



Cedar Park School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131907
Local Authority Buckinghamshire
Inspection number 293883
Inspection dates 14–15 March 2007
Reporting inspector Steven Hill

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

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|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Cedar Avenue |
| School category | Community | | Hazlemere |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 | | High Wycombe HP15 7EF |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01494 711918 |
| Number on roll (school) | 211 | Fax number | 01494 717125 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mrs Cheryl Whitehead |
| | | Headteacher | Mr Stephen Kelsey |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 February 2002 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school with one form of entry. A Nursery class operates in the mornings in the Spring and Summer terms, and during the inspection had just four children. Pupils' social circumstances vary but are generally above average, with very few entitled to free school meals. Relatively few pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British origin, with a few from a variety of other ethnic heritages. The vast majority have a mother tongue of English, and a tiny minority are at the early stages of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cedar Park provides a good education and standards are consistently above average. Pupils achieve well and their personal development and well-being are good. They are well prepared for their future lives, both in education and beyond. This is a result of good teaching, an interesting curriculum and good provision for the care, support and guidance of pupils.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and is improving. Children settle happily into school and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They achieve satisfactorily overall because of sound teaching, but their overall progress is restricted because of shortfalls in the outdoor provision to support their learning.

Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 and standards by the time they leave school have been significantly above average for several years. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, who behave well in class and work hard. Teachers provide interesting work that is usually well matched to the different needs of pupils, so it is suitably challenging. This particularly supports pupils' good progress in English and mathematics. Progress in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory and standards are in line with those expected nationally. Resources in ICT are limited and, although extensive new equipment and software are shortly to be installed, current provision prevents pupils attaining higher standards.

Pupils enjoy school and have good relationships with each other and with adults. They develop good levels of self-confidence and work well cooperatively. They take a pride in their achievements and in their school. High levels of pastoral care ensure that pupils are safe and pupils assured the inspectors that they feel they are looked after well. Good systems are in place to track the progress of individuals and to ensure they get extra help if they start to fall behind. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of enrichment activities through clubs, visits out and visitors to school.

The school's many strengths rest on firm foundations of good leadership and management. The headteacher provides a clear lead as well as good support to colleagues, who work very effectively as a team for the benefit of the pupils. Good systems to monitor teaching and standards are used to identify strengths and weaknesses, and effective action is taken to address any issues that arise. However, because the data about pupils' progress is held manually, rather than using ICT, the information is somewhat cumbersome to use. It is not a useful tool for subject leaders to identify detailed trends in the achievement of different groups and cohorts. The school is currently transferring data to an ICT system to address this problem.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in ICT by improving equipment and software, and providing staff with training to make the best use of this.
- Raise achievement in the Foundation Stage by improving the outside area and equipment.

- Implement the plans for a better system for tracking pupils' progress to enable subject leaders to have a more detailed view of strengths and weaknesses in achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Standards are above average throughout the school and rise steadily as pupils get older. Children's attainment when they start in the Foundation Stage covers a wide range, and varies from year to year, but overall is above average. Children settle in quickly and happily and make steady progress, doing particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. They make good progress across the rest of the school and standards are above average at the end of each key stage. A relative weakness in progress in mathematics was shown by the results of national assessments at Year 6, in 2005. This was addressed well by the school and mathematics was the strongest subject in 2006. Progress in science, as shown by results in 2006, while satisfactory was not as good as in English and mathematics. The school accurately addressed the reasons for this and pupils in Year 6 are now making good progress in science.

Pupils of different abilities, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress. There are no significant differences in the progress made by pupils from different ethnic groups, by boys and girls, or by bilingual pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy being at school. They speak warmly of their relationships with one another in their work and at play. Pupils take pride in their work and readily share it with visitors. They work well collaboratively, for example, as they take part in science investigations. Pupils gain steadily in self-esteem and recognise that the adults care about them. They value the praise they receive for their personal qualities as well as for their academic achievement. They enjoy opportunities to undertake responsibilities, for example, supporting pupils who may feel upset or unwell at playtimes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are curious about and interested in other cultures. Their work in art, geography and history reflects this well. Pupils are enthusiastic about the recent link made with a school in Kenya. They know how to keep safe and pupils in year 6 spoke convincingly of what they had learned from a visit to 'Hazard Alley'. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, joining in enthusiastically with the many sporting opportunities, and bringing healthy snacks and lunches to school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Throughout the school, teachers have clear expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They treat pupils with kindness and consideration, and relationships are good. As a result, pupils are keen to learn, enjoy pleasing their teachers and work hard in lessons. All this supports their good progress. Teachers work hard to tailor work to the needs of individuals and groups, so tasks are generally challenging but manageable. Occasionally, higher attaining pupils tackle work that is a little easy for them, but the school is already working well to improve this. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work in pairs or in groups, so they learn to work together effectively. In those classes that have interactive whiteboards, teachers use them well to generate enthusiasm and to clarify their explanations. Teaching and learning are only satisfactory in the Foundation Stage because, despite many strengths, pupils' learning is limited by the weaknesses in outdoor provision.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of different groups of learners well. It is enriched through a wide range of educational visits and visitors. Pupils' knowledge of different religions, for example, is enhanced through visits to places of worship. Contact with the local church has enabled the setting up of an interesting link with a school in Kenya. This, together with work in geography, is effectively raising pupils' awareness of global issues such as the scarcity of water resources and the quality of life in various communities. The use of specialist teachers in art and music, and for sports' coaching, is raising standards. For example, Wycombe Wanderers provides good quality coaching to improve pupils' skills in football. Parents, too, provide invaluable help to enrich the curriculum. The school is increasingly linking work across curriculum areas, which boosts pupils' understanding. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage provides satisfactorily for most aspects of learning. However, the outdoor area is not adequate to enable the children to extend their learning sufficiently. The curriculum includes good provision to raise awareness of healthy living and the development of skills and attitudes associated with responsible citizenship. Pupils' involvement with the wider community reflects their awareness of how their interest and involvement in supporting a variety of good causes benefit a range of people.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and procedures to keep them safeguarded are very well established. The safety of pupils at school is an area of high priority and pupils appreciate this. The support for pupils with learning difficulties ensures that they make good progress. Liaison with outside providers gives additional valuable support to the

school in meeting the needs of pupils with particular problems. The induction procedures when children join the school are carefully and sensitively carried out. Parents of children in the Foundation Stage say their children are helped to settle very well to the routines of school. Pupils transferring to secondary education receive effective support to help them make a good start in their new schools.

The school tracks the pupils' progress well and uses this information effectively to plan lessons. Information is used successfully to identify pupils who are falling behind and to provide programmes of individual support. Teachers also know their pupils' personal needs well and work hard to enhance links with parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led and managed well. Clear leadership from the headteacher is backed up by good support from the senior management team. The headteacher's care and support for his staff is coupled with high expectations of performance. This has resulted in a hard working and effective team, who are dedicated to achieving the best they can for the pupils. This underpins pupils' good achievement and personal development.

Self-evaluation is good so the school understands clearly what it needs to do to improve. The issues for improvement from this inspection have already been identified by the school, and plans are afoot to address them. The school is well placed to improve further. Good systems are in place to monitor teaching, and colleagues are given clear feedback to help them improve their practice. Standards are monitored carefully and effective action taken to help individuals, and to identify whole-school issues. This led, for example, to a greater concentration on investigations and problem-solving in mathematics last year, with the resultant rise in standards. However, the tracking of individuals' progress is done manually and is very cumbersome, so it is difficult for subject leaders to analyse trends in any detail.

The school has made a point of consulting both parents and pupils about its work in the last few years, and has made a number of changes and improvements in response. Parents are strongly supportive of the school's work and appreciative of what it does. There remains a small minority of parents, however, who are not convinced that their views are given sufficient weight.

Governors have improved the systems for carrying out their responsibilities in the last few years. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, are supportive of its work, and have developed the capacity to act as a 'critical friend'.

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Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 | 3 |
| 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

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| 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

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| 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 | 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

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| 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

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| 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 for your help and your warm welcome when we visited your school. This is what we found out.

You told us that you think that Cedar Park is a good school and we agree. You learn a lot of different things and enjoy being at school. This is because your teachers give you interesting things to do and take care to make sure that you get extra help if you need it. You are making good progress in English, mathematics and science. Your progress in ICT is not as good, because the school doesn't have enough equipment for you. We have agreed with your teachers that they are going to use all the new computers they have ordered to help you do as well in ICT as you do in other subjects.

Children settle in very happily when they start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make steady progress, but there isn't enough good outdoor equipment for them to do really well. We have agreed with the headteacher that the school is going to buy some new things to make their learning even better.

We thought that your behaviour was good and we were pleased to see how hard you try in lessons and how well you all get on together. You know a lot about keeping healthy, bring in sensible things to eat, and join in enthusiastically with sports lessons.

The headteacher and other staff organise the school well. All the adults in school take good care of you and make sure you are safe. They keep a careful eye on how everyone is getting on, so they can check that everyone is making the right progress. We have agreed that they should use a new ICT system to do this even better, and your teachers have already made a good start on this.

Thank you again for your help, we hope you keep on working hard and enjoying school.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill

Lead Inspector