugs and alcohol addiction. They speak knowledgeably about the importance of safety when using the internet and the potential dangers of fire, busy roads and strangers. Pupils are particularly aware of water safety through the regular swimming lessons in the school swimming pool.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management at all levels, including that of the governing body, are

inadequate. This is because the school has not secured essential improvements in English since the previous inspection. In addition, the monitoring of pupils' work and of the quality of teaching is not sufficiently robust. Consequently, strengths and weaknesses in practice across the school, or the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress, are not identified sufficiently well. The skills of middle leaders are underdeveloped and the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team are not clearly defined. There is a lack of capacity to help bring about rapid and sustained improvement.

Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English are inaccurate. As a result, neither middle or senior leaders, or governors, have an accurate picture of the attainment and progress of groups of pupils as they move through the school.

Leaders have introduced a creative curriculum, which effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, the curriculum is inadequate because it is not sufficiently adapted to challenge and meet the needs of all learners or to promote good enough progress in writing. Inconsistencies in the planning of pupils' work, allocation of homework and opportunities for the recording of pupils' work within year groups and across the school, indicate that the school does not adequately promote equal opportunities. The school nonetheless tackles discrimination effectively and arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



5 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clifford Road Primary School, Ipswich, IP4 1PJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for completing the inspection questionnaire. It was good to talk to you and to see your work. We found that while your school has some strengths, it also needs to improve because you are not making the amount of progress you should. Your school has been put into special measures. Inspectors will visit your school regularly to see how well the school is improving.

Here are some of your strengths.

- You learn how to keep yourselves safe, you are polite and get on well with each other.
- Your attendance at school is regular.
- You get on well with your teachers and all the other staff in school.

To improve the school further we have asked your headteacher, governing body and staff to do the following things.

- Ensure that you make faster progress in English, especially in your writing
- give you more opportunities to do longer pieces of writing.
- Make sure that all your lessons are as good as the best ones and that you are all given work that challenges you.
- Ensure that you have individual targets to help you improve your work.
- Improve the ways in which teachers assess your learning and make sure that the school's leaders make regular checks on your work and your progress.

All the adults in your school want it to improve quickly and I am sure you do too. You can all help by trying really hard and doing your best written work, and letting your teachers know if you find work either too easy or too difficult.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Hall
Lead inspector

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