



Castleview Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110092
Local Authority Slough
Inspection number 288588
Inspection date 1 November 2006
Reporting inspector Steven Hill

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Woodstock Avenue
School category	Foundation		Slough
Age range of pupils	3–11		SL3 7LJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01753 810615
Number on roll (school)	475	Fax number	01753 810851
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Mike Maydell
		Headteacher	Mr Italo Cafolla
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection date 1 November 2006	Inspection number 288588
--------------------------	-------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: 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 an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school with a nursery. About 60% of pupils are of Indian heritage, with substantial minorities from White British and Pakistani backgrounds, and small numbers from a range of other ethnic groups. Relatively few pupils (10%) are identified with learning difficulties or disabilities. Over half the pupils have a first language other than English, most commonly Urdu or Punjabi. Just 16 pupils are identified as being at the early stages of learning English. Pupils' social circumstances, while varied, are somewhat better than average overall. Children's attainment when they start school is average or slightly above in most areas, although weaker in speaking and listening skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Castleview is an outstanding school. It is a thriving and harmonious multi-racial community, where pupils' achievement is excellent regardless of their background. Standards are consistently very high. By the time they get to Year 6, two thirds of pupils achieve above the expected levels in English, mathematics and science, a higher proportion than found in the great majority of schools. The school has identified that speaking skills, while above average, are not as high as in other aspects of English, and is rightly concentrating on improving these further.

Children get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage, which is described by one parent as a '...home from home'. Excellent provision ensures that the vast majority meet the expected standards by the time they reach Year 1.

The high academic standards are matched by pupils' personal development, which is outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils have extremely positive attitudes to school. They thoroughly enjoy their lessons and take a great pride in their achievements. They form excellent relationships with each other and with staff, and boys and girls from all ethnic groups play and work together happily. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping themselves safe. Their social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is outstanding.

Teaching and learning that are consistently at least good, and often outstanding, are major factors in the school's success. Excellent classroom management is based on positive relationships and very high expectations of work and behaviour. Pupils make rapid progress because they find lessons fun and challenging, but are confident that help and support are always available if they are 'stuck'. The school has excellent procedures to track how well pupils are doing, and uses the information very well to match work to pupils' individual needs. Plans are in hand to use a new computer-based system to improve assessments even further. Good use is made of the very skilled learning support assistants to give help to pupils. This is particularly effective in ensuring the excellent progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The pastoral care for pupils is very good. One parent summed this up by writing that the school '... is like a second home to my children'.

The school has an outstanding curriculum. The excellent provision for English, mathematics and science, which leads to very high results in national assessments, is paralleled by exciting and innovative provision in other subjects. Planning that links work in different subjects helps make learning meaningful and interesting. The creative aspects of the curriculum are covered particularly well, so that pupils say they really enjoy subjects such as music and art. A current project, 'Power Drawing', to raise pupils' understanding across the curriculum through enhancing their visual skills, is enthusing pupils, who say it is helping them to learn.

The school's outstanding provision is the result of outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher and senior leaders provide excellent educational direction to the school. A well-informed governing body and hard work from all staff support them very well. The school is relentless in seeking improvements, consistently

making innovations to drive up standards further. It uses its excellent self-evaluation to seize on even the smallest perceived weaknesses, and to implement action to tackle them. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good, and the school is very well placed to go on from strength to strength.

What the school should do to improve further

While there are no major issues for improvement, the inspector agrees with the staff that the school should build on its strengths by implementing the innovations outlined in its development plan. In particular, it should focus on raising speaking skills, developing the Power Drawing project, and refining assessment procedures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are exceptionally and consistently high, because of pupils' excellent achievement across the school. Children start the school with standards that are slightly above average and, by the end of Reception, standards are clearly better than those found typically at this age, because of the very good progress children have made. Outstanding progress overall, including that of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities, continues throughout the school. Almost all pupils reach the expected standards at both Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 2, standards are significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and have been for several years. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average, with two thirds of pupils exceeding the expected standards in English, mathematics and science. At both key stages, overall achievement and standards have risen over the last few years.

Pupils have good speaking skills and contribute confidently to discussions, although the school has identified that these are not as high as standards in other aspects of English. An emphasis on developing speaking skills is being used to raise standards further and to support learning in all subjects. Pupils who are new to learning English get very effective support and make rapid progress as a result.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have very positive relationships with each other and with staff, which underpin their excellent behaviour. They are very positive about school, greatly enjoying the social aspects as well as their lessons. They appreciate the support they get from their friends, enjoy helping others, and show responsible attitudes to younger children. They work hard in class and show high levels of independence when required. Their strong relationships help them to work effectively in teams, sharing ideas and materials enthusiastically but sensibly.

Pupils have a good knowledge of healthy lifestyles and enjoy physical activities. They are enthusiastic about the good range of sports and other clubs on offer.

Attendance is above average, and has gone up significantly in the last year, following stringent efforts by the school to reduce holidays in term-time.

Pupils' very good basic skills, their positive attitudes to work and excellent social skills, stand them in very good stead for their future lives, both in school and out.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Outstanding teaching and learning strongly support pupils' high standards. Classes are managed well, and pupils work hard to meet their teachers' very high expectations of both work and behaviour. Pupils like and respect their teachers, try hard to succeed and are confident that they will get extra help if they are puzzled. Teachers make very good use of their knowledge of pupils' progress to match work to their particular needs. They keep a careful eye on how pupils are doing, so that any problems are quickly identified and addressed. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and, although some say they are less confident in teaching design and technology, the good standards of work produced show that they are doing a good job in this subject as well.

Lessons are interesting, lively and have a good pace, so that pupils find them fun and make rapid progress. The help provided by the highly skilled learning support assistants ensures that all pupils are able to participate effectively. The help given to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is sensitive and effective, strongly supporting their achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy school from the start, participating with enthusiasm in the well-designed practically based curriculum. A good balance between teacher-directed work and opportunities for children to make their own choices supports their excellent social development, as well as their very good progress academically.

The school's curriculum is exceptionally exciting, wide-ranging and innovative. Staff are constantly seeking to extend and develop the interesting activities that are provided. The most recent innovation, a 'Power Drawing' project, is already enthusing pupils in their use of visual skills across the curriculum. This is just the latest example of the many meaningful links that are made between learning in different subjects, which lead to high levels of enjoyment and excellent progress. Very good use is made of help from local secondary schools to provide specialist help in particular subjects, such as design and technology, French and Spanish.

Excellent specialist music provision, good opportunities to learn musical instruments and a wide range of visits, including substantial residential trips, all contribute to

pupils' learning and personal development. These are further enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular clubs, in which pupils participate enthusiastically.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pastoral care is very good, so that pupils feel safe and confident in school and are able to make the most of what the school provides. The inspector agrees with the parents who wrote that the '... level of care and support offered by all involved in running Castleview is, in our opinion, exceptional'.

The strong pastoral care is backed up by excellent academic support and guidance. The outstanding arrangements for assessing pupils' progress give a clear picture of how each is doing, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Staff use this information very well to ensure that work is matched to pupils' particular needs. The system allows any pupils who are falling behind to be quickly identified, and extra help is provided. This is a major factor in pupils' excellent achievement, and particularly in the progress of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Ambitious plans to extend the assessment procedures to all subjects, using a new computer-based system, are well in hand. This has the potential to raise standards even further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school's excellent standard of education, and pupils' consequent outstanding achievement and personal development, stem from outstanding leadership and management.

The headteacher shows excellent leadership and vision, ensuring that all the school's efforts are centred on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development. A very effective leadership team provides excellent support and all staff work together well to drive improvements. The school receives excellent support from the governing body, whose members have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and take a full part in helping to improve provision.

Self-evaluation is outstanding and is firmly rooted in the tracking of pupils' progress and the monitoring of teaching. The school makes very good use of assessment information to identify strengths and weaknesses, tackling the latter robustly and effectively. For example, a slight fall in the proportion of pupils reaching the highest grade in Year 6 science results has led to a thorough analysis of pupils' errors, and an effective plan to address these issues this year. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous and gives teachers clear feedback on how they can improve. This strongly supports the consistently high quality now seen in lessons.

A key to the school's success is the complete absence of complacency, and a consistent drive to make innovations that contribute to pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm, as well as raising standards.

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.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	1

The quality of provision

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

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Thank you for all your help when I visited your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and watching you at work in lessons. A special thank you to the children who took the time to meet me, and to the head boy and head girl who gave me an excellent guided tour of the school. You told me you enjoyed school, and it was easy to see why.

Castleview is an excellent school. You all make exceptionally good progress because your teachers are very good at helping you to learn. You all work hard and try your best. You get to very high standards by the end of the school in English, maths and science. You have good speaking skills, and the teachers are concentrating hard on making these even better.

The staff are very good at keeping a careful eye on how you are getting on, and making sure that no-one falls behind. The teachers are going to use the new computer based system so they can do this even better in future.

The teachers and other staff all work hard to make sure that you are safe and well cared for in school. I thought your behaviour was excellent and I was very impressed by how well you all get on together.

You get a lot of exciting and interesting things to do in lessons and in clubs, and you enjoy going on visits. The Power Drawing project should help keep things exciting and help you to learn more.

The headteacher, staff and governors are very good at organising the school and are always trying to make things better. They have very good plans for improving things this year, and I have agreed with them that they have chosen just the right things to do. You can help by working hard on your speaking skills and on your drawing.

Enjoy the rest of the year and keep working hard.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill

Lead Inspector