

Cippenham Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110088
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	288587
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	534
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr H Rutti
Headteacher	Mrs B Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2003
School address	Elmshott Lane Slough SL1 5RB
Telephone number	01628 604665
Fax number	01628 660696

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This very large junior school serves pupils from the local community. Numbers on roll have reduced recently from five to three forms of entry due to a large number of pupils transferring to a new school in the locality. Pupils represent a diverse range of ethnicities. The largest group is of White British heritage but there is also a significant number from Indian and Pakistani families. The remainder comprises a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language and this proportion is rising. There has been a high staff turnover in the last few years. A new headteacher began in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Some aspects of its work are good, including the care and support given to pupils which results in them feeling safe and keen to engage in learning. Most enjoy coming to school and take an active part in all the opportunities offered.

The school has undergone substantial changes in the last six months since the new headteacher arrived. She has made an excellent start to her leadership role. Improvements to the premises have provided better facilities for pupils and staff as well as raising morale. Staff say they feel 'inspired and energised' by her example. The atmosphere in the school is extremely positive, with staff and governors being committed to change and development. The management structure of the school has been reviewed and new teams are in place to oversee aspects of provision. These teams are very new however, and staff members have not yet gained a clear view of their roles and how their work will help to raise pupils' achievement.

All these changes are positive and are valued highly by staff, governors and pupils but they have not been in place long enough to have made any difference to the standards that pupils reach. Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 6 but this has to be weighed against the fact that they start in Year 3 at higher than expected levels. Pupils make steady progress and their achievement is satisfactory. However, national test results show that too few reach the higher level 5, especially in English. The school has recognised this and is trying to address it through a focus on improving teachers' planning for children with different needs, especially those who are more able. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good elements. The curriculum is satisfactory. Recent developments in curricular planning have helped to make learning more relevant and interesting for pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, and the new headteacher is providing a very clear vision and direction for the school's work. This, together with the obvious commitment of staff and governors, gives the school a good capacity for further improvement. Most parents are happy with the school but there are a few who have concerns, mainly about the changes to teaching arrangements. The school is aware of this and is monitoring the situation closely so that the impact of the changes can be reported back to parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the progress that higher ability pupils make to ensure that a greater proportion reach higher levels in national tests, especially in English.
- Use the information from day-to-day assessments more effectively to plan work which meets pupils' needs, especially those who are more able.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of curriculum and management changes to ensure they are having a positive effect on raising standards and achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The results of national tests in Year 6 show that Indian pupils do well, reaching higher standards than those expected for their age compared with Indian pupils in other schools. Other pupils achieve appropriately for their age, including those from Pakistani families, White British backgrounds and other minority ethnic groups. Pupils for whom English is an additional language reach levels similar to those of their classmates, significantly outperforming their counterparts in other schools. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also perform better than similar children nationally. More able pupils do not make as much progress as they should, especially in English. Not enough reach the higher level 5 in national tests.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful to each other and visitors. Most have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have a good understanding of multicultural issues and a good knowledge of the many faiths represented in the school. Racial harmony is strong.

Most pupils behave well and listen attentively in class. When teaching fails to stimulate them a small minority of pupils, mainly boys, do not always concentrate sufficiently. Pupils say that bullying is rare and when it does occur, is dealt with quickly. Exclusion rates have fallen over the past year. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, for example, as peer group mediators and monitors. They are proud to serve on the school council and support a variety of charities and community events. Pupils understand the importance of maintaining a healthy life style and enjoy the increased opportunities for physical exercise. They are equipped well for their future education. Attendance has improved and is now above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are developing well because teachers are working together more effectively and have a strong commitment to improving the way pupils learn. They are embracing recent initiatives to improve curriculum links to make learning more relevant to pupils. Teachers always share the learning intentions with pupils at the start of lessons. Pupils therefore understand what they are expected to learn and settle quickly to work. Teachers use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, effectively to illustrate teaching points and make learning more enjoyable. Whole school assessment and tracking systems identify trends in pupils' performance and identify those who need additional help. The quality of day-to-day assessment is inconsistent however, and does not always ensure that work is matched effectively to pupils' different needs. Often, for example, the work set for the more able pupils lacks enough challenge to ensure they learn quickly enough. Marking is good and contains useful developmental comments. Expectations of presentation are not high enough in some classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum covers all subjects and includes a good range of extra-curricular activities including sport and the arts. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. This results in good standards in basic skills. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development well and successfully develops their understanding of healthy living and how to stay safe. Earlier this year, senior leaders reviewed the curriculum and consulted pupils about their views. They concluded the curriculum was too narrow and lacked an exciting and creative dimension. As a result of recent initiatives, this is now improving and there is better planning of curricular links that make learning more relevant for the pupils. The current theme on pollution is a good example of this since it links work in literacy, science and ICT effectively. Art, drama, dance and increased opportunities for investigative work are adding significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well. They say there is always an adult to talk to if they have any concerns. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and those who have English as an additional language is well organised. Academic guidance is mostly good although in a minority of lessons work is not always matched appropriately to pupils' needs.

There are secure procedures in relation to child protection issues. All staff pay good attention to health and safety and there are regular risk assessments. This enables pupils to feel safe and secure. The school works well with other agencies to support pupils' learning. Effective partnerships with local schools for example, introduce pupils to a range of foreign languages and ensure their smooth transition in and out of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is led and managed satisfactorily. Some good improvements have been made in recent months that have led to better provision in terms of caring for and supporting pupils and in developing the curriculum to make it more interesting for pupils. Some parents report a new vibrancy about the school and this is seen in the attitudes and enthusiasm of staff, governors and pupils. The deputy headteachers have played a very useful role in supporting staff during this period of change. Curriculum teams have been established recently to drive improvement forward but these are very new and are just beginning to identify how they will meet the task ahead.

The governing body provides satisfactory support. Governors are also in the process of reviewing and improving systems to monitor the work of the school. Individual governors bring a good range of expertise to support the school in for example, finance and the curriculum.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

27 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cippenham Junior School, Slough, SL1 5RB

Thank you all so much for your warm welcome during our recent visit. We really enjoyed spending time in your school, watching some of you working in lessons and chatting with you in the playground and the dining hall.

Our visit showed us that you are receiving a satisfactory education. We felt that some things were good.

- You are growing up as confident, polite, well-behaved young people who show good attitudes to learning.
- The school helps you understand the importance of keeping safe, fit and healthy.
- Teachers and other adults take good care of you and give you help if you need it.
- Most of you attend school regularly so you don't miss important parts of your education.
- All the adults in the school are really working hard to make things even better for you.

There are a few things we think need improvement.

- More of you should be reaching higher levels in national tests at the end of Year 6, especially in English.
- The work given to you in class could be more closely matched to your needs so that you can make even faster progress.
- The people in charge should check carefully how all the different initiatives they have introduced are helping you to make better progress and reach higher standards in your work.

I know you will continue to work hard and support your teachers and other adults so that they can help you do your very best at school.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers

Lead Inspector