



Clyst Heath Nursery and Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134641
Local Authority Devon
Inspection number 294141
Inspection date 11 December 2006
Reporting inspector Anna Sketchley

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Clyst Heath
School category	Community		Royal Crescent
Age range of pupils	3-11		Exeter EX2 7QT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01392 361415
Number on roll (school)	131	Fax number	01392 361416
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Vacant Position
		Headteacher	Karen Hadley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Clyst Heath School opened in September 2005. It serves two new housing areas on the outskirts of Exeter. These are very diverse in character. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average. Many new pupils have joined the school during its first 15 months. The number expected for 2008 has already been reached. As a result, the school has had to reorganise classes several times. All pupils are taught in mixed age groups. There is a nursery and after-school care. A further extension of the building is planned to begin next year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Clyst Heath is a good school. In the short time that it has been open it has done extremely well to establish a good quality of education for its pupils. The school continues to improve as it adapts to meet the needs of an increasing number of pupils. Parents are unstinting in their praise, many speaking of it as an excellent school and saying... 'I will continue to recommend it'. The school has got off to a very successful start because of the exemplary leadership of the headteacher, deputy and governors. Over the last 15 months, pupils have joined the school from many other schools, bringing with them a wide range of different experiences and expectations. The excellent relationships that abound between adults and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, enable them to adjust quickly. They soon adopt the high standards of work and behaviour that are expected at Clyst Heath. As a result, pupils achieve well. Although standards vary from year to year, they are improving and are currently above average in mathematics, science and reading. Pupils do not do as well as they might in writing, where standards are average. This is because they do not always translate their thoughts well when constructing sentences. Most Nursery and Reception pupils join the school with average skills and abilities. Nursery, Reception and Year 1 work closely together and this seamless beginning to school life ensures that pupils settle well and are happy and confident. This good provision helps pupils make good progress. The good quality care, support and guidance given to all pupils are key factors in securing their good personal development and well being. Pupils say that it is a very friendly school where they feel safe and happy. One pupil said that 'within five minutes of joining the school, I had five friends!' They really enjoy coming to school and taking part in all the activities provided for them. The school and the pupils make an outstanding contribution to their local community through the excellent way in which the school is used and promoted. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are good and pupils respond keenly to lively lessons that are effectively planned and meet their differing needs. Most pupils behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. Those experiencing learning or behaviour difficulties are well supported by calm and helpful teaching assistants. Parents are unanimous in agreeing that pupils are very well cared for. Although there are good procedures in place to monitor absence from school, attendance is barely in line with the national average. There is insufficient encouragement for pupils to take some responsibility for trying to attend every day. The leadership and management of the school are good. They have set up a very clear vision for the school's development. Close and effective cooperation at all levels of leadership and management give the school a good capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is good, although the school has progressed further than its modest assessments would indicate. This is mainly as a result of its sharp and accurate focus on what needs to be improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise achievement and standards in writing throughout the school, particularly pupils' skills in sentence construction
- involve pupils more actively in improving rates of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress throughout the school, and standards are above average by the time they leave. The school has set challenging targets in English, mathematics and science for Year 6 pupils which they are on course to reach. Due to pupils being admitted at various times during the year, national assessments are not an accurate indicator of pupils' progress in the school. The school evaluates pupils' progress by means of termly assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. These, and current predictions, show that pupils throughout the school are making good progress and are achieving above average standards in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are average. The school, rightly, has identified the need to raise standards in writing. This is because, in particular, pupils do not construct sentences sufficiently well. Plans to address this have very recently been implemented but have not yet had time to have an impact upon standards. Reading assessments show significant signs of improvement across the school because of efforts to raise attainment in this area. Pupils with learning difficulties are also achieving well. In the Foundation Stage, pupils get off to a good start and make good progress, especially in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Peer mediators make a significant contribution to pupils' growing moral and social maturity. Pupils have a very real sense of the importance of friendliness and the need to get along well together. This ensures that they really enjoy coming to school. Pupils demonstrate their caring commitment to others by fundraising and sponsoring a child in Cambodia. The school council was so concerned about safety issues on the roads around the school that it was instrumental in arranging for traffic calming measures to be installed. Pupils understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and many attend the after-school sports clubs. They were quick to point out the folly of too much chocolate in lunch boxes! The skills they are developing as a result of their full involvement in the work of the school and their good academic skills are preparing them well for future life. Although attendance is average and the school has correct procedures in place to monitor it, there are currently few extra incentives for pupils to encourage them to take some responsibility for attending every day.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and is characterised by skilful questioning and good use of interactive whiteboards. Teaching assistants help to ensure that all pupils, especially those with

learning or behaviour difficulties, participate fully in lessons. Thorough planning matches tasks well to pupils' needs so that all pupils are appropriately challenged and build progressively on previous learning. Teachers sharpen their use of assessment with increasing effectiveness and identify clear targets for improvement in pupils' 'progress books' when assessing writing. However, the use of these books is not yet fully understood by all teachers. Warm relationships exist between pupils and adults because lessons are fun and interesting. Consequently, most pupils behave well. Very occasionally, expectations of good behaviour are not established firmly enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is a developing strength of the school. It is imaginative and creative and is contributing effectively to pupils' enjoyment. Pupils take great pleasure in the problem-solving challenges they are given at the beginning of the school day. Resources are well organised and accessible, encouraging pupils, especially in the Foundation Stage, to be independent. Despite the challenge of mixed age classes and the number of pupils joining the school throughout the year, the curriculum is effectively matched to the needs of all pupils. It is enriched by the very good range of activities that exist because of the school's outstanding links with the community, as well as visits, visitors and after-school clubs. The constant movement of pupils into the school has made it difficult to set up small groups for those needing intensive help, particularly with writing. New whole-school target-setting to improve pupils' sentence construction has not yet had time to raise standards. Currently there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils, including those with learning difficulties, is good. All adults know and care for pupils really well and as a result, relationships are excellent. The well-planned personal and social education programmes are used consistently by the school to support pupils' personal development. This is reflected in pupils' good attitudes to learning. Pupils are very well guided and supported academically. Marking and assessment form clear targets for pupils which help them to improve their work in English but this is not yet consistent throughout the school. This potentially good model is not yet in place for mathematics and science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The outstanding partnership and teamwork of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, alongside the governors, sets an excellent example within the school. The governance of the school is very strong. Governors have many skills that they use to monitor the school's progress. They are well informed and fully involved in the strategic long-term planning and

pro-active thinking that provides the school with its excellent educational direction. Leaders take good account of the views of the whole school community, especially the pupils, who make a significant contribution through the school council. This has a very positive impact upon pupils' personal development. However, they are insufficiently encouraged and guided to take some responsibility for improving their attendance. There are good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school in the long term. Analysis of pupils' work in English has correctly identified where there are weaknesses in writing but plans to tackle these have yet to be fully implemented. There is also scope, as the amount of school data grows, to sharpen the evaluation of pupils' achievement and standards so that accurate individual targets can be set for all pupils in English, mathematics and science.

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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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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	NA

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	1
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	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

- Thank you very much for such a friendly welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed spending time with you and talking to you. These are some of the things we liked most:
- you really enjoy coming to school and all get along very well together
- you are very good at looking after one another and take a real interest in your community and the world around you
- your teachers plan your lessons very carefully, making them fun and interesting
- you behave well, have a good attitude to your work and know how to improve it
- you are very well cared for and feel safe and happy in school
- your headteacher, deputy and governors lead your school very well. Your parents told us what a good school they think Clyst Heath is and we agree with them, but there are some things that can be done to make it even better:
- we have asked your teachers to help you to improve the way you write sentences when you are doing your work
- we have also asked them to help you improve your attendance by providing ways of encouraging you to come to school every day. You could help your teachers by coming to school every day and trying hard with your work especially your writing.