

Carfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107087
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	287708
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Philip Cole

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 on roll	
School	555
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne Baxter
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Petty
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001
School address	Argyle Close Sheffield South Yorkshire S8 9HJ
Telephone number	0114 2557534
Fax number	0114 2580335

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Carfield is larger than most primary schools. It serves a suburb of Sheffield with mainly owner-occupied houses, and includes an area of social deprivation. Most children are of White British Heritage, but the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing, as is the number who do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is a little below average, and the number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school currently has an acting headteacher who is the school's long-standing deputy headteacher and the third headteacher in three years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Carfield is a good school. Despite some parental concerns on the move to mixed-age classes in Key Stage 1, Carfield remains a popular school which enjoys the strong support of parents, who are very pleased with the progress their children make and with how well they are cared for.

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave very well in lessons and are very sensible around school, carefully negotiating the many stairs in the old building. They really enjoy the interesting visits they make and 'have fun' in lessons. Pupils get on very well together and naturally help each other in class and when playing.

Standards and achievement are good. Children come into Nursery with attainment clearly below average, particularly in their language development. Good quality provision in the Foundation Stage enables them to make good progress and reach broadly average standards by the end of Reception, although their attainment in language development remains below average. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been noticeably below national averages for several years, mainly because of weaknesses in English. All pupils in Key Stage 1 are in mixed-age classes. Currently Year 1 pupils are making strong progress, while Year 2 pupils are mostly making satisfactory progress. This is because teachers do not always provide enough challenge for them. Standards and achievement are good in Key Stage 2 with particular strengths in mathematics and science. Results in national tests have been very impressive and pupils have consistently reached the challenging targets set for them. Pupils in Year 6 are making good progress in mathematics and science and satisfactory progress in English. Almost all groups in the school achieve well. However, those with English as an additional language make progress that is only just satisfactory, because their work has not always been planned carefully enough to meet their individual needs.

Teaching is good overall. Teachers in Key Stage 2 make clear to pupils what they will be learning, lessons are interesting and teachers expect pupils to be fully involved. Pupils respond well. They clearly enjoy lessons, eagerly answer questions, concentrate and work hard. Teaching in Key Stage 1 shares these strengths, but is satisfactory because the demands made on Year 2 pupils could sometimes be greater. The curriculum is good. Visits to interesting places, including three residential visits, often initiate learning, motivate pupils and extend their experiences. Subjects such as art are valued and this leads to high standards being reached in these subjects. Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs which enrich their learning. Care, guidance and support are good. Well developed systems and trusting relationships underpin pupils' good personal development and well-being. A combination of effective feedback to pupils and a strong emphasis on self-evaluation is enabling pupils to gain a good understanding of how well they are doing and what they can do to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, which is lower than the school's judgement of good. This is because the leadership is currently going through a transitional phase. The acting headteacher is not content to just fulfil a caretaking role. She is leading the school well and using her good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses to help her begin to tackle issues such as the learning of pupils who have English as an additional language and to broaden the roles of senior managers. However, senior managers are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school, and governors are too reliant on the reports they receive. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and currently the

school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Given the positive outcomes and effective provision, the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English
- Improve the progress made by pupils in Year 2
- Develop the skills of the leadership team and the involvement of governors
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as the other pupils in school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with well below average attainment and leave, at the end of Year 6, above average. This has been the case since 2002, although in 2006, when there was a disproportionate number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, standards were average. Overall, by Year 6, pupils achieve well although, by comparison, English results have not been quite as good as those in mathematics and science, largely due to weaknesses in writing. Since 2002, with the exception of 2005, when additional teaching resources and support were put in Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils have attained significantly below national averages in reading and especially writing. Both of these have consistently been well below average on entry to Nursery. Fewer Year 2 pupils than nationally have attained the higher levels (including in mathematics where attainment is in line with the average). This reflects children's attainment at the end of Reception, when many reach expected levels but few attain above them. Given their starting points, pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve satisfactorily.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Strengths in this area are underpinned by the rich experiences provided by the curriculum and the effectiveness of the programmes that support pupils' personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have good self-awareness and show maturity and sensitivity when considering issues such as slavery. They readily accept responsibility, for example when older pupils listen to younger ones read, and they take their roles on the school council very seriously. They are sensible and considerate of others and believe that there is little if any bullying and no racial harassment. They have a good understanding of, and celebrate, cultural differences. Pupils know what they should eat to stay healthy and enjoy the many opportunities they have to exercise. Attendance is comfortably in line with the national average. Well developed personal and social skills and the good progress they make in basic skills enable pupils to face life's future challenges with confidence.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There are consistent strengths found across the school that contribute to good teaching. Teachers explain clearly to pupils what they will be learning in lessons and successfully encourage them to evaluate how well they have done. This ensures that pupils are well focused and promotes good self-awareness. Questions are used well to encourage pupils to think clearly

and are usually well matched to different groups, although this is not always the case in the mixed Year 1 and 2 classes, where sometimes tasks could also challenge the older pupils more. Teachers often provide interesting stimuli to motivate pupils, for example hatching chicks in the Foundation Stage. As pupils move towards the end of Key Stage 2, they are increasingly involved in evaluating for themselves the strengths and weaknesses in their own and others' work. This is enabling them to have a very good understanding of what needs to be done to improve. Some teachers are not yet utilising the potential of interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well balanced and extends pupils' learning through modern foreign languages and philosophy. All of the subjects, beyond English, mathematics and science, are clearly valued with high standards seen in them. A particular strength of the curriculum is the use of visits and visitors to initiate and stimulate learning. These include, for example, the residential visits, various experiences of different cultures, and activities which enrich the strong programmes that support pupils' personal development. Pupils enthusiastically attend the wide range of clubs on offer. These often provide additional challenges for gifted and talented pupils, for example working with professional coaches. Although effective provision ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, not as much has been done to meet the differing needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and their progress is just satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Excellent and caring relationships create a learning environment in which pupils flourish and work hard. Pupils are confident that any problems they may have will be sorted out and that issues they raise in the school council will be listened to sympathetically. There are robust systems in place to ensure their safety both in school and when they make visits. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored and carefully tracked. Prompt and effective action, involving parents and outside agencies when this is appropriate, is taken to support any pupil whose performance shows signs of dipping. Pupils appreciate the effective academic guidance they are given, including the targets they agree with teachers and the helpful comments that are made about their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The acting headteacher is determined to bring about improvements in areas she knows could be better. She has tackled low staff morale, successfully established a more broadly based senior leadership team and is empowering its members to extend their responsibilities, which had previously been limited. Self-evaluation is sound. Data is used well and has led to the action now being taken to make the learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language more effective. The acting headteacher's monitoring and evaluation of teaching is accurate and leads to appropriate support being given to individual teachers. However, the involvement of senior staff and the range of strategies used in this process are underdeveloped. Governors

are very supportive of the school, but are not sufficiently involved in finding out for themselves how well it is doing.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Carfield Primary School, Sheffield, S8 9HJ

I really enjoyed my visit to Carfield. I think your school is a good school. Your behaviour is very good and you all get on very well with each other. I am glad that you understand what you need to do to keep healthy and safe. I think that all the adults in school care for you very well. Your teachers work hard to make school interesting and to help you understand how you can make your work better. Many of you told me how much you enjoy the visits you go on and the many clubs you attend.

Almost all of you are learning new things quickly because your teachers are good at what they do. I think though that those of you in Year 2 could do even better if your teachers always made sure they stretched you as much as they could. I also think that those of you who do not speak English at home could be given more help with your work so you can achieve as well as everyone else. The test results have been very good in Year 6, particularly in mathematics and science. I have asked your teachers to help you to reach the same high standards in English in the future.

Your headteacher is doing a good job and the senior teachers in school are very keen and eager to do their best to help her. However, they are still developing their skills and are not yet able to help her quite as much as they would like to. Your governors give good support to the school. I think that it would help them to do their important jobs even better if they were able to come in more to look for themselves at what you do.

Your parents are very pleased that you come to this school. I am sure that you will continue to be very happy there.