



Chaucer Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112568
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289331
Inspection date 23 January 2007
Reporting inspector David Speakman

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Cantelupe Road
School category	Community		Ilkeston
Age range of pupils	3-7		Derbyshire DE7 5LN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01159325629
Number on roll (school)	207	Fax number	01159327795
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr J Smith
		Headteacher	Ms J M Hampton
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

This is an average size school and draws its pupils from the local area, which experiences some degree of social disadvantage. The percentage of pupils claiming a free school meal is broadly average. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average and a small number has a statement of special educational need. Fewer pupils than average come from minority ethnic groups and a very small number of these are at the early stages of learning English. Attainment on entry is below that nationally expected for children of this age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Most children attend part-time in the Nursery for up to five terms and then between two and three terms full-time in Reception. The school has achieved the Health Promoting Schools Award and is at the Bronze level of ECO Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, which offers an extremely high quality of education enabling pupils to make excellent progress. It provides excellent value for money. This is a thriving school whose leaders have very high expectations and are always looking for ways to improve. Consequently, the school is modest in judging its effectiveness as good. It has the overwhelming support of parents who expressed highly positive views in the inspection questionnaires.

Children settle into the Nursery very quickly and soon become engaged in highly effective learning, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. They become very confident very quickly. By the time they reach the end of Year 2 attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics and has remained at this level since the previous inspection. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show that girls perform better than boys in reading and writing. Although this reflects the national picture the school is determined to raise boys' attainment to match that of girls. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 in writing is above average, but in reading and mathematics it is closer to the national average and the school is working hard to tackle this issue.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. All aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. From the time children join the school they show highly positive attitudes towards learning and are eager to participate because they enjoy school so much. Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary and helps create a highly effective learning environment. Pupils feel safe and comfortable in school and relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are of a high quality. Pupils know they are valued highly by all adults working in school. Pupils appreciate and fully engage themselves in a wide range of opportunities to eat healthily and to take physical exercise. They make an excellent contribution to the life of the school, local communities and to communities in developing countries. They are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The quality of education provided is excellent in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Teaching is extremely effective for pupils at all stages of the school. The curriculum is good and largely meets the learning needs of pupils. The quality of both pastoral and academic care and guidance is outstanding. This is all the result of excellent leadership and management. The headteacher works very closely with a team of managers. Together they are highly effective and use a comprehensive programme of monitoring to evaluate the school's performance and to identify any improvements needed. Under the excellent direction of their chair, governors are very involved in school leadership and management. They play a full role in the review process and support and challenge the senior leadership team to a high level. High quality self-evaluation and very effective leadership and management have maintained high levels of achievement and made further improvements since the last inspection. The school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help the boys to improve their reading and writing so that their standards match those of the girls more closely.
- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and mathematics so that it matches that in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

From a below average baseline pupils achieve extremely well and by the time they reach the end of Year 2, attainment in reading writing and in mathematics is above average. This profile of excellent achievement and above average standards has been maintained since the previous inspection in 2002. Children in the Foundation Stage make excellent progress and achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, and many of those identified as gifted and talented, make excellent progress. Within this overall picture of excellent achievement the school has identified that some more able pupils, particularly some boys in reading and writing, could do better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils love coming to school. They say they enjoy everything about school and find lessons interesting and enjoyable. Attendance has improved. It is now satisfactory but too many parents still take their children out of school for family holidays during term time despite the school working hard to discourage them. Pupils find playtimes calm and safe and they feel they are able to play happily with their friends. They know that there is someone to go to if they are ever worried and that something will always be done to help them, should they need support and assistance. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community through doing jobs and their ECO work, such as bulb plantings and keeping the school site clean and tidy. They are very involved with the local community and regularly perform in local venues or take part in civic activities, such as Remembrance Day. Pupils are active in fund raising, for example, recent endeavours have provided a village in Africa with toilets and clean water kits. This type of activity helps to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills and, with their very good numeracy and literacy skills, prepares them very well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The school has a team of highly skilled and experienced teachers. They provide an outstanding quality of teaching and contribute much to pupils' excellent achievement. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and set challenging activities and a brisk pace to their lessons which accelerate pupils' learning. Teachers know their pupils very well and have good knowledge of how they learn best. Consequently, teachers plan lessons that use a wide variety of learning styles, carefully chosen to suit age, ability and subject. Information and communication technology (ICT) is widely used to make teaching clear and to make learning interesting, through the use of interactive whiteboards for example, which both teachers and pupils use very effectively. Teachers are skilled at making sure that all pupils are involved actively. Even pupils who are shy and reluctant to come forwards are skilfully included through well-directed and focused questions. Teaching assistants are highly competent, work closely with teachers and make a significant contribution to the achievement of pupils in their care. Teachers use day-to-day assessment and feedback (both oral and written marking) extremely well to tell pupils how well they are doing, what they need to improve and how to do so through effective target setting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT in the curriculum. The school has developed secure links between literacy and other subjects, which adds meaning to learning and gives pupils extra opportunities to practise skills such as reading and writing. Staff mostly plan well for different groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and gifted and talented pupils, although a few more able pupils could do better in reading and mathematics. Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent and underpins pupils' excellent personal development. Through links with the community and a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors, the curriculum benefits from a good level of enrichment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All adults working in the school show high levels of commitment to the care and welfare of pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are fully in place. Links with care agencies ensure a very high level of support for those pupils who, from time to time, may be at risk. Pupils are very well looked after in school. Any rare incident of intimidation is dealt with sensitively and effectively. Academic guidance is outstanding and where it has been identified that there is a need for improvement, pupils are being skilfully guided to achieve the required improvement. Right from the Nursery, children's progress is individually monitored and tracked to ensure they are

making the best possible progress. Pupils are kept fully aware and are included in assessing how well they are doing and in setting their targets for the next steps in learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Team-work is central to the highly effective leadership and management, which helps make the school so successful. The headteacher works in very close collaboration with other staff, particularly the senior leadership team, to monitor and evaluate very carefully the effectiveness of all aspects of the school's performance. The governors provide excellent support and challenge to the leadership team. They join the staff in monitoring and evaluating school effectiveness. Together they all establish an extremely clear way forward through the highly effective plan for improvement, which is clearly focused on pupils' academic achievement and personal development. Leaders are fully aware of issues identified by this inspection and have plans in hand to improve the performance of small groups of identified pupils.

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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?	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	2
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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 January 2007

Dear Children

Chaucer Infant School, Cantelupe Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 5LN

Dear Pupils,

I was very pleased to visit your school recently and I was very impressed by what I saw. You go to an excellent school and this shows in the outstanding progress you make, both in lessons and in your own personal development. I thought you behaved extremely well in lessons. From the enthusiastic way in which you joined in and cooperated with teachers and teaching assistants, I could tell how much you enjoy school. Those of you that I spoke to throughout the day told me that you enjoy everything about school.

Your headteacher, teachers and other adults work very hard to make life in school interesting and enjoyable for you all. They succeed very well and you help them by making the most of all the opportunities they give you. They care very much for your well-being and in turn you care very much for your friends and others. I like the way you all think about other children, either in school or in other countries. You were very kind to raise funds to help those people out in Africa so they can have decent toilets and drinking water. I am sure they are very grateful to you.

To make things even better I have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to:

- Make sure that boys do as well as girls in the tests at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing.
- Help all of you who are capable, to reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics.

I wish you all the best for the future and I feel confident that you will carry on playing your part in making Chaucer Infants a very successful school.

David Speakman

Lead Inspector