

Carrington Junior School

Chapel Lane, Flackwell Heath, High Wycombe, HP10 9AA

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- While achievement is improving following a dip in pupils' progress after the last inspection, it is not yet good because pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation require improvement and pupils have too few opportunities to write in some lessons.
- Although there are good features to teaching in all lessons, pupils' progress slows when teachers do not have high enough expectations for what pupils could achieve. Teachers do not assess learning sufficiently during lessons to check that the work is right for all pupils.
- Pupils are not always told what they are to learn next precisely enough, and teachers' marking, while positive, does not consistently point out next steps clearly.
- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have increased their understanding of what needs to be improved in the school but until recently have not taken action quickly enough to eradicate inconsistencies in teaching and learning as soon as they arise.

The school has the following strengths

- Teachers motivate pupils with clearly structured lessons and interesting activities. They provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening through the use of 'talk partners'.
- Pupils behave well and feel and stay safe because they are keen to learn and members of staff promote positive values and provide a safe environment.
- Pupils, including those who have some difficulties with relationships, develop good social skills and are polite and friendly.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their above average rates of attendance.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and leaders, including the governing body, know what to do to make the school good in the future. They are starting to improve teaching and achievement more rapidly and consequently the school is moving forward.
- Teaching is good when pupils are working in the additional resource provision (ARP) because instructions are clear and adults work well as a team to support pupils' needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 21 lessons, of which 11 were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account 18 responses to Parent View and informal discussions with a sample of parents and carers.
- Inspectors considered the views raised in nine staff questionnaires.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised including the school's own assessment data, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Robert Arnold

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Carrington School is an average-sized junior school.
- There is an above average proportion of pupils who are supported through school action and an average proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The school has nine places for pupils with autism in the ARP.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been many changes in staffing and members of the governing body since the last inspection, with the current headteacher joining the school in September 2011.
- The nursery on the premises is not managed by the school's governing body and was therefore not included in this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by September 2013 so that it consistently promotes good progress by:
 - raising teachers' expectations for what pupils should achieve in each lesson
 - ensuring that teachers make clear to pupils precisely what they are to learn
 - assessing learning during lessons and adapting work so that it is at the right level of difficulty for all pupils
 - providing sharper guidance through marking that helps pupils understand their next steps.
- Increase the quality and rate of progress in writing by:
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to practise and extend writing skills in support of not only their writing but also their learning across the curriculum
 - ensuring that pupils understand and use knowledge of sounds and letters (phonics) when spelling
 - making sure that pupils are more consistent in their handwriting and use of punctuation.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels, including members of the governing body, secure consistently good teaching and pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers make use of information on pupils' prior attainment when planning and providing work
 - checking that all groups of pupils are doing similarly well in different subjects and classes and taking steps to rectify any weaknesses straight away.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.
- Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6, although it is higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. In writing, pupils are given too few opportunities to write and consequently their punctuation, spelling and handwriting require improvement. Leaders are providing a structured approach to teaching phonics in response to weaknesses identified in the reading of a few lower attaining pupils and pupils' spelling in general.
- The proportion of pupils making the expected progress is improving and is broadly average because over the past year the school has increased the rigour in tracking pupils' progress and setting appropriate targets. Pupils' progress is not yet good because it is inconsistent between classes and within subjects. Teaching pupils in groups according to their prior attainment has increased their progress in mathematics.
- In lessons where learning is effective, pupils are expected to think deeply about topics they are studying. For example, in a science lesson in Year 6, pupils were expected to give likely reasons for plant adaptations due to differences in their environments.
- There is no particular pattern in progress between different groups of pupils over time because the school is promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination effectively. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement because progress is not always good and pupils' targets for improvement are not broken down into sufficiently small steps to measure and show their ongoing progress.
- Pupils registered to the ARP are integrated into mainstream classes for part of the week and make similar progress to other pupils over time. Progress is more rapid when they are working in the ARP because their specific individual needs are supported well at these times.
- The school has not yet evaluated the impact of funding provided for pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding over the past year, but tracking information shows that while their progress requires improvement, the social and academic support provided enables them to make similar progress to other pupils at the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is improving because teachers have received clear guidance through performance management about what constitutes good teaching. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge in most lessons and manage behaviour well so that lessons run smoothly.
- Teachers do not necessarily expect enough of pupils and sometimes accept pupils' first attempts without encouraging them to make improvements as they work. In addition, work is not always pitched at the right level when assessment information is not referred to when planning lessons. When this happens pupils spend too much time reinforcing prior learning at the expense of moving learning forward more rapidly.
- Activities that motivate the pupils are often used well by teachers to make lessons interesting. For example, in mathematics in Year 6, pupils enjoyed beating the clock on a computer programme designed to test understanding of place value of decimals and, in Year 5, pupils listened avidly for the metaphors in a popular song.
- Pupils benefit from good opportunities for speaking and listening and 'talk partners' enable them to share ideas and rehearse answers to questions. For example, in Year 3, pupils discussed information for their writing 'all about me' and teachers made sure that pupils were properly included. In Year 4, 'hot seating' encouraged pupils to ask questions of a story character very effectively.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support when working with individuals or small groups but are not as well deployed as they might be during whole class discussions.

- Teachers encourage pupils to assess their own learning and provide supportive comments on their work, but tend to be over generous in their praise and not encourage pupils to be consistent in the quality of work completed.
- Teaching is good for pupils who are working in the ARP because clear expectations for behaviour and well-understood boundaries support pupils well in their learning in this small group.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy at school and their behaviour is good. For example, pupils in Year 5 respect the trust placed in them by reading sensibly when working outside the classroom. Behaviour is not outstanding because occasionally, especially when work is too easy, pupils have lapses in concentration and do not work as quickly as they should.
- Pupils show respect for others by being polite and supporting each other when working in pairs and small groups. For example, in Year 6 they cooperated well when discussing how they would organise a 'non-chronological' report about their school. In Year 3 pupils praised each other for their suggestions about 'celebrations' from various faiths.
- They are happy with the way any incidents of bullying are dealt with and consequently feel safe at school. As one pupil put it, 'We make friends easily.' Most parents who put forward their views about the school agreed that pupils behave well, feel safe and are happy at school.
- A few members of support staff are not happy with the way behaviour is managed. The behaviour policy has recently been reviewed and monitoring of behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes are proving that behaviour management is becoming increasingly effective. Pupils are aware that it is 'good to be green' and are keen to avoid having to take a 'red letter' home.
- Pupils who attend the ARP receive good support with developing their social awareness. For example, in one lesson pupils increased their ability to listen to each other by sharing with the group the new fact they had learnt from their partner.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision and this has led to an accurate self-evaluation and a renewed drive to make the necessary improvements. Attainment and progress have risen over the past year and teachers are clear about how they can improve their own teaching. For example, a whole school initiative to involve more pupils in discussion has been successfully implemented and consequently speaking and listening skills have been strengthened.
- Procedures for supporting literacy are starting to improve attainment and progress in this subject. For example, guided reading sessions have raised the profile of reading. Writing continues to lag behind and leaders are not ensuring that pupils write as much as they should or improve their punctuation, spelling and handwriting quickly enough.
- All subjects are covered at the school, but work is not always appropriately pitched for all abilities within each class to ensure that they can all make good progress. This does not apply to any one group, it varies between groups of pupils and lessons. New subject leaders have had limited time to monitor learning to ensure that teaching and progress are consistently good and that teachers make consistent use of assessment information to pitch work at the right level for their classes.
- The local authority provides the right support for the school and the headteacher feels that it has enabled the school to make the necessary improvements over the past year.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports social and moral development especially well and pupils learn to appreciate the importance of caring for others and the environment.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and the school is quick to respond to issues raised by pupils, parents and carers, and members of staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - ensures that statutory duties are met and has ambitious visions for the school
 - takes a greater role in holding the school to account for its actions now that they receive more detailed information on pupils' progress across the school. They are developing their role in assessing the impact of funding spent on initiatives to improve teaching and the progress of the various groups of pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	110274
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	401110

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Favager
Headteacher	Amanda Fell
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 March 2010
Telephone number	01628 521457
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