



Calmore Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116483
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 296537
Inspection dates 14–15 September 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Grove

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Calmore Drive
School category	Foundation		Calmore
Age range of pupils	7–11		Southampton SO40 2ZZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380865354
Number on roll (school)	238	Fax number	02380872946
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Kate Patience
		Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Thorne
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated on the edge of Totton, a small town west of Southampton. It is about the same size as most primary schools, and is a Foundation school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is much higher than average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than average, and none is at an early stage of learning English. Pupil mobility is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of Calmore Junior is presently satisfactory, which is also the judgement of the school. The school enjoys the full-hearted support of parents, who are overwhelmingly appreciative of its positive ethos and supportive atmosphere. This was well illustrated by one parent who wrote: 'We are very proud of Calmore School'. The school's effective partnership with others, including parents, is an important factor in the outstanding personal development of its pupils.

Behaviour in class and around the school, and attentiveness in lessons, are excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also excellent. It is clear that they greatly enjoy school. One pupil said he is excited about coming to school because 'every day is different'. Pupils show a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and of ways of keeping safe. The contribution which they make to the school and to their local community is outstanding. Pupils are learning valuable workplace skills such as co-operating with a partner and in teams, but their basic literacy and numeracy skills are not as well developed as they could be. This means that the development of skills contributing to their future economic well-being is just satisfactory.

Pupils' standards have been about average in the previous five years, but were lower in English, mathematics and science in 2006. The reasons for this were specific to the experience of this year group. Better progress is evident in current year groups in the school. For example, pupils' attainment in the present Year 6 is as would be expected. Achievement across the school is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, with the new team of teachers that is in place, there are strong elements in present teaching in many lessons, which are helping pupils of all abilities to make good progress. It is too soon as yet to see the impact of this on pupils' achievement over time. Teachers' use of assessment information is not consistent, and the result is that pupils do not always get feedback on how they could improve their work. The curriculum is satisfactory, but is not helping all pupils sufficiently to make the progress they could. Not all year groups have sufficient opportunities to apply and extend their English skills in other subjects or to develop their thinking and reasoning through solving problems in mathematics and conducting investigations in science. However, the school's extra-curricular provision is outstanding.

The school offers good care for its pupils, including effective child protection arrangements, and good personal guidance. Support for all pupils is strong and especially for those who are vulnerable. Guidance to help pupils to improve their work is inconsistent.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and her senior colleagues set a very clear direction for improvement. This has borne fruit in terms of the outstanding personal development of pupils and in the good quality of care and personal support. The school's self-evaluation is increasingly effective in diagnosing any weaknesses in teaching, leading to action to address them. It is good overall. However, arrangements to check and review the quality of the curriculum provided

for each year group, and the use of assessment information are not yet completely effective. The school's capacity to make necessary improvements is good. This has already been shown in the high quality of pupils' personal development and in the improved quality of teaching.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement by improving the curriculum in English, mathematics and science for all pupils.
- Make more consistent use of assessment information to help pupils improve their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school has been consistent year by year at about the national average. In recent years, the standards which pupils reach by the time they leave the school have also been average, indicating that their progress has been satisfactory. In 2006, however, the standards of Year 6 pupils in national tests in English, mathematics and science were somewhat lower. This resulted from a lack of continuity in teaching earlier in the school careers of this year group, caused in part by prolonged staff absence. The results in 2006 showed evidence of underachievement by some higher-attaining pupils, and by some boys with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, information about the standards and progress of all groups of pupils in the current Year 6 shows that last year's experience does not represent a trend. Inspection evidence indicates that current year groups are making better progress and that achievement is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are very keen to learn. They form very good relationships with staff and recognise this. One pupil explained that 'the teachers make you feel special'. Relationships between pupils are also very good. Pupils show a mature understanding of the needs of others, including those with particular needs. They undertake responsibilities willingly and conscientiously. Attendance is broadly average. The irregular attendance of a few pupils hinders further improvement. All aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding, with particular strengths in the social aspect, indicated by their good levels of self-awareness. Pupils take part extremely enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities available. They feel very safe and well cared for by staff, and say the school deals effectively with any bullying. School councillors emphasise how the views of all pupils are taken into account and describe how their ideas, such as the sunshades, have benefited everyone. Pupils also contribute very well to the wider community through, for example, activities for the local elderly residents' home and work for charities. They co-operate well, and successfully organise events such as the 'Games Emporium'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers make clear to the pupils what they are expected to learn, and set varied tasks that engage them. Most maintain a brisk pace that keeps pupils on their toes and interested. As a result, pupils concentrate well and most enjoy lessons. One pupil commented that the teachers, 'make learning fun'. All teachers use paired discussions well to help pupils extend their ideas and to involve them fully. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants who provide good support for pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and most make steady progress towards their targets. A highly focused use of specific support programmes is being introduced this term to improve their rate of progress. Teachers encourage pupils to assess their own learning, although the effectiveness of this is inconsistent. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' abilities because effective systems to assess and track the progress of individuals have been introduced. However, there are variations in how well teachers use this information, or the marking guidelines, to improve individual progress, especially of more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

In mathematics and science, opportunities for pupils to learn to solve problems, and to improve their skills of investigation are not consistent between year groups. In English, there are not enough links across the curriculum to enable pupils to apply and extend their skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Provision for personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education, is good, and the curriculum successfully promotes healthy living, staying safe and developing cultural awareness. The outstanding extra-curricular activities available include, for example, seventeen after-school clubs providing for sporting, musical and other interests. About one third of pupils receive instrumental tuition. A further strength is the school's Sports Gold Mark Award. These activities greatly enhance the school's provision and contribute to the good attitudes and enthusiasm of pupils. Regular special events such as the Tudor Day, and a range of visits and visitors, enrich school life well. French has been successfully introduced into Year 5, with the intention of extending this to Year 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has created an environment in which pupils feel confident and want to learn. Pastoral guidance is very effective in the contribution it makes to pupils' personal development. Parents appreciate this. One commented, 'The school always goes the extra mile!' All health and safety issues are monitored effectively. Procedures for child protection are well established and staff carry out their responsibilities well. Systems

for rewards and sanctions are effective in promoting excellent behaviour and in celebrating pupils' successes. The school is meticulous in identifying vulnerable pupils, including those with emotional difficulties. It provides very effective support for them, working closely with local community groups and external agencies. The school's positive example in this area results in pupils showing tolerant and supportive attitudes towards diversity. Individual targets are reviewed regularly with parents and pupils, but there is inconsistency between staff in this work. This is also the case with marking, where not all teachers focus on the improvement of pupils' work to the extent that they could.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's Standards Team has good arrangements in place to check the quality of teaching and to analyse pupils' progress. Furthermore, inspection evidence shows that recent appointments to the teaching staff are having an impact in terms of raising the quality of teaching. The school has a good commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for pupils, which is recognised by pupils and parents. However, some underachievement by higher-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities in the national tests in 2006 indicates that, in practice, the promotion of equal opportunities is at present just satisfactory. The governing body satisfactorily discharges its responsibilities, and has a sound understanding of pupils' standards. Given present achievement by pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1
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?	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?	3
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	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

Following our visit to your school, Mrs Bonser, Mr Dukes and I would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you at work in your classrooms and talking to you playtimes and lunchtimes. We think Calmore Junior is a satisfactory school which has some important strengths.

These are the things we most liked:

- You greatly enjoy school and your behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- Your concentration and eagerness to learn in lessons are excellent, and you are making an excellent contribution to your school and local community.
- You feel safe at school and know it is important to have lots of exercise.
- Pupils' standards of work at Year 6 are average, and achievement is satisfactory.
- Your headteacher is very clear about how she wants your school to improve further.
- All the teachers and other adults in the school take very good care of you, and give you good support and personal guidance.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent and many of you take part in these.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory and are improving.

We have asked your teachers to:

- Do more to ensure that all of you make good progress in all year groups by improving the curriculum in English, mathematics and science.
- Check more carefully how well you are doing, so they can help you to improve your work.

We wish you all every success in the future. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector