



Carrant Brook Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115750
Local Authority Gloucestershire
Inspection number 290328
Inspection date 27 November 2006
Reporting inspector Lorna Brackstone

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Hardwick Bank Road
School category	Community		Northway
Age range of pupils	7-11		Tewkesbury GL20 8RP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01684 297065
Number on roll (school)	192	Fax number	01684 292439
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	John Savory
		Headteacher	David Forster
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized junior school with seven classes, which serves a range of social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Carrant Brook is a good school. From a below average start in Year 3, pupils achieve well because teaching is good and their progress is very carefully tracked. School leaders and governors have high expectations for the school. They have very good systems for analysing its performance and they set challenging targets for pupils' achievement which are successfully met. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in mathematics, and pupils make outstanding progress because the quality of teaching in this subject is excellent. Standards are average overall in English. Pupils do particularly well in reading because the teaching of literacy skills is well planned and there are high quality support groups for those pupils who have difficulties. Pupils make sound progress in writing and science but standards are below average because there are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to organise their own work and record their ideas and observations.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils have good attitudes to their work because they are rewarded for high quality effort. Behaviour and relationships are good, as a result of the pupils having a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They feel safe and secure because the school looks after them well and there are robust systems in place for their protection. This is endorsed by parents who feel that the school has a good atmosphere and 'staff create a safe environment where the children are encouraged'. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are good, but the information is not always used as well as it might be to set targets for the next stage in their learning. Pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve. Parents are almost unanimous in their praise of the school and are delighted with the way the school works with them. A strength noted by several parents is the way the transition from the infant school is managed very well. They also feel that the school 'plays a major part in the educational and emotional growth of the children'. The pupils like school and agree that it is 'always nice and friendly'. Pupils are prepared well for their future because they play a full part in their school community and have a good understanding of the wider world.

Good leadership and management ensure that senior leaders have a secure insight into the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Their judgements of the school's performance are realistic and they have a good capacity to improve because they know what to do next. Governors are very involved in the life of the school and are fully committed to providing the pupils with the best possible education. They ask challenging questions to check decisions and are starting to be more involved in planning for school improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve achievement in writing and science by developing more opportunities for pupils to plan their own work and decide how to record their ideas and observations
- ensure that target setting is consistent throughout the school and that pupils know how they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In relation to their below average starting points in Year 3, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well and are well prepared for their future education. In the 2005 Year 6 national tests, standards were well above average. In 2006 tests, results in mathematics were maintained at an above average level and this represents exceptional progress from a low starting point in Year 3. Standards in English were average overall but pupils achieved exceptionally well in reading. Standards were below average in writing and science. The school has recognised that this was because pupils were too reliant on being teacher-led and did not have sufficient confidence to adapt their knowledge and skills to new situations. Pupils with learning difficulties make very good progress because they are supported well in class. More able pupils are challenged and also achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good personal development and well-being underpin pupils' good achievement. Good moral and social development results in high quality behaviour, mutual respect and self-confidence. Spiritual and cultural development is equally strong and ensures that the pupils take time to reflect about issues such as the importance of family life. Pupils appreciate the world around them and show a good understanding of the diversity of the society in which they live. Pupils enjoy school, work hard and are very positive about all aspects of school life. Attendance is in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly but despite the regular involvement of appropriate agencies, attendance is poor for a small number. Pupils speak knowledgeably about eating healthily and they explain why exercise is so important. They use the morning 'Wake and Shake' routine as a good way of getting active when they first arrive in school. They have no concerns about bullying and feel safe in school. Pupils enjoy helping their teachers around school and Year 6 are eager to take on responsibilities as monitors and house captains. All pupils support the school well through participation in inter-house competitions and are involved in community projects, such as creating a wildlife area. Pupils' good response to appeals, such as fundraising for a children's hospice and sending books to Africa, shows how well they contribute towards the wider community

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Expectations of work and behaviour are high and this enables pupils to concentrate well in their lessons. Teachers match work well to pupils' levels of ability, particularly in mathematics, where teaching is outstanding. In these lessons, the pupils are grouped

according to their abilities and the pace of learning is good. Teachers use real-life examples to help pupils understand what skills they need to use. This was illustrated well in a lesson focusing on division where pupils were required to divide 20 envelopes between four secretaries. The school fully recognises that the teachers need to help the pupils plan and organise their own written work, and encourage them to use their ideas and observations much more, particularly in science. Assessments are used to move learning on and reviewed by senior managers so that any areas for development can be quickly dealt with. Teaching assistants provide good effective support for individual pupils with whom they work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The well structured curriculum ensures that the pupils have a good range of experiences. Mathematics sessions are particularly well planned to develop problem-solving skills. Reading skills are extended well through a very good programme of well-structured activities. However, writing and science activities are not developed sufficiently well across the curriculum to provide pupils with opportunities to think for themselves and organise their own work. Good use is made of support strategies, such as mathematics clubs and booster sessions, to help pupils with specific learning difficulties. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities that enhance their learning. Several parents agreed that 'having the teachers so greatly committed to these activities is so beneficial to the children, improving their confidence and abilities'. Involvement in activities such as chess and sporting competitions makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils work in safe surroundings and good child protection procedures are in place. Pastoral care is strong, and relationships are open and supportive. The well planned programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) provides good opportunities for pupils to talk to an adult about any problems. This helps pupils feel secure and confident that any concerns they might have will be sorted out. Parents appreciate the way that pupils with learning difficulties are quickly identified and supported well through individual programmes. They also appreciate that they can seek guidance and support at any time. This is endorsed by a parent who expressed delight at the way she works so closely with the school, enabling her child to be 'on the way to much improvement'. Pupils are set targets but systems for doing this vary from one class to another. This means that not all pupils are clear about how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership of the headteacher is reflected in the way he sets clear educational direction within a calm and purposeful atmosphere and works very closely with senior staff. The leadership team has devised outstanding systems for tracking pupil progress, which also identify strengths in the teaching and any training needs. Governors bring a range of important skills and experience to their work. They understand the achievements of the school and how to support its ongoing development. Outside agencies are used well for specialist support and as a way of measuring itself against national standards. For example, a recent audit when the school applied for a review of their Investors in People Award recognised the commitment to, and value of, staff professional development.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3
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?	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	2
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

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I really enjoyed meeting you all in assembly and was very interested in seeing you at work in your classrooms. A special thanks to the group of pupils I met who told me all about life at Carrant Brook.

Your school provides you with a good education. You feel safe and cared for because the school looks after you well and gives you good support with your learning. You make exceptional progress in mathematics and reading and by Year 6 reach good standards with these skills. This helps you to be prepared you for the next stage of your education. You behave well and enjoy your learning because teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned. You are very proud of the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities which you told me you really enjoy. The adults in charge of the school are leading and managing the school well. Your headteacher, senior staff and governors are determined to give you the very best education.

To help you become an even better school, I have asked your teachers to:

- help you improve your writing and scientific skills by giving you more opportunities to decide how you will organise and record your work
- devise consistent ways of setting you clear targets so that you know what to do to improve your work.

As you can see, you have your part to play. I wish you lots of luck for the future.