



# Camestone Lower School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109462  
**Local Authority** BEDFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 288384  
**Inspection dates** 28 February –1 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Margaret Goodchild

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Jowitt Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Kempston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9		Bedford MK42 8NW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01234 855587
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	311	<b>Fax number</b>	01234 701414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lynn Carmichael
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynne Russell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4–9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 February –1 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 288384
-------------------------	--	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large school on the outskirts of Bedford. The school draws from an area of social deprivation and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is more than twice that in schools nationally. Most of these pupils are of Indian heritage and an above average percentage speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average although the percentage with a statement of special educational need is above average. Attainment on entry to the school is below average.

## 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. Parents are highly satisfied with its work and say that they have 'been very impressed with the standard of teaching and the fact that children are nurtured and encouraged from the moment they start school'. They say that their children 'always look forward to coming to school, and are proud and happy to be part of Camestone'. Pupils confirm this and show a genuine enthusiasm for all the activities that the school provides.

Senior managers are accurate in their judgement about the school's effectiveness and recognise that the quality of education is outstanding in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, but that it is not yet as good in Years 3 and 4. Pupils achieve well overall and reach above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 4. Their achievement is outstanding in the Foundation Stage where teaching is exceptionally good and the staff instil in children a joy of learning as well as fostering the development of the skills needed to succeed when they move into Year 1. Achievement is outstanding in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is again of very high quality and expectations are extremely high. Pupils make rapid progress in these years and reach above average standards by the end of Year 2.

Pupils are cared for, supported and guided exceptionally well, and the outstanding curriculum is organised in a way that engages pupils' interests. The range of activities to enrich pupils' learning reveals the high expectations that are evident in the school as a whole and contributes significantly to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils reveal a real enjoyment of learning and grow in an environment where they feel happy and safe.

Powerful systems are in place for checking pupils' progress, rigorously monitoring all aspects of teachers' work, and for coaching staff that need additional support. This has enabled senior leaders to develop to a point of excellence the teaching of a number of teachers in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 who joined the school as newly qualified teachers. The same approach is being used in Years 3 and 4, where several staff also joined the school as newly qualified teachers. Managers at all levels are working concertedly to bring the quality of teaching in these years into line with the rest of the school. Although this has begun to have a positive effect on pupils' achievement, teaching in Years 3 and 4 does not ensure that work is matched consistently to the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Expectations in these classes are not as high as they are in the rest of the school. The impact of leadership and management is therefore good overall. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to improve further. It provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4, particularly by ensuring that work is matched consistently to the next stage in the learning of different groups of pupils and that expectations are sufficiently high.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children join the school with below average attainment and make outstanding progress to reach above average standards by the end of Year 2. The school gained above average results in the Key Stage 1 national tests in 2006 and a particularly large number of pupils reached the higher levels in writing. This represented especially good progress given the significant number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Currently, pupils are making good progress towards challenging targets. Standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, with some work that is well above average. All pupils make equally good progress from the beginning of the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make satisfactory progress and sustain the above average standards they have reached at Key Stage 1, instead of building rapidly on their existing learning as they do in the younger classes.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding. Pupils are happy at school, talk enthusiastically about the activities provided and apply themselves very well. Behaviour is good and in the younger classes, pupils behave exceptionally well. Pupils are polite and considerate, play harmoniously together and care for one another. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. In the Foundation Stage, they discover that learning is exciting. In Years 1 and 2, they work extremely hard, producing neat and beautifully written work. Pupils know how to stay safe and who to go to if they need help. They understand the importance of making healthy choices. The school has been successful in increasing the number of pupils achieving full attendance and the overall rate is broadly average. Pupils contribute well to school improvement through meeting in groups to share their views with the staff. They develop personal qualities and basic skills to stand them in good stead when they move on to middle school and in the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good overall: it is outstanding in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. In teaching lower down the school, the level of expectation and challenge is exceptional. Teachers in these classes are highly skilled in creating an atmosphere that is at once focused and exciting. Challenging questions probe pupils' thinking, and information about what pupils can already do is used exceptionally well to plan work that is matched exactly to the next steps in their learning. In Years 3 and 4, teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well and give

pupils things to do that motivate them. They do not always use assessment information, however, to set tasks that are sufficiently matched to the needs of individuals or groups. Rather, pupils are expected to produce work more or less according to whether they are higher or lower attaining, instead of being given tasks that offer a different level of challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs of the pupils extremely well. The many well-planned opportunities to develop literacy skills through links with other subjects are particularly beneficial to pupils with additional needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Planning ensures a seamless progression between the different key stages and increasingly between subjects. Through its work towards full accreditation as an International School, Camestone provides pupils with exceptional opportunities to develop their global and cultural awareness. The excellent range of visits, visitors, themed days, and clubs reflect the high aspirations and expectations the school has for its pupils. For instance, pupils have the opportunity to learn a number of musical instruments and to learn Italian and Spanish. The school identifies precisely those pupils who are gifted and talented and has used links with a local upper school exceptionally well to challenge these pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. All the staff show a high level of care for the pupils and make sure they are personally guided and supported to become the best that they can be. The school has thorough systems in place to protect and safeguard pupils, and close links with outside agencies underpin the care and support it provides. Highly developed systems record and track pupils' progress and ensure that they know how to improve their work. Teaching assistants make a meaningful contribution to pupils' progress and the school has very good systems in place to support pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and their families. Parents are kept well informed and the school has provided workshops, for instance in numeracy, to increase their skills in helping their children at home.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Senior leaders have a very clear vision and in many ways provide outstanding leadership. The impact of the school's leadership is good overall because it has not yet been fully effective in bringing the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 up to that in the rest of the school. Senior staff pay meticulous attention to detail in their efforts to improve the school. Their work has been outstandingly effective in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.

The school's work is monitored and evaluated exceptionally well, whilst the effectiveness of actions to bring about improvement is good. Monitoring by senior managers, including that of teaching and learning, is rigorous and perceptive. Subject co-ordinators carry out a wide range of tasks in order to evaluate the quality of education in their areas, to see how well pupils are achieving and identify what could be done to raise achievement. Co-ordination is exceptionally effective in the Foundation Stage, in literacy, numeracy and science. Managers at all levels are very effective in ensuring a sense of coherence in the school community, including between pupils of different cultural heritage.

Governance is satisfactory and improving. The chair of governors has a thorough knowledge of the school and is working to strengthen the effectiveness of the governing body as a whole. Governors are very supportive of the school and some collect information for themselves, then use what this reveals to ask challenging questions, but not all governors are yet comfortable with that aspect of their role.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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

2 March 2007

Dear Children,

Camestone Lower School, Jowitt Avenue, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 8NW

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed seeing all the exciting work that you do and talking to you about it. I am writing now to let you know what we found out about the school.

This is a good school and we can see why so many of your parents are pleased with it. You told us that you are very happy at school, feel safe and really enjoy all the activities it provides. We were pleased to see how hard you work and how well you get on together. In the Foundation Stage and in the classes in Years 1 and 2, you make fantastic progress so that by the end of Year 2, your work is better than that in many other schools in the country. You are doing especially well with your writing and making a lot of progress with your mathematics in these classes. Those of you in Years 3 and 4 still make progress and learn new things, but you are not learning as fast as you did lower down the school. Your headteacher and the other managers run the school well and in many ways they are outstanding. They know that there is more to do to make learning in Years 3 and 4 as good as it could be and they have been working very hard to make it better for you. We have asked them to do even more to make sure that you learn as well in Years 3 and 4 as you do in the rest of the school.

The school cares for you exceptionally well and provides you with very interesting activities, such as clubs, visits and special days. We thought it was marvellous that you have such a wide choice of musical instruments to learn and that you can go to clubs to learn Italian and Spanish. The link with a school in the United States and other things the school is doing to become an International School are also very exciting.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your time at Camestone Lower. Keep working hard and doing your very best.

Yours sincerely,

M J Goodchild

Lead Inspector