



Chadsmoor CofE (C) Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124240
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281668
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Peter Clifton AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Burns Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Chadsmoor
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 6DR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01543 511000
Number on roll	233	Fax number	01543 511505
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Pam Cork
Date of previous inspection	11 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Herszenhorn

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated between Cannock and Hednesford in an area recognised for its social and economic deprivation. The number of pupils has fallen since the last inspection, and the school is now of average size. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is slightly above average. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion with learning difficulties has been below average for the past two years. Few pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual time. The results of national tests taken by the pupils in Year 2, before they join the school, show that attainment is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils a satisfactory standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate and it provides unsatisfactory value for money, even though a large majority of parents are pleased with what it offers. Standards have been significantly below the national average for the past four years. A large proportion of pupils are underachieving in English, mathematics and science, and making inadequate progress from their standards on entry to the school. The progress made by more-able pupils is poor, particularly in mathematics. The school is not meeting targets set in English or mathematics. The school judges itself, incorrectly, to be good. Progress from the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

The main reasons that the school has not remedied its weaknesses are because the leadership has not focused sufficiently well on raising standards through improving the quality of teaching and learning, and because it underestimates the pupils' standards on entry to the school.

The evidence from observing lessons, looking at the pupils' work and analysing their progress indicates that teaching is inadequate. On too many occasions, the work given to pupils is either too easy or too hard. The curriculum is unsatisfactory and too much time is spent on activities that are undemanding. The school provides well for pupils' personal needs and physical care but there are weaknesses in guidance for their academic needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that activities are better matched to the pupils' level of understanding.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making monitoring and evaluation more rigorous in identifying weaknesses and pursuing improvement.
- Raise expectations across the school by giving more weight to the results of the Key Stage 1 national tests.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils enter the school with average standards but attainment when they leave is significantly below average. The pupils make inadequate progress in English, mathematics and science. In each of the last three years, their lack of progress has placed the school in the bottom 5% of schools nationally. In 2005, there was an improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5, which the school attributes to the intensive support programme it is using.

At the time of the last inspection, standards were average in English and science but below average in mathematics. Since this time, standards have declined, with mathematics remaining the weakest subject.

The progress made by more-able pupils is poor, particularly in mathematics where only one third of pupils make the expected gains. In English, their progress is better but still inadequate, with about two thirds achieving as well as they should do by the time they leave the school. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities have also underachieved over time, although they were often well supported in the lessons seen during the inspection.

The school judges standards at the beginning of Year 3 to be lower than those achieved in the national tests when the pupils were in Year 2. As a result, its targets are lower than they ought to be but the school still fails to reach them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Although the school rates this area as outstanding, inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. The pupils' behaviour in classes and their attitudes to learning are satisfactory. Many pupils are keen and want to do well and show this in their responses to questions. However, a minority of pupils do not pay sufficient attention. In assembly, older pupils are not as attentive as younger ones and need to be settled before prayers. Pupils move around the school with consideration for others, but there are a few instances of silly behaviour. Attendance is average.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Generally, they enjoy school because they feel well cared for and safe. They say that the school is largely without bullying.

The pupils are aware of the importance of exercise and eating healthily because this knowledge is developed effectively through the curriculum.

During lunchtimes, pupils expend considerable amounts of energy playing games together or on the scooters provided by the school.

Pupils make a good contribution to the community through their organisation of charitable events. Key skills such as writing and mathematics, which are crucial for their future well-being, are underdeveloped.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching is inadequate, although the school views it as good. Some lesson planning is very brief and results in teachers providing a narrow range of activities, which they over-direct. Teachers sometimes move on too quickly before all groups of pupils are secure in their learning. On other occasions, the work is too easy,

especially for the more-able pupils. Good teaching was observed in Year 4 because the lesson, about telling the time, was well planned and took account of the pupils' differing levels of understanding.

Teaching assistants provide satisfactory support in lessons. They are sometimes used well to support specific groups and pupils who have learning difficulties, but they are not always involved sufficiently in planning.

The use of assessment is unsatisfactory. Targets are not securely identified and shared with pupils; as a result, pupils are not clear about how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve. Marking is variable; some is supportive, but a lot does not give pupils enough feedback.

A variety of assistants and instructors teach the pupils for 10% of the week. Their planning is brief and objectives are sometimes not clear. While the sessions are enjoyable for pupils, the teaching is not sufficiently well focused on raising achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is inadequate in catering for the range of pupils. The planning of the curriculum was an issue in the last inspection and weaknesses still remain. The curriculum satisfactorily meets the needs and interests of those who have specific learning difficulties and disabilities, and some of the individual support provided is good. Planning for more-able pupils, so that they develop skills systematically, is unsatisfactory.

In addition to having lessons in the usual subjects of the National Curriculum, every year group spends 10% of the week on other curriculum activities. Half of this is spent in Karate lessons, the rest in a variety of activities such as French, dance, cookery, craft and 'nurture'. These lessons are taught by teaching assistants and instructors. Their contribution to tackling the pupils' underachievement is not satisfactorily monitored or evaluated and the relevance of some activities is unclear.

The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been developed well since the last inspection and pupils use the resources satisfactorily to support their learning. In addition, the school has successfully developed some creative aspects of the curriculum. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Staff identify the personal, social and emotional needs of pupils well and provide good levels of individual support. Arrangements for child protection are fully in place and there are good systems for ensuring the pupils' safety and welfare. However, guidance to help the pupils achieve high standards is weak; target setting and the monitoring of progress are inadequate.

During the inspection, the support for vulnerable pupils was at least satisfactory. Teaching assistants were usually well briefed and were able to help pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. Links with a wide variety of external agencies enhance the support which the school gives to pupils with particular needs.

The school has effective systems for checking on absences and is working hard to ensure that parents send their children to school regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The school's view is that leadership and management are outstanding and that improvement since the previous inspection is good. Inspectors judge the overall leadership and management of the school to be inadequate. Since the time of the previous inspection, overall standards have dropped. Little effective progress has been made on some of the key issues identified at that time, such as raising standards in mathematics and developing the monitoring and evaluation work of co-ordinators. These areas are still inadequate and, overall, insufficient progress has been made. The school's improvement plan is not sharply focused on raising standards and progress. The school is not well placed to overcome its weaknesses and is providing unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's self-evaluation is poor and is based largely on a denial of the accuracy of the information about attainment on entry. During the inspection, the headteacher broadly accepted the accuracy of the data for mathematics and reading, but strongly disputed the figures for writing. The governors, headteacher and teachers have too low expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Although the governing body is suitably involved in the process of self-evaluation, governors have not been provided with a sufficiently accurate view of the pupils' overall progress.

Over the past year, the school has participated in an intensive support programme to improve provision and accelerate the pupils' progress. There are some positive signs of its impact, but it is too early to judge its overall effectiveness.

There have been good improvements in the management of ICT since the previous inspection. Some of the spare rooms which have resulted from the fall in pupil numbers are used creatively. The instructors bring additional skills to the school, but their impact on raising standards and achievement is not evaluated sufficiently.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	4	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	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	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	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and telling us so much about it. We enjoyed talking to many of you and what you said was very helpful. We thought that your playtimes were very lively and that you get on well together. There are some big improvements needed in the school, especially with helping you to do as well as you can.

What we most liked about your school:

- how well the school supports your personal needs
- your consideration for other pupils in the school
- your understanding of the need to exercise and eat well.

We have asked your headteacher to work on:

- making sure your work is not too hard or too easy
- ensuring that teaching is looked at carefully and regularly so that it can be improved
- expecting you to make more progress from the time you join the school by using the results you get in the Year 2 tests.

The adults in your school will be working hard together to make it better. To help do this, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors will visit the school regularly to check the progress you are making and the work of the school.