



Cheynes Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109556
LEA LUTON LEA
Inspection number 278216
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Andrew McDowall LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cranbrook Drive
School category	Community		LU3 3EW
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 617800
Number on roll	224	Fax number	01582 617800
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	.Not Known
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Stella Rogers

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	Inspection number 278216
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is a large infant school situated in Sundon Park in north Luton. The children come mainly from the immediate area which consists of mixed housing with above average levels of social deprivation. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average as is the number learning English as an additional language. When the children start in the reception classes their skills and knowledge are below that typically found amongst children this age. The number of children with special educational needs is below average. The school is currently in the process of appointing a new headteacher. At the time of the inspection the school was being led by two acting headteachers.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that gives good value for money. The inspectors largely agree with the school's own view of its strengths and weaknesses. The personal development of the children is good, particularly the way in which they are involved in supporting each other in school. They behave well and enjoy school. The attendance at the school is below average and is unsatisfactory. This is largely due to a number of parents taking children on holidays in term time. The children make good progress and reach standards that are above average by the time they leave the school. The children in the reception classes make good progress in most areas of their learning. More needs to be done to make sure the work planned for the youngest children provides them with more opportunities to extend their speaking and social skills through play activities. The school has been very successful in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Standards are generally above average in all subjects. The standard of teaching although good overall varies in quality from satisfactory to outstanding. More needs to be done to enable the teachers to learn from each other and improve the teaching where it is only satisfactory. The school sets challenging targets for the children to reach by the time they leave the school and it is successful in meeting them. Leadership and management are good. The acting headteachers have been successful in maintaining the drive for improvement since they have taken full responsibility for leading the school. They know the school well and what needs to be done to make it even better. The quality of care provided for the children by everyone working at the school is very good. The school has made good progress in dealing with the issues identified in the last inspection and has good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

To improve standards further the school should: - spread the outstanding practice within the school to increase the amount of good teaching. - improve the planning in the reception classes to ensure work is well matched to the particular needs of the children and that children are given more opportunities for purposeful play.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school feels standards are good and the inspectors agree. From a fairly low starting point, children make good progress in the reception classes and by the time they move into Year One their skills and knowledge are close to what is expected at that age. The children continue to make good progress in Years One and Two and go on to achieve above average standards in reading and mathematics by the time they leave the school. The standards in writing are average. The school has recognised that the standards in writing are not as high as they could be and has plans in place to bring about improvement. Standards in science and other subjects are good. The work in art is outstanding. Those children with special educational needs also make particularly good progress, with many achieving the expected level in mathematics and reading by end

of Year Two. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language also make good progress and do as well as the other children.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good with some outstanding features. Children behave well because staff have high expectations of them and use a good range of strategies to keep them interested. The majority of children have good attitudes to learning and respond well to the praise given by teachers, which helps to raise their self-esteem. Most children attend regularly and arrive on time but overall, attendance is below the national average. The school does its best to encourage good attendance but a few families take holidays during term time. Children in Years One and Two enjoy being members of the school council, which helps them to see that their views are taken into account. This is a very good aspect of the school that benefits children's sense of community and belonging. They look after each other willingly by acting as playground 'buddies' and they know about staying safe. Children adopt healthy lifestyles by taking part in regular physical activities and by eating crunchy fruit and vegetables. They enjoy being involved with the local area by displaying their artwork in the nearby library. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children think carefully about the way they treat others and are beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong. They learn to be respectful towards adults and are beginning to understand each other's beliefs and cultures. The school puts a strong emphasis on the development of basic skills which serves the children well as they move to the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. However, the quality of the teaching varies too much from satisfactory to outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers create very calm, purposeful environments in which children have great fun. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Year One the teacher's superb questioning led to a wonderful sense of enjoyment as she prompted the children to think very hard about the sentences they were writing. 'Is this a Wow sentence?' was answered by all, 'No! There's no full stop.' Where the teaching is only satisfactory the pace of lessons is rather slow. Not enough is expected of the children who could be given greater opportunity to make decisions for themselves. For example, in a science lesson the children were finding out about their senses. They spent too long on the carpet which limited the time for them to explore and record what they found out. Had they been given more time it would have helped them develop key scientific skills. The teachers and nursery nurses in the reception classes know the children well and have high expectations of behaviour. They provide stimulating and brightly coloured classrooms to help the children feel happy and secure. Teachers plan a wide range of activities to help the children make

good progress, but at times the teaching is too formal with insufficient opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play. In Years One and Two, teachers have established very positive relationships with the children and treat them with great respect and kindness. As a result, the children are eager to please and they try hard. Teachers mark work regularly and provide helpful comments to point children in the right direction and improve their work. Teaching assistants make a sound contribution to children's learning. They provide additional help to children with special educational needs. This means that the few who need close guidance are well supported and make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall. In Years One and Two it includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and there is a satisfactory range of sporting activities to help the children become fit and healthy. The youngest children in the school have a suitable range of activities in the reception classes. However, because the teachers plan children's work as individual subjects some important areas of early educational development do not receive sufficient attention. Social and speaking skills would be better developed if the staff spent more time working alongside the children in carefully planned play activities. For example, a group of children were observed playing with a puppet theatre. The absence of support from an adult to guide the play and encourage the children to take turns meant that they became over-excited. Consequently they made little progress in developing their ability to play well together and take part in a simple performance. Overall, the teachers plan suitable activities that allow children of all abilities to enjoy their learning. The plans for children with special educational needs are detailed and teachers use them carefully to construct activities to inspire and challenge them. Children at the early stages of speaking English receive good support to help them access all activities, and their progress is monitored rigorously. The school has good links with the local community. Visitors, such as members of the Fire Brigade, come into the school regularly to talk about various aspects of their work. Accommodation is good and resources are well managed. The school is welcoming and vibrant, and outstanding displays of children's colourful work adorn the walls and corridors. The high quality of children's artwork is a real strength throughout the whole school and provides inspiration and excitement for everyone. The well-maintained, attractive school grounds provide a safe and stimulating environment for the children, although there is no covered area for the reception classes to help staff develop the outdoor activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of children are good overall, with outstanding features in the caring way in which staff deal with individuals. Everyone at the school works hard to create a loving environment where the children feel secure and highly valued as individuals. All members of staff are aware of the procedures for child protection

and make sure that children are kept safe and healthy. Parents particularly like the fact that they can approach the teachers openly if they have any concerns. Children are supported soundly in their academic work through helpful comments from teachers. The school's liaison worker effectively helps children to cope with the move up to the junior school and this works well. In a few classes the children are encouraged to be aware of what they should do to improve their skills but this is not always the case. The systems for checking on how well children are doing in their writing are being improved to help raise standards further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The inspectors agree with the school's judgement that leadership and management are good. The combined efforts of the school leaders have been successful in improving the school in recent years. The strong commitment from all concerned to do the best they can for the children is clear in the very high quality of care the school provides. There are good systems in place to consult the parents who express strong support and confidence in the school. The school has a clear understanding of most of its strengths and weaknesses. The governors know the school well. Some visit the school regularly and call on this first hand experience when making decisions. There are effective systems in place to check the quality of teaching and the progress the children make as they move through the school. These have been instrumental in improving the teaching in the school since the last inspection. More now needs to be done to improve the teaching where it is only satisfactory. There are too few opportunities for staff to observe and learn from the outstanding teachers in the school. The school has been successful in improving all the areas identified as issues at the time of the last inspection. This, along with the good track record in raising standards, indicates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I would like to start by saying a big thank you to everyone for being so nice to us when we visited your school recently. Everyone we spoke to was really helpful. You told us you think your school is really good and we agree with you. These are the things we liked about your school: We think you all behave really well and we like the way you look after each other and are kind to each other when someone is feeling sad. We think your teachers plan interesting things for you to do in lessons and we think your painting and models are fantastic. Your reading and number work are really good and everyone is trying very hard to improve your writing. All the people working at your school really care about you and work very hard to keep you safe and help you get better at your work. Mrs Rogers and Mrs Walsh are doing a really good job in helping everyone at the school do as well as they can. To make your school even better we think it would be good if the teachers sometimes worked together more, so they could learn from each other. We also think you need more chances to play when you first start school. We are sure your school will continue to get better and thank you again for all your help in the inspection.