

Caldicotes Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111573
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	395387
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2012
Lead inspector	Barbara Hudson

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	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Eagle
Headteacher	Helen Steele
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Barbara Hudson
Kathleen Mullen

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 19 lessons or parts of lessons. Ten teachers and five teaching assistants were observed. Approximately 11 hours were spent in direct observation of teaching and learning. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff. Inspectors observed the school's work in and out of the classroom and looked at documentation relating to safeguarding pupils, school improvement planning and governance. Inspectors took account of the 44 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is very high. The school meets the current floor standards which set the government's minimum expectations of attainment and progress. The school holds numerous awards including Green Flag and the Artsmark.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching and the school improvement plan does not set targets that are sharp enough so that progress and impact can be accurately evaluated. Pupils, parents, carers and staff are extremely positive about the school.
- Throughout the school pupils make good progress. They have a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is built upon effectively in Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is accelerating securely and achievement is good.
- Good teaching provides a good match between the tasks pupils are set and their differing abilities. However, teachers do not always explain clearly what pupils need to do to complete tasks successfully. Teaching is usually conducted at a good pace but sometimes the pace slows because teachers spend too long on explanations. Marking provides pupils with good points for improving their work in their writing books but this is not always the case in their mathematics books or topic books.
- The excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all pupils feel safe and are ready to learn. Pupils understand fully, and mostly meet, the high standard of behaviour expected by the school.
- Leaders and managers strive constantly to improve the school. However, the school improvement plan does not have targets that are readily measurable in order to evaluate whether an action has been successful or not. The performance management of staff is rigorous and has had a positive impact on improving teaching and learning. An excellent example of this is the effective work undertaken to improve pupils' attainment and progress in reading and writing. The gap between the achievement of different groups has narrowed and the rate of pupils' progress is better than most pupils nationally.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by ensuring:
 - that pupils know exactly what they have to do to tackle and complete tasks successfully
 - that there is a consistently good or better pace of learning throughout all parts of every lesson
 - that the quality of marking in mathematics and topic books is consistent in showing pupils what they need to improve.

- Ensure that the school improvement plan has measurable targets so that success in achieving them can be assessed accurately.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils are enthusiastic and motivated to learn because teaching is good and the curriculum stimulates their interest and application. In lessons, pupils show that they can effectively work independently and in small groups. They concentrate well and show perseverance when solving challenging tasks. This was very evident in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, for example, where pupils were challenged to solve how many imaginary seven-legged and three-legged animals lived on an imaginary planet if the total number of legs was 52.

Pupils make good progress. Achievement in mathematics is higher than English because teaching has a sharp and effective focus on developing pupils' ability to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving. However, the gap between English and mathematics is closing rapidly and securely. This is because staff have very successfully implemented actions to boost pupils' attainment and progress in reading and writing, such as improving the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) and extending pupils' range of vocabulary in their writing. School data, confirmed by inspection findings, show that recent progress in pupils' writing has been rapid.

Generally, children enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are exceptionally low. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage particularly in their personal and social development and are able to concentrate and persevere with tasks. Children leave the Reception class with skills that are still below those expected for their age. In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress although, because of their low starting points, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is generally below average. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good and improving progress because teaching is consistently good and because of the significant impact of the school's actions to improve reading and writing. By the time they leave the school, attainment is broadly average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable make good progress because of a wide range of interventions that are tailored to each child's particular needs. Most parents and carers are very happy with the progress their children make in school.

Quality of teaching

The good quality of teaching is valued highly by parents, carers and pupils. As one parent commented, 'Since starting this school my child's confidence has been boosted and her work has improved a lot, especially in reading.' High expectations, good questioning skills and the effective use of assessment to match tasks to pupils' needs and abilities are the characteristics of the good teaching throughout the school. Most teaching is very effective in providing good opportunities for pupils to use their communication, reading, writing and mathematics skills across the curriculum. However, occasionally there is a lack of clarity in showing pupils what they have to do to be successful and instructions are too long. This results in some pupils forgetting what they have to do and in which order. Teaching is usually lively, varied and well-planned. It makes sure that pupils are fully engaged in their learning. For example, in an outstanding Year 6 poetry lesson pupils were given a series of specific small steps that enabled them to create a very impressive group poem. In a Year 5 history lesson, pupils learnt at a rapid pace how to excavate and record their findings in a teacher created excavation site. However, in some lessons, the pace of learning drops when teachers spend too long explaining things when pupils are ready and eager to get on with learning.

The presentation of pupils' work in their books is of high quality and reflects teachers' high expectations and also pupils' pride in their work. Marking of pupils' work is comprehensive in their writing books where comments provide pupils with clear indications about what they do well and how they can improve. However, although marking in mathematics and topic work is regular, it does not always give clear indicators about steps to improvement.

Teaching provides disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are potentially vulnerable with good levels of care and support that bolsters their confidence as learners. Tasks and interventions are well matched to their ability and/or emotional needs.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers, pupils and staff value the calm, welcoming atmosphere in the school. All staff go the 'extra mile' to ensure that pupils feel safe, are able to learn and can fulfil the school motto 'to be the best I can be'. The 'meet and greet' and 'chill and chat' sessions are successful in helping pupils apply themselves to learning. Pupils aspire to meet the high expectations of behaviour that are set. However, very occasionally behaviour does not live up to the high expectations and, when this happens staff manage the situation effectively and sensitively. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and pupils say that this is the norm. All staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils are safe. They do this through carefully evaluating risks and ensuring pupils and staff are not put in any danger. Pupils are also taught to look after themselves, through well managed lessons about the safe use of the internet, drug and alcohol safety and what to do if they have any concerns. The pupil/parent advisor makes a significant contribution to helping parents, carers and pupils deal with a wide range of problems. Pupils report that bullying in any form is rare and when it does occur, staff deal with it quickly and effectively. The positive, supportive environment nurtures and celebrates success ensuring that pupils thrive and do their best.

Pupils' attendance has improved rapidly and significantly since the previous inspection and is now average, because staff work effectively to promote good attendance. Pupils are very aware that attending school is very important. Pupils say they really enjoy school because

they like to be with their friends and teachers, and because they enjoy working hard in lessons.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides very effective leadership and leads through example. All staff and the governing body demonstrate the ambition, determination and expertise continually to make good improvements to their school. High levels of teamwork, professional dialogue and sharing good practice within the school and beyond are the norm. An excellent example of this is the high quality professional development that has led to significant improvements in the quality of teaching of writing and reading. This has been rewarded with good improvements over time and excellent improvements recently in pupils' progress and attainment in writing.

Leaders and managers produce clear and appropriate plans for school improvement. However, targets and success criteria in the school improvement plan are not always sharp enough to allow the impact of actions taken to be judged with precision. Performance management is used effectively to hold staff accountable for their work. Regular pupil progress meetings ensure that staff have a clear focus on the progress each individual child is making in their class and where and what type of intervention is required. Staff are vigilant about ensuring every child has equal access to all that the school has to offer and that all make the progress of which they are capable. The very effective curriculum provides pupils with a range of interesting tasks that engage them well in their learning and promote positive attitudes to learning. The curriculum provides good opportunity and support for developing pupils' communication, literacy and numeracy skills.

All staff and the governing body have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. The governing body holds the school to account well. Its members bring a wide range of expertise and experience to the service of the school and community. The governing body ensures that policies are understood and implemented effectively by all staff, including policies relating to safeguarding and tackling discrimination. Consequently, safeguarding procedures meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Members of the staff and the governing body make very positive links with parents and carers who, in turn, are high in their praise of how well their children are taught and cared for in school.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



20 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Caldicotes Primary School, Middlesbrough, TS3 9HD

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and appreciated the open way in which you answered our questions. I am sure you will be pleased to know that we judge your school to be a good school. This means that the school has lots of good things and a few that need improving.

Some of the good things about your school are:

- the way in which you work hard and make good progress in your lessons
- the good teaching that motivates you to learn and behave very well
- the very good care and support the school provides for you and your families
- the way in which you all try your hardest to live up to the school motto 'to be the best I can be'.

Even in good schools there are still things that can be improved. We are asking your headteacher to work with staff to make sure that:

- teachers give you clearer instructions so that you complete your tasks even more successfully
- you learn at a quick pace at all times in every lesson
- teachers always provide you with helpful comments when they mark your mathematics and topic books.

Also, we are asking leaders and managers to make sure that they measure more accurately the success of the actions they take to help your school improve.

You can help the school become even better by continuing to work as hard as you do now in your lessons and to attend every day unless you are ill. I would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Hudson
Lead inspector

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