



Calow Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112876
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289448
Inspection dates 2–3 November 2006
Reporting inspector David Speakman

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	North Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Calow, Chesterfield
Age range of pupils	3–11		Derbyshire S44 5BD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01246274370
Number on roll (school)	191	Fax number	01246274370
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Jon Clark
		Headteacher	Mr Martin Thacker
Date of previous school inspection	24 April 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	2–3 November 2006	289448

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Calow Primary School is an average sized school. It generally draws most of its pupils from the local area, but about two fifths come from out of district. Children attend the nursery part-time. The percentage of pupils claiming a free school meal is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is average, and an average number has a statement of special educational needs. Far fewer pupils than average come from minority ethnic groups and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. Attainment on entry is average. The school is involved in initiatives such as Health Promoting Schools, Derbyshire's Anti-Bullying Commitment Scheme, ECO Schools and has achieved the Football Association Charter Mark, Investors in People and the Basic Skills Agency Charter Mark.

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, which has shown significant improvement since the appointment of the current headteacher and which has an excellent capacity to improve even further. The school judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory, but school leaders have been cautious; they have not yet taken into account the recent improvement in pupils' achievement, as they are waiting for results to be verified. After being above average for several years, Key Stage 2 results dipped to an average level in 2005; this was due to some disruption in teaching. However, achievement is once again good and results at the end of Year 6 were above average in 2006. Test results and the school's own assessment data show that achievement and standards in writing are not as good as in speaking and listening and reading. The school has recognised this area for improvement and is working hard to address it.

There has been a notable improvement in many areas since the appointment of the headteacher almost two years ago. This view is strongly supported by staff, pupils, parents and governors, all of whom show high levels of confidence in the excellent leadership of the headteacher. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are now good. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff and governors. Governors are much better informed and more involved. Pupils say they now enjoy coming to school, their attendance is now above average and there is a very positive atmosphere and their behaviour is better. They feel they are valued and fully involved and they make an excellent contribution to the life of the school. They look after each other extremely well and this helps make the school a safe and enjoyable place to be. Pupils have an excellent awareness of maintaining a healthy life style and their involvement in the many opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Good overall standards in literacy, numeracy and in using computers prepare pupils well for the future.

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good across the school and enables pupils to progress well. Teachers do not however, always insist enough on good quality presentation of pupils' work. Teachers' positive approach to teaching and good planning encourage pupils at all levels of attainment to be confident learners. The curriculum is good and is particularly strong in its approach to pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. However there is scope to develop the curriculum further by planning links between literacy and other subjects to improve standards in writing. The staff are fully committed to the care, welfare and safety of all pupils. This is a strong area of the school's provision and pupils receive good personal and academic guidance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing in order to improve standards in English and in other subjects.
- Strengthen the curriculum by identifying ways in which subjects other than English can be used to raise standards in writing.
- Ensure that pupils are given the skills to improve the presentation of their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well at all stages of the school and most recent test results at the end of Year 6 are above average in English and well above average in mathematics. Above average results have been maintained at the end of Year 6 for some years, but fell in 2005 and were broadly average. There was some disruption to the teaching of this year group and their achievement was not as good as in other years. However achievement has recovered now and the improvement is reflected in the school's assessment data for pupils now in Years 5 and 6, which shows they are on course to achieve the challenging targets set for them. Standards for different year groups in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 vary. Those currently in Years 2 and 3 left the reception class without having achieved the goals that children are expected to reach, by then and their achievement was unsatisfactory. However, they achieved well in Years 1 and 2 and attainment was average by the end of Year 2. Recent improvement in the Foundation Stage provision is now reflected in good standards of achievement in both the nursery and reception class. The school's tracking data shows that children Key Stage 1 are now making good progress and the school predicts an improvement in standards at the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, achievement and standards in writing are not as good as in other aspects of literacy and the school has identified this as a major area for improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is a calm and happy environment where pupils feel safe. Behaviour is well managed and consequently is good. Introduction of 'playground pals' has had a positive impact on relationships between pupils. They enjoy their education and attendance is good. Pupils feel valued and have the confidence to make an effective contribution in lessons. However, the pride pupils have for their work is not always demonstrated clearly enough through high standards of presentation. Pupils have a high awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are fully involved in the Healthy Schools project. They grow vegetables in the school garden for use in the school kitchen and choose healthy options at lunch. The majority of pupils take part in the wide range of extra curricular activities to promote their physical fitness. Pupils of all ages make an extremely positive contribution to school life through the School and Class Councils and have a very meaningful voice in school life. They willingly and enthusiastically take on special responsibilities and contribute very well to the smooth running of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes good achievement at all stages of the school. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and this results in any inappropriate behaviour from individual pupils being successfully dealt with and lessons proceeding as planned, without interruption. Planning is good and effectively meets the learning needs of pupils at all levels of attainment. Learning intentions are made clear at the start of lessons so pupils are aware of what is expected of them; learning is effectively reviewed at the end, so pupils know what they can do well and what needs to be improved. Questions are well planned to cater for different levels of attainment, so pupils are confident in answering. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils, but do not always insist enough on good quality presentation of work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good although there is not enough opportunity in all subjects for pupils to apply and improve their literacy skills. The curriculum is well organised to take account of pupils' individual learning needs, in particular pupils at different levels of attainment. Personal, social and health education and citizenship are well established and are significant strengths in the curriculum. Learning activities in the Foundation Stage are stimulating and provide children with a good start to their education. The school is very inclusive and pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities which make a good contribution to their academic and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care and support is good and there is a strong emphasis on nurturing and developing each individual pupil. Pupils are well supported academically because there are good systems for checking and tracking their progress. The school works closely with parents and a wide range of support agencies to ensure that pupils who need extra help receive the necessary support. The systems for monitoring the health, safety and protection of pupils are rigorous and meet fully all the statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and, in the time he has been in post, he has secured some significant improvements in provision and standards. He has

quickly established a very strong ethos of teamwork. By enabling and encouraging staff and governors to be fully involved and to take responsibility for their areas of work, he has established an extremely clear, shared vision for the school's continued improvement. All staff and governors contribute to the excellent school improvement plan, which makes the way forward very clear. However, since some of the staff with responsibility are new to their roles, there is further work for them to do, particularly in relation to raising standards in writing. The work of the governing body is good. Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are fully involved in the self evaluation process. They are supportive of the school's work but also provide a healthy level of challenge. This school provides good value for money.

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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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?	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	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	2

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?	2
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

5 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Calow CE Primary School, North Road, Calow, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 5BD

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed watching your lessons, talking to you and finding out about what you do throughout the day. You had some really good things to say about your life in school, and how your headteacher and staff work hard to make you feel comfortable there. It is clear that you enjoy school and we were impressed by the way you all get on together and the lovely atmosphere in Calow CE Primary. We feel you all contribute to the good progress you make by cooperating with your teachers and behaving well in and around school. You can also help to improve your work by taking a greater pride in the way you present it. You go to a good school, which is getting better all the time and we feel confident will improve even more.

We have asked the headteacher, teachers and governors to make a few improvements for you. These are mostly linked to writing. We would like them to:

- help you all to improve the quality of your writing
- find different ways in which writing can be practised and improved in subjects other than English
- expect you to make your work neater and better presented.

David Speakman

Lead inspector