

Cedar Road Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	121911
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	292258
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	N Kitson
Headteacher	Kay Elizabeth Gerrett
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2002
School address	Cedar Road East Northampton NN3 2JF
Telephone number	01604 712645
Fax number	01604 712672

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2007
Inspection number	292258

Amended Report Addendum

© Crown copyright 2007

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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size. Most pupils are of White British heritage, but an above average number of pupils (20%) come from a diverse range of ethnic minority backgrounds. Twenty pupils receive support in learning English as a new language but only three are at a very early stage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The school has an unusually high proportion of boys.

Since the last inspection, the age range of pupils has changed. It was previously designated a Lower School and pupils moved to their next school at the end of Year 4. The school has also had two changes of headteacher since that time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school where children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and where pupils' personal development is good. The school provides warm care and support so that pupils feel happy and secure at school, form good relationships and trust the adults that work with them.

Children start in the Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are often lower than expected at this age, but good teaching provision results in their ability to reach expected levels at the end of this first year. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. In Year 6, pupils are working at just above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and this results in pupils' overall satisfactory achievement. Through appropriate support, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils new to learning English receive a similar level of support and make satisfactory gains. Assessment and tracking procedures are satisfactory but teachers do not always use this information to match accurately the work to pupils' needs. Consequently, expectations of what pupils can do are not always high enough and pupils are not challenged fully. This unnecessarily limits what they can achieve. The curriculum is satisfactory and additional activities and experiences enhance learning well. Care, guidance and support arrangements are satisfactory overall. Care arrangements are good and parents are very confident that if problems arise these are dealt with promptly but pupils do not always receive the guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is aware of the need to raise standards so pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education but too much of her time this year has, of necessity, been given to overseeing the building works and managing staff changes. Consequently, there has not been enough time for sufficient attention to be paid to rigorous monitoring provision and to ensure consistently good classroom practice. Similarly, not all middle managers have monitored their subjects closely enough to identify how provision could be improved. Governors are very supportive and manage finances well but their involvement in monitoring the school's performance is too limited. Nevertheless, action has been taken to raise pupils' performance in science and mathematics. Better assessment data is helping the school to identify, at an early stage, the pupils who need additional support to meet their targets. The school judges itself as satisfactory and this is accurate. The senior managers recognise what needs to be done to become a good school and have the capacity to achieve this. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching by challenging all pupils fully in every lesson.
- Use the assessment data to match work to pupils' needs more accurately.
- Ensure that middle managers effectively monitor the subjects for which they are responsible, so that pupils can make much faster progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start in the Reception classes with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected at this age. Their literacy and numeracy skills are particularly weak. Careful assessments identify children's individual needs and activities are modified accordingly so that all children achieve well. Those new to learning English receive good support and progress well. Most children leave the Reception Year having achieved all the early learning goals.

Achievement in Years 1 to 6 has improved since 2006 and is now satisfactory in all subjects and for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those new to learning English. In the national assessments in 2006, pupils in Year 2 reached standards that were at the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. In these same national tests, pupils in Year 6 attained above average standards in English but were well below average in mathematics and below average in science. With improvements in assessment this year and interventions such as additional support for targeted groups, Year 6 pupils are now working at slightly above average levels in all three subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although spiritual and cultural development is not quite as good as it could be. Pupils are mature and sensible, behave well and respect others. 'It's like one big family,' said one pupil. Older pupils act as 'playground pals', making sure playtimes are friendly and safe and everyone has someone to play with. Pupils' spiritual development is restricted because the school does not always seize opportunities for reflection, for example, in assemblies, or to celebrate the richness and diversity within the school. While pupils are well aware of the western cultural traditions, their awareness of the multicultural nature of the society in which they live is limited.

Pupils enjoy learning and pupils as young as those in Year 2 participate enthusiastically in the many clubs the school organises. School council members represent their classmates proudly, influencing decisions regarding play equipment, for example. Through residential visits and other social events, pupils successfully learn to work with others. They contribute well to the local community by sharing their musical talents at public events and by supporting good causes through fund raising events.

Pupils understand the importance of healthy living as they enjoy eating fruit and take physical exercise through various sports clubs. They know drugs are harmful and know how to stay safe. Attendance is satisfactory but the frequent absence of a few affects their achievement. Regular visits and many visitors introduce pupils to life and work beyond the school. Satisfactory achievement in their academic skills prepares pupils adequately for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In the Foundation Stage, where teaching is good, teachers take good account of what children can do and plan activities that challenge and extend them well. In Years 1 to 6, while some

lessons are good, teaching is generally satisfactory. Teachers do not always check that the work they prepare and the activities and resources they select are matched precisely enough to pupils' needs. This is because not all teachers accurately use the assessment information they have to build on pupils' prior learning or provide pupils working at different levels with alternative starting points for their tasks. Therefore, pupils are not always challenged fully and opportunities for them to work independently and take greater responsibility for assessing their learning are limited.

Lessons are generally well managed and teaching assistants help, for example, by assessing individual pupils, supporting small groups of pupils and managing practical investigations in science. Because relationships are good, pupils are confident in asking for help. Those who need individual attention receive this and recent improvements that include more practical activities in mathematics and science are helping pupils achieve more.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Good curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage encourages children to work both independently and under guidance on a wide range of interesting and well constructed activities that help them to achieve well.

In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is planned in themes and topics. Teachers plan in year groups to ensure some level of consistency but links between curriculum areas are not clearly defined and pupils do not always understand the purpose of the lesson. Similarly, the planning from year to year sometimes fails to check that pupils build on previous learning in all subjects step by step and this hampers their progress. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision has improved since the last inspection but the promotion of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through other subjects is limited. Strategies to address the weaknesses in mathematics and develop investigations in science have resulted in improved standards this year. A good personal, social and health education programme underpins pupils' personal development well. Many additional events and the numerous sports and other clubs enrich learning well. Good links with other schools and the local community provide pupils with experiences of life beyond the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school looks after pupils well. They know they will be listened to if problems arise. They learn how to live healthy, happy lives and stay safe. Procedures for child protection, health and safety and safeguarding pupils are all secure. Procedures for the reporting of racial incidents are sound and prompt action is taken if issues arise.

Pupils' attainment is tracked carefully and helpful targets are set for further progress. Effective action is taken to support pupils who need specific help and external agencies involved if appropriate. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress to other pupils because of well targeted support. An experienced teaching assistant successfully supports pupils new to learning English so that they participate fully in all activities. However, not all teachers make the most effective use of the assessment information that is gathered in order to match work accurately to pupils' needs and to secure high achievement. In some classes, pupils have individual targets but this practice is inconsistent, as is the quality of teachers' marking, which often does not clearly advise pupils as to how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The partnership with parents, who are very supportive of the school, has developed significantly since the arrival of the current headteacher. Effective teamwork is emerging with a shared vision that has at its heart the importance of each individual pupil. This is already having a positive impact on achievement and all members of the school community feel the school is a happy place to be in.

Governors carry out their duties satisfactorily but they are not involved enough in monitoring the school's performance, particularly in ensuring higher standards. While middle managers have attended relevant training, they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring provision in their subjects and analysing pupils' progress carefully enough to ensure their good progress.

The school evaluates its performance satisfactorily and identifies accurately what needs to be done to make improvements. The issues from the last inspection have been fully dealt with. Against a backcloth of major disruption caused by the extensive building project, appropriate action has been taken to reverse the decline in standards in mathematics and science last year, and teaching in these subjects has improved. This success demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

27 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cedar Road Primary School, Northampton, NN3 2JF

I am writing to tell you what we found out when we came to your school recently and looked at the work you do and talked to your teachers. It was lovely meeting you. Thank you for making us feel part of your 'happy school family' and for being so friendly and polite. We know it has been hard for you coping with the building work that has been going on around you but it will look nice when it is finished. I am sorry we could not spend longer listening to your school band but it sounded really good, as did your singing!

- While the school on the whole is satisfactory, some things are good and others could be better.
- You enjoy being there, try your best and get the results we expect from children of your age. Although the results last year in mathematics and science were not good enough, the teachers have improved teaching in these subjects so that now lessons are always at least satisfactory.
- The work you do in all the subjects is satisfactory but all the additional clubs, the interesting visitors and visits you have are really good.
- The school takes good care of you. Your teachers and other staff listen to you and help you if you have problems but they do not always give you work that is hard enough to help you achieve even more.
- You behave well and know so much about staying fit and healthy.
- The headteacher has had to spend a lot of her time on making sure the building work went smoothly which means that she has not been able to make sure that work in all the subjects has been checked and improved where necessary.
- There are a few things we have asked your teachers to do to improve your school.
- They should set you harder work so that you learn even more in all your lessons.
- They should use the information they have about how well you are doing to set you the right work that you need to do next.
- They should check what happens in the lessons in all the subjects to see what can be done to make improvements.

There are things you could do to help, too. For example, you could make sure you always check your work and even ask for harder things to do if you finish quickly. It is lovely that you enjoy school so much and we hope that you continue to do well.

Yours sincerely Rajinder Harrison (Lead inspector)