

Charnwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124185
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	292917
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Frances Gillam

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Gill
Headteacher	David J Isaac
Date of previous school inspection	9 September 2002
School address	Purcell Avenue Lichfield WS13 7PH
Telephone number	01543 512015
Fax number	01543 512019

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Charnwood is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is lower than in most schools. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, a few of whom are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Charnwood is a satisfactory school that has established a positive climate for learning. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are friendly and polite. Their excellent behaviour and the respect they have for others lead to strong and trusting relationships. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe and well cared for. A strength of the satisfactory care, guidance and support they receive is the strong emphasis the school places on safeguarding pupils and promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils make sensible choices about their diet and make very good use of the sporting activities the school provides. The school council plays an important role in making their school a better place to be. The pupils' contribution to the community is good. They take part in local events and raise charitable funds enthusiastically because they want to help others less fortunate than themselves. All pupils have targets to help them improve their work. Older pupils use these regularly to gauge how well they are doing and what they need to do next but some pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, are not sure of their targets because they sometimes find them difficult to understand. This means they are not always able to improve their work further.

Good provision because of effective teaching and a lively curriculum in the Foundation Stage captures children's interest and motivates them to do well. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below that expected for their age. By the time children enter Year 1, standards are average and children make good progress. In Years 1 to 6, satisfactory teaching and learning help pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, to make satisfactory progress and reach average standards by the time they leave the school. Teachers value pupils' efforts and praise their achievements. These features encourage pupils to work hard and grow in confidence. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they receive well focused support in lessons. Lessons in mathematics are exciting and provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas and use mental strategies to investigate and solve problems. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the challenges this provides and this leads to good levels of involvement, good progress and above average standards in mathematics. Pupils though, could be doing better in English and science. Sometimes activities are too easy for the more able pupils and these activities do not always appeal to girls as much as they do to boys. A wide and exciting range of activities outside normal lessons is a strong feature of the satisfactory curriculum. The pupils make very good use of all the clubs on offer and enjoy visits to places of interest. These contribute very well to the pupils' enjoyment of school and their personal development and well-being.

Satisfactory leadership and management set a clear direction for improvement. This ensures that staff and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is helping to ensure that the right action is taken to bring about change for the better. How the school evaluates its effectiveness has improved since the last inspection but senior managers acknowledge that they are not fully successful in raising the achievement of the more able pupils and that of girls. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Evaluation of the school's work includes monitoring teaching and checking the quality of pupils' work but does not include pupils' views about how their learning could be made even better.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that teachers challenge the more able and girls to do their very best in English and science.

- Make sure that teachers provide targets that pupils can understand and make better use of, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- Give pupils a greater say in how they can make their learning even better.

A small proportion of 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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average by Year 2 and Year 6. From the below average starting point in Nursery, children make good progress because basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. By the time they enter Year 1 most children achieve the goals for their age. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress in English and science and good progress in mathematics. The school sets challenging targets for the end of Year 6 tests but these are not always achieved at the highest level in English and science. This is because the work for the more able pupils is sometimes too easy. Pupils say mathematics is exciting and how much they enjoy the challenge of investigating and solving problems. This inspires them to work hard and leads to above average standards in mathematics by the time pupils leave the school. Work in English and science is not always as exciting as it is in mathematics and girls especially say they would like more opportunities to read and write about things of interest to them. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they have well focused support and activities build effectively on their previous learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have high regard for others and they develop very good relationships with adults and each other. They have a strong sense of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they play safely and know how to take good care of themselves. These features contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school and their good attendance. Pupils make good choices about their diet and take regular exercise because they know the importance of these in keeping healthy and fit. Pupils contribute well to the wider community. They take part in local events and help to keep their environment clean and tidy. The school council members take their responsibilities very seriously and act well on behalf of all pupils. Their efforts have led to considerable improvements to the outside environment. Being a school council representative contributes very well to pupils' personal development but pupils generally would like a greater say in how to make their learning even better, especially the girls. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology prepare them satisfactorily for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage are happy and settled and they make a positive start to school. Activities are exciting and these interest the children and motivate them to learn. In Years 1 to 6, teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are going to learn and this helps pupils to settle quickly and focus well on their work. Staff value and praise pupils' efforts and this

establishes very good working relationships. Pupils with learning difficulties do well because learning support assistants encourage them to 'have a go'. This builds these pupils' confidence and contributes successfully to the good progress they make. Many pupils say they find mathematics lessons exciting and fun. Mathematical games and investigations challenge pupils to think hard and to use mental strategies to calculate and solve problems, which they really enjoy, but lessons in English and science do not have the same appeal. Girls in particular do not always see the relevance of what they are being taught in science and they feel that reading books are sometimes too 'boyish'. Good planning in Year 5 ensures that activities cater well for the different groups within the classes but in other years this is not always the case. In English and science, activities are sometimes too easy for the more able and opportunities for these pupils to plan and organise their work are less frequent in these subjects compared with mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides a broad range of learning experiences that for the most part build satisfactorily on what pupils have done before. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is vibrant and interesting but this is not always the case elsewhere in the school where curriculum activities, especially in English and science, do not always motivate girls or ensure the more able do their best. The strong focus the school places on developing pupils' personal skills, health and well-being enables pupils to have a clear understanding of how to be good citizens and live healthy lives. Pupils make very good use of the wide and exciting range of activities outside normal lessons, which contributes successfully to their enjoyment of school and physical fitness. Many pupils appreciate visitors and visits to places of interest, which they say help to make their learning exciting, especially in history.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and parents are right to think their children are well cared for. Pupils say staff are kind and there is always someone they can turn to if they have any worries. Staff promote healthy lifestyles and physical activity successfully and regularly remind pupils about the need to take care of themselves and others. This high level of care contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Though individual pupils who struggle with their work receive well focused support the school does not check carefully enough how well groups such as girls are doing. This means that support for girls is not always as good as it should be. All pupils have targets for improvement and many older pupils say their targets help them to improve their work but some, especially in Years 1 and 2, do not always understand what their targets mean.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Systems to monitor and evaluate the school's work are satisfactory. These provide senior managers, staff and governors with a secure view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and help them to identify the right priorities for improvement. These systems include the evaluations of teaching, the analysis of data and pupils' work, but do not include consulting pupils about what helps them to learn best. Pupils are very aware of how their lessons could

be better and they are eager to share their views. Parents have confidence in the school and support its work but the school acknowledges that parents could be encouraged to play an even greater role in their children's learning, especially in helping to improve the skills of more able pupils in reading.

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Annex A

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	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	1
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	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

13 July 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Charnwood Primary School, Lichfield, WS13 7PH

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. The inspection team really enjoyed meeting you.

Your school, the people in charge and your teachers do a satisfactory job and this is helping you to make satisfactory progress. The standards you attain by the time you leave school are average.

- Here are some of the good things we found about your school.
- You make good progress in mathematics.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception class do well.
- Children who have difficulties in learning have good support and this helps them to make good progress.
- Your behaviour is excellent; you enjoy school and you get on well together.
- You make good choices about what you eat and make very good use of all the sporting opportunities your school offers because you know how important it is to be fit and healthy.
- You are well cared for and you know how to look out for yourselves and others.
- Your school council works hard on your behalf. You are good at caring for your surroundings and others less fortunate than yourselves.
- You have lots of exciting things happening outside your normal lessons. You told us how much you enjoy visiting places of interest, especially in history.

To improve the school still further we have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on three things.

- To make sure that all of you always do your very best in English and science.
 - To make sure that you can read and understand your targets, especially in Years 1 and 2.
 - To make sure you have a greater say in how you learn and what you enjoy learning about.
- With best wishes for the future,

Fran Gillam Lead inspector