

Caroline Haslett Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110394
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	288655
Inspection date	14 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Richard Hancock

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kath Keilor
Headteacher	Mr P Hussey
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002
School address	Faraday Drive Shenley Lodge Milton Keynes MK5 7DF
Telephone number	01908 231101
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a mixed area of private and shared ownership housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. About a quarter of pupils are from an ethnic minority background. Some 16% of pupils are learning English as an additional language and 16 pupils are at the early stages of doing so. Most pupils have experience of pre-school provision and attainment on entry is about average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. There is a small language centre for children with speech and language difficulties.

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 with some outstanding features. Standards are above average and the achievement of pupils is good. They get off to a fast start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress to the end of Year 2. The school builds strongly on this success, especially in mathematics and science, and standards are high in both subjects by the end of Year 6, as a result of good teaching. Standards in English are average but, although pupils are very articulate and read well, they are not achieving enough in writing. Most pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make as much progress as other pupils but some lower attainers do not get enough help to eliminate persistent inaccuracies in their written work.

Outstanding care, guidance and support promote pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. With the support of staff, governors have worked directly with pupils to ensure that all aspects of their safety are fully attended to. The school has won awards for its achievements in health education and pupils not only have a very good knowledge of what makes for healthy living but enjoy debating health and safety issues. In most lessons pupils have stimulating opportunities to learn and this is a major reason why so many enjoy coming to school. Occasionally parts of lessons lack challenge and the pupils' progress slows. However, the overall profile of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are very keen to take part in educational visits, clubs and concerts which broaden their experience. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and their attendance is above average, both major factors in contributing to their good achievement. The school is very successful in promoting pupils' confidence and as a result they have a strong sense of their own self-worth. Because the curriculum is so broad pupils are able to enjoy learning about their own and other communities and to appreciate the arts of different cultures. The preparation for their future working lives is outstanding.

As a result of outstanding leadership and management, the school has made strong progress since it was last inspected. Effective monitoring has ensured that good quality teaching has been maintained and that pupils' standards have risen. Pupils' work with computers, a weakness when the school was last inspected, has been turned into a strength. The school analyses its needs accurately and identifies the right priorities for improvement. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The governing body supports the school strongly and ensures it sets its sights high. Capacity for further improvement is outstanding because the school has a knowledgeable and well motivated staff, is fully committed to giving children the very best, and can show that many of its initiatives have met with success. It enjoys the support of parents, one speaking for many when commenting:

'I am really impressed by the progress made by my child, the fact that the school is so approachable and that staff have always dealt well with any little problems that have arisen.'

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in writing by ensuring that:

- lessons consistently provide stimulating opportunities that encourage pupils to write well
- persistent inaccuracies in the work of some lower attaining pupils are effectively addressed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average. Pupils make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and by Year 3 standards are above average. Pupils continue to make good progress in mathematics and science. Their progress in English is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards are high in mathematics and science and average in English. Consistently high performance in science is a marked feature of test results. In 2006, lower attaining pupils achieved less well than other groups but there were no other disparities in the results of different groups of pupils. Given that standards are average on entry, and that results are above average by the end of Year 6, pupils' overall achievement is good. However, standards of writing are not yet high enough and the progress made by some lower attaining pupils is not sufficient. Current standards in writing are showing some improvement as a result of school initiatives.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and know there are trusted people if they need help. They have a thorough understanding of healthy life-styles. In lessons they enjoy replicating the rhythms of African drumming, debating the merits of types of shelter in the blitz, and investigating how different materials can be separated by scientific processes. They are very keen to join clubs, their behaviour is outstanding and attendance is above average. Pupils are reflective, considerate, and respect all members of the school community. They make an excellent contribution to their community by fund-raising and expressing opinions at governors' tea parties. They have a growing knowledge of the wider world, including its cultural diversity. Pupils have very well-developed skills in numeracy, reading, and speaking and listening and these attributes, together with their sense of self-esteem and awareness of other people, prepare them excellently for their working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there is some outstanding teaching in the school. Lessons are well organised, and have clear objectives which are shared with pupils who know what they have to do to succeed. The use of interactive white boards helps to illuminate and stimulate learning. A distinguishing feature of lessons is the skill with which teachers use questioning to ensure that pupils have understood what they need to know. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and excite pupils' interest so that they become enthusiastic about learning and make good progress. Occasionally lessons are less successful because they lack consistent challenge. Pupils are told what to do and have limited opportunities to develop their own ideas, to show what they know and understand and what they have learned. Lower attaining pupils do not always get the pinpointed help they need to develop their writing skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It fully serves the needs of pupils and provides excellent opportunities for learning. Pupils in the Foundation Stage experience a full range of activities to nurture their development. Lessons in science and PSHE, help pupils develop a very good understanding of how to live healthily. There is a very successful stress on the development of numeracy. Provision for science is outstanding. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is a prominent feature of learning. A strong emphasis on the development of reading and a love of books, is turned to great advantage in the very innovative 'Books Build Bridges' partnership with European schools. The curriculum is very responsive to the different needs of pupils and, recognising that standards of writing need to be higher, the school has adapted national strategies which are beginning to improve performance. The curriculum is enriched by clubs and opportunities for pupils to perform in concerts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school is clean, safe, bright and stimulating. Initiatives such as 'caring hands', for helping pupils to know which adults to turn to when they need support, work very effectively. Arrangements for protecting and safeguarding children are fully met. Very good use is made of outside support. Pupils new to this country are quickly made to feel at home. Teaching assistants provide very good care for pupils who find it difficult to adjust to school. Pupils are very well cared for in the language centre. Assemblies, circle time and lessons in personal, social and health education help pupils feel good about themselves and to respect others. Academic guidance is outstanding. Pupils have personal targets to meet and know when they have reached them. Work is carefully marked so pupils understand how well they are doing. They receive clear helpful guidance on what to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and results in appropriate priorities for its development. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and has led to improved standards. Strong teamwork has ensured the school provides a safe and stimulating environment in which pupils feel protected and valued and are encouraged to give of their best. Subject leaders ensure the progress of pupils is carefully tracked and further support made available where most needed. Target setting is well established. The school's own monitoring has identified writing as an area for development and a good start has been made on the road to ensuring that standards of writing match the high standards in science and mathematics. Lessons are regularly monitored and teachers are made aware of their strengths and areas for development to challenge teachers further. The well established and confident governing body knows the school well, supports its programme for improvement and sets challenging targets.

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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?	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	2
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?	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?	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	2
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.

Annex A

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	2
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

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

I enjoyed meeting you on my recent visit and would like to thank you for the help you gave me. I would also like to share my findings with you.

Yours is a good school. You all get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress so that by the time you reach Year 6 your standards are higher than those of pupils in most other schools. Your achievement is good and is outstanding in mathematics and science. Standards in English are not as high and, although most of you read well, I am sure that many of you can achieve more in your writing.

Your behaviour is outstanding and is helping you make the most of your lessons. I enjoyed the discussions I had with you about healthy eating and the good things that should find their way into our sandwiches. I was particularly struck by how many of you wanted to tell me how helpful your teachers were and of their kindness. I was pleased to hear that you feel safe and know there is someone you could turn to if ever you need help.

Lessons are good and I saw some especially stimulating work in history, science and music. I was pleased to see that your work is regularly marked and that you receive good feedback on how to improve. Target setting is really helping you to move forward.

You are getting good opportunities to learn and to take part in clubs, shows, and sport.

Staff work as a outstanding team to provide you with an environment which is safe and stimulating and they have good ideas for the school's future improvement. I am asking the school to make some changes to help you improve the standard of your writing so that it matches the high standard of your work in numeracy and science. I know that you like to be co-operative and I am sure that you will work with the school to bring this improvement about.

Best wishes

Richard Hancock

Lead Inspector