



Chadsmoor Community Infants & Nursey School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124068
Local Authority Staffordshire
Inspection number 292879
Inspection date 28 February 2007
Reporting inspector Ian Hodgkinson

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Kingsway
School category	Community		Chadsmoor
Age range of pupils	3-7		Cannock WS11 6EU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01543 570718
Number on roll (school)	204	Fax number	01543 468279
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Muriel Davis
		Headteacher	Karen Burns
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a residential area on the western edge of Cannock. Relatively poor employment prospects for many families mean that many pupils come from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average, although the proportion with statements of special educational need is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage.

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. It benefits from a first-rate group of staff with high aspirations for every child. Teachers and their assistants work with dedication in highly effective teams to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils. They continually check on pupils' progress against clearly defined targets so that they can intervene promptly to offer more support or challenge where necessary. The quality of academic support and guidance for pupils is exemplary throughout. It underpins the excellent teaching and learning in the school, because teachers and pupils have such a clear view about what each pupil needs to do to improve. As a consequence, pupils achieve exceptionally well, and reach standards that are above average by the time they leave in Year 2. While the skills of those who start school in the Nursery or in Reception are generally well below those expected for their age, pupils end the Reception Year with skills that are broadly average. This remarkable progress through the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) results from a skilfully planned balance of activities which ensures that, whether in independent or adult directed activities, children are all purposefully engaged and continually developing their skills.

A sense of fun and enjoyment permeates the school, and staff provide an exceptional degree of care for the pupils. This is keenly felt by parents, one of whom summed up the views of many when she wrote that, 'The staff within this school make the children feel secure and happy, and provide them with fantastic learning opportunities.' Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. They are especially well equipped with the skills they will need for the next stage of their education. This is because the school's good curriculum offers such a focus on the effective development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills and on their social and emotional development. Pupils' moral development is excellent too. Pupils conduct themselves very well in formal situations such as lessons and assemblies, although the behaviour of some in the playground can be rather boisterous. There are relatively few outdoor play facilities to provide sufficient channel for pupils' energy at lunchtime. These limitations also constrain opportunities to develop pupils' physical skills. While pupils enjoy school greatly, overall attendance is just average, and those with poor attendance records do not make the very strong progress achieved by many of their peers.

The school is driven forward by excellent leadership and management at all levels. Its self-evaluation, while modest in its judgements, has been highly effective in identifying weaknesses in performance and planning swift, resolute, and innovative action to overcome them. As a consequence, the school has been able to improve on its very strong performance at its previous inspection, particularly in raising standards of writing and the use of information and communication technology (ICT). It is, therefore, exceptionally well placed to improve further, and to ensure that, in the words of one parent, 'children's education just thrives at this school'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' attendance.

- Support pupils' physical development and the quality of play opportunities at lunchtime by improving provision of outdoor play facilities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is excellent. Although pupils' skills are low on joining the school, standards are above average overall by the end of Year 2. Weaknesses are clearly diagnosed when pupils join the Nursery or Reception, and innovative methods used to address these, such as the Chatterbox device used to encourage children to speak about personal items, and the 'Bob the Builder' context for encouraging boys' writing. As a consequence, children make excellent progress and their skills are broadly average by the end of the Foundation Stage, although writing remains a relative weakness. Across Years 1 and 2, however, pupils make excellent progress in writing. This is because they work to clear targets for the development of their writing skills, and are encouraged to apply these skills by writing at length about interesting topics, both in literacy lessons and in a range of other subjects. By the end of Year 2 results in writing assessments are consistently above average. This is a very significant improvement on the last inspection, when writing standards were below average. In the 2006 assessments, boys performed particularly strongly relative to other boys nationally. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make excellent progress because teaching is so carefully tailored to meet their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. From the time children arrive in the Nursery, they grow in confidence as a result of the school's focus on developing their self-esteem. They are, therefore, willing contributors in lessons, assemblies and school productions, and give extended answers to teachers' detailed questions. They work together very constructively in solving problems and willingly take on responsibilities in class. Their opportunities for contributing to whole-school developments are limited at the moment because of a lack of a school council, but such a body is planned to start later in the year. Pupils' excellent moral development is shown in their first-class behaviour in lessons and assemblies, where they also show a good regard for working safely. Occasional over-boisterous play at lunchtimes, however, ends in tears for some. Pupils have a good awareness of how to live healthily and many are willing to try a range of healthy foods from the school canteen.

Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education and for later life. Attendance is satisfactory. In the last academic year, though, overall attendance was below average. While currently broadly average, it remains a little below the school's target, and the attendance of some pupils is poor. The school stresses the importance of good attendance to parents and pupils, and works with other agencies to support those with poor attendance. There is, however, scope for more rigour in following up general absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers and their assistants plan comprehensively to meet the needs of their pupils. They set very clear objectives for pupils' learning, and continually assess pupils' performance against those objectives. The pupils themselves are well aware of their targets, and bear them closely in mind while completing their work. They get excellent and prompt feedback from their teachers about their progress in relation to their targets. Pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. Their enjoyment of learning is stimulated by the rich variety of methods and resources used by their teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants share methods and resources very effectively, and the dynamic exchange of ideas between staff ensures that best practice is spread throughout the school. Pupils with learning difficulties receive excellent support through work which is well matched to their abilities in whole-class, small group or one-to-one lessons as appropriate. Resources are carefully chosen to ensure that higher attainers are stretched, and end of Year 2 assessments in 2006 showed that higher attainers made particularly good progress in all areas.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has a number of outstanding features. It is exceptionally well planned to ensure that pupils continually make progress in their academic, personal and social skills. Very good links are made between subjects so that pupils can apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills well in a range of contexts. Trips and visits to the local community and beyond are used very well to stimulate pupils' ideas and interests. The use of ICT by both teachers and pupils has improved considerably since the last inspection and is having a very positive effect in supporting pupils' reading and writing skills. The school's strong emphasis on developing the social and emotional aspects of learning has a very positive effect on developing pupils' social skills and self-esteem. There is a sound range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. While some good learning goes on outdoors, outdoor play facilities are limited at present and constrain opportunities to develop pupils' physical skills and occupy them purposefully at lunchtimes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school offers outstanding care for its pupils' well-being. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and protection are fully in place. Teaching and non-teaching staff know each child very well, and pupils have a great deal of confidence that they can turn to adults for help if needed. Parents appreciate the ease with which they can make contact with the staff to discuss and resolve any problems, and the efforts made by the school to involve them in their children's education. The school works very closely with other

agencies to ensure that the specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are well met. It has also, however, made the strategic decision to commit resources to a relatively high number of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. The exemplary quality of teamwork between teachers and their assistants is highly effective in ensuring that all groups of pupils make excellent progress. Pupils are given excellent support and guidance in their academic development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Staff throughout the school share high expectations for their pupils and are relentless in reviewing their own performance to keep standards high. This culture of continuous improvement is well established in the school and comes from its excellent leadership at all levels. A highly experienced governing body offers the school much support and challenge, despite its difficulties in recruiting active parent governors. It has been successful in ensuring a high degree of stability in the staffing and resourcing of the school, thereby securing excellent value for money. The headteacher, new in post since September, has worked highly effectively with her excellent senior management team and middle managers to analyse the school's strengths and weaknesses with rigour. A coherent school development plan emerges from this self-evaluation process, and the success of the plan is carefully and regularly reviewed. The school's innovative approaches to raising standards are derived in part from some excellent links with partner schools and other organisations, who in turn often use Chadsmoor approaches as models of good practice.

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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	2
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	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	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	1
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

Many thanks for the welcome you gave me when I visited the school for its recent inspection. I really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. Your singing in assembly was fantastic. It gave me a real sense of how much you enjoy school.

- Like you and your parents, I think your school is outstanding. These are the main reasons why.
- The teaching is excellent.
- Teachers and other staff keep a very careful check on your progress and welfare, and make sure that everyone has exactly the support they need.
- You make excellent progress to get to standards which are higher than average when you leave.
- You get excellent preparation for your next school.
- You develop a lot of confidence and work well with others.
- The headteacher and other staff, along with the governors, give the school excellent leadership, and are always working hard to improve the school.
- There are two main ways in which the school could get even better.
- Your attendance is just about satisfactory, but could be better.
- Some of the facilities for play outdoors could be improved.

Those of you who miss school a lot do not make the excellent progress made by others. You can clearly help here by making sure that you come to school regularly so that you do not miss out on learning.

Congratulations on playing your part in such an excellent school. I wish you every success for the future.