



Chipping Ongar Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114948
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279482
Inspection dates 16 March 2006 to 17 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Raminder Arora LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Greensted Road
School category	Community		CM5 9LA
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277 363789
Number on roll	232	Fax number	01277 365696
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Eric Crook
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Cara Caldock

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 16 March 2006 - 17 March 2006	Inspection number 279482
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Chipping Ongar is an average size school set in a rural location. The school was identified as causing concern in 2004. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Most pupils are from White British families and all but four speak English as their first language. A privately run on site service offers out of hours care to pupils. The school has experienced considerable staffing difficulties over the past three years with a huge turnover of teaching staff including three headteachers and two deputy heads. The current headteacher has been in post since April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school that provides pupils with a satisfactory education and looks after their personal well-being effectively. The appointment of the new headteacher in April 2005 heralded a fresh start after a significant period of instability. As a result, the school no longer poses any cause for concern. The school views itself as satisfactory and the inspection team agrees. Parents and pupils think the school is doing a good job. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and all issues from the last report have been tackled. The value for money is satisfactory. Provision for children in the Reception class is satisfactory and they make satisfactory progress to reach standards expected for their age. The school's decisive action to remedy weaknesses has already made a difference although the changes made have yet to impact fully on pupils' learning. Standards are now broadly average. Across the school, achievement is satisfactory and this demonstrates considerable improvement, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. The school is now working hard to improve its performance further in these subjects and especially in writing across the school. The views of staff, pupils and parents are sought and everyone is positive that their views are listened to and acted upon. Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. However, the new systems for assessments are not yet consistently applied and teachers' marking does not help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, although the leadership of the new headteacher is particularly effective. Although monitoring of teaching is better than it was, it still needs to improve, in order to move the school's performance up further. Self-evaluation is satisfactory, as is the school's action plan to remedy weaknesses and move forward. However, more needs to be done to strengthen the role of senior managers and subject co-ordinators to take a fuller part in school's development. The school works effectively with other local schools and organisations and the scope for further improvement is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to take steps to raise standards in writing across the school. - Support all pupils to know how to improve, by encouraging their self- assessment and ensuring consistency in marking and target setting. - Evaluate more rigorously, the work of teachers to make teaching and learning consistently good. - Develop the role of senior staff and subject managers in checking and driving forward improvements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. From average starting points they reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception year. Progress throughout the school is adequate and pupils reach broadly average standards in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, although writing is weaker than other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress, as do the very few learning

English as an additional language. In 2005, Year 2 pupils did better in mathematics than in reading or writing. Following a school focus on writing, standards have begun to rise and are currently average in Year 2. Pupils presently in Years 1 and 2 classes are making satisfactory progress. Pupils are on track to reach the school's challenging targets in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Current standards remain broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Recent staff changes have meant that pupils' progress had been unsatisfactory in recent years. The school has worked hard to overcome this and, although still patchy, progress is now satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. There are clear indications that the corner has been turned and improvements to maximise pupils' progress are underway.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy school and are keen to join in all activities. The Reception children settle quickly into the school routines and become happy and keen learners. They increasingly show that they can make informed choices and decisions about their work. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In discussions, pupils show respect for others' views and a sense of responsibility for each other. They are keen to help one another and applaud each others' achievements, for example when the school's brass band played in an assembly. Pupils take on duties, such as school councillors, that involve them in the life of the school. They have been involved in asking their classmates' opinions and choosing new reading books at the school's book fair. Pupils behave safely and have an understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They successfully acquire the basic skills, which helps to prepare them for the world of work. Attendance in previous years has been in line with the national average but dropped to below average in 2005. As a result of the successful action taken to address this issue, attendance rose to an average level this year.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The headteacher has rightly identified the need to improve teaching as her highest priority. Teaching and learning are now monitored closely with the result that significant improvements have been made in a short period of time. These improvements are motivating children to want to learn. In the best lessons pupils know what they are expected to learn and activities are well matched to their needs. In a good lesson seen, pupils were enthused by the teachers' secure command of the subject and the challenge of designing their own investigations in science. In the minority of comparatively less effective lessons there was insufficient pupil participation, a lack of challenge, and too long spent listening to the teacher. Too often, teaching assistants were not used well to provide a good quality of support that enabled learners to achieve well. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory

with some good features such as the positive and encouraging relationships, which motivate children to do well. However, the day to day assessment of children's work is not carried out effectively and insufficient use is made of the outdoor facility to enhance provision in all areas of learning. The school has made a good start on improving teachers' assessment of pupils' work. Teachers have begun to assess pupils' performance and set targets in English, mathematics and science. This practice is inconsistent, and the information gained from assessments is not yet applied well to match the needs of all learners. Teachers' marking, although encouraging and regular, does not support pupils' understanding of how to improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and suitably organised for the amount of time given to each subject. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is suitably planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has recently introduced French in all classes, which is greatly enjoyed by all pupils. Appropriate attention has been given to building links between subjects, for example, pupils learn about healthy living through science and physical education. Teachers are also developing effective cross-curricular links in literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology. There are a good number of lunchtime and after school clubs including music and sports. These are well attended and enjoyed by pupils. The computer revision club provides good opportunities for Year 6 pupils to extend their skills. The provision in music is particularly strong. Pupils learn a wide variety of instruments and have their own Big Band and a Brass Band that is invited to participate in competitions and other local community events. The Foundation Stage curriculum, although being improved in planning, has not been developed enough to provide a range of outdoor activities for the young learners.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for its pupils, both academic and pastoral. Pupils feel safe and confident that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. They say that bullying is rare and that any incident is treated seriously. Parents are confident that their children are well looked after. The procedures for supporting relationships and behaviour are effective. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place and any pupils who are at risk are identified and supported. The quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory and outside agencies and parents are effectively involved. Target-setting procedures are still being developed, although they are beginning to help pupils understand how well they have done. However, they are not used well enough to help pupils recognise what they need to do to make better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has worked hard to improve teaching and learning and raise standards in a short space of time. She has clear priorities and an accurate picture of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to carry on improving, for example, developing the role of senior managers to be involved more effectively in the work of the school. Parents and pupils, have consistently positive views, and report significant improvements. All staff work hard to make every pupil feel valued and supported to good effect. Governors are led by the new chair and vice chair, and are enabled to take an active role in setting appropriate direction for the school. They have begun to be involved more strategically in school improvement planning and monitoring of school's work. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a caring and supportive atmosphere. There is a shared commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils and to ensuring equality of opportunity. The views of all members of the school community are sought, carefully analysed and taken into account. While all those with leadership and management roles appreciate how the school has improved, they are far from complacent, but keen and ready to make it even better. There is awareness to take strong action based on effective self-evaluation to secure improvement. The new headteacher has the full support of the parents. She has formed a cohesive team of staff, who are keen to improve their own practice. Given the improvements, particularly in pupils' progress and the commitment of all those who work at the school, it is well placed to continue improving.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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	Yes
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

Following our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you how much we enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes. A special thank you to those children who spent time talking with us, and telling us their views and ideas. There are lots of good things about your school. Some of these are: - Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave well and get on well with each other. - You listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and try hard in your lessons. - Your new headteacher is determined to ensure that you all make good progress and no-one is behind in their learning. - We enjoyed the performance by the brass band in the assembly, and were also very pleased to see so many of you receiving achievement awards and certificates. All the adults in your school want your school to be even better. We have asked your teachers to help you improve your writing further and to check regularly how well you are doing in all different subjects. We have also asked your teachers to help you to understand how to perform better in all your work. Thank you for welcoming us to your school.