



# Calcot Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 109932  
**Local Authority** West Berkshire  
**Inspection number** 288540  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Christopher Gray

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Curtis Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Calcot
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Reading RG31 4XG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 942 8727
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	214	<b>Fax number</b>	0118 945 5587
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Lee MBE
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda McCulloch-Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 January 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school is much smaller than at the last inspection and is now similar in size to most primary schools. It has an unusually high proportion of boys. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. A higher proportion of pupils than found in most schools have learning difficulties. The local area is less advantaged than most in West Berkshire. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This school gives its pupils a satisfactory standard of education. Following the last inspection, the school went through a period of decline, caused chiefly by staffing difficulties. There was some underachievement, especially in Years 3 and 4. The school has worked hard to reverse this trend, with good support from the local authority, and pupils' achievement is now satisfactory in all year groups. Pupils reach average standards by Year 6. Their progress in mathematics is not as fast as it is in reading and writing and the school is striving to enable all pupils to make good progress on all fronts.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school and their behaviour is good. A few parents do not share this view, but pupils are clear that behaviour is now much better than it used to be. Behaviour in lessons, round the school and in the playground shows that pupils are considerate and have good self-control. They are adamant that bullying is not a worry and that any occurrences are effectively dealt with.

Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy most subjects and many of them put the teachers on the top of their list of favourite things about the school. Teaching is strongest for older pupils, but that is largely connected with the experience of these teachers. The school is working effectively to bring all staff up to a similar standard. One of the inconsistencies in the teaching is the varying success with which teachers meet the needs of all pupils in their class. This relates to how well they use their knowledge of pupils' abilities when they plan the next steps of learning. Sometimes, work is too easy for some groups or too hard for others.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and strengthening. Recent work with the local authority has improved the school's ability to analyse and remedy its weaknesses, and the strategies to raise achievement are beginning to bear fruit. This demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to make further improvement. Staff are dedicated, work hard and put pupils' progress at the heart of all that they do. The levels of pastoral care and welfare given to pupils are good and enable them to develop well as individuals.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress, especially in mathematics.
- Enable teachers to make more consistent use of assessment information in planning work to meet pupils' needs.
- Improve teaching to the level of the best.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave the school. Results in recent years have reflected underachievement in Years 3 and 4, but this has now been reversed.

The most recent national test results showed a marked improvement on those of the past few years. Pupils make faster progress in English than in mathematics; part of the reason for this is that pupils' basic number skills, though sound, do not enable many of them to perform mental calculations as quickly as they could.

The school has a much larger proportion of boys than is usual, but there is no evidence of any marked difference in their attainment compared with that of girls. The school gives extra support to a number of small groups of pupils, such as those who have fallen behind in reading, and this enables these pupils to make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties generally progress at a similar rate to that of other pupils.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. One pupil said, 'It's a good and safe school because teachers listen to you and help you'. Pupils are developing social awareness because of the opportunities they are given to take responsibility, such as the 'buddy' system. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they are gaining an understanding of other cultures. This was evident in discussion with a group of pupils. When they were asked if the world would be a better place if everyone believed the same, one girl replied, 'No, because then there wouldn't be different festivals and everything would always be the same'.

From the positive attitudes and good behaviour of both girls and boys, it is clear that pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is average. Pupils know how to keep safe and to whom they should go if they are unhappy. They are given a voice through the school council and feel that teachers listen to them and consider their views; this helps them to have a say in what happens in their school community. Pupils explained clearly about healthy foods and why they are important. Their economic well-being is satisfactory. Their literacy skills are average, but they need to become more adept at quick mental calculation.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. They are better in classes where the most experienced teachers work and the school is successfully developing the skills of less experienced staff. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to make learning more interesting. A good example was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Pupils were learning to interpret information and the teacher showed them a variety of data, presented in different ways, to help them understand the concepts of mode and range.

Teachers mostly mark pupils' work well and this helps them know how to improve. Another tool for improvement is the use of 'success criteria' - this is a phrase that the pupils themselves understand and use. These help pupils to evaluate how well they

have learnt at the end of a lesson, but teachers do not always make the best use of this strategy. The activities given to pupils do not always meet their needs closely enough. Sometimes, the work given to lower or higher attaining pupils is too difficult; on other occasions, higher attaining pupils could be given greater challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are good. The school provides a variety of visits and a wide range of clubs such as information and communication technology (ICT), ceramics and rugby. Involvement in clubs is high and some are over-subscribed. The parents of one child wrote, 'We particularly like the range of after school activities'.

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily, but this is not always consistent. Those with particular needs are well supported by programmes such as 'Catch-Up'. One parent of new children wrote, 'The school has made an excellent effort to make the children feel welcome and get them enrolled in Catch-up, which both children enjoy'. Pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum and their literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory overall. Welfare aspects are good. Child protection procedures are thorough and the quality of health and safety provision is very good. As a result, pupils feel safe and happy in school and extend to others the care and concern shown to them.

Assessment procedures are used satisfactorily. They have recently been revised to provide a good picture of pupils' short-term progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is enabling the school to direct support to where it is most needed. The necessary analysis is in its early days and needs refining to enable it to be used more consistently by teachers.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is now a strong culture of raising achievement with the recent aid of the local authority's Intensive Support Programme, which is already having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The headteacher has worked hard to establish a variety of good links with other agencies to ensure that pupils have a range of experiences. An example is the link with a local firm of accountants, members of whose staff come to school on a weekly basis to help pupils with their reading. There is a strong ethos of team work. As a result, managers at all levels are beginning to have a clear impact on teaching and pupils' achievement, though there is still work to be done to achieve consistency. The school development plan is

detailed and thorough and ensures that the school's self-evaluation is effective. Data about pupils' performance are gathered and are beginning to be used effectively to track the progress of each pupil at regular intervals. Governors offer a good level of support to the school but have not often seen the need to challenge its work.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	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	3
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**

We enjoyed our visit to your school and thank you for the very friendly and polite way in which you welcomed us and told us about your work and opinions. Many of you are very good at expressing yourselves and you think carefully about what is important to you.

We agree with most of your parents that behaviour in the school is good. Those of you we spoke to told us this too. You said that bullying is rare but that it is dealt with well if it does happen. Your school is a very safe place because adults work hard to make it so, and you have clear ideas about how to keep secure and healthy.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. You and all the adults get on very well together, so that classrooms are pleasant places to be and you are able to work hard. You reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. (I know that older pupils will understand the word average, because I was present during a good lesson in Year 6, all about different types of average.) We have asked the school to do three things:

- to help you to reach higher standards - especially in mathematics; you know your basic number skills, but you need to be able to use them faster; you might get your parents to help you learn your tables
- to make sure that the work you are given is not too hard or too easy
- to ensure that the teaching in every class is equally good.

I hope you continue to enjoy your education at Calcot Juniors.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray(Lead inspector)