

Chelsfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101610
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	307755
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Milton

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Eileen Vassie
Headteacher	Mr Patrick Foley
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	Warren Road Chelsfield Orpington BR6 6EP
Telephone number	01689 825827
Fax number	01689 819909

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This village school is much smaller than average. Pupils are normally in four classes although there were three at the time of the inspection. About half of the pupils joined the school after the Reception year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school draws its pupils from a wide area and a number are from places with some socio-economic disadvantage. It has the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has a few outstanding features as well as some areas for improvement. The school has overcome some recent challenges, with a falling number of pupils. Parents are very supportive of the school. As one parent wrote, 'The school and its pupils have regained their stability under the new leadership and are moving forward progressively.' The new headteacher leads by example and has helped create a staff team committed to helping all pupils to achieve well. He has introduced several important improvements, including an outstanding system for tracking the progress of individual pupils, and transformed the provision for information and communication technology, which pupils appreciate.

Many aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding but the school's attendance rate is below average because the attendance of a small number of pupils is well below average. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and pupils of all abilities are keen to learn and take a pride in their achievements. They enjoy school. Pupils feel safe and free from any form of harassment. They know how to stay safe in a variety of situations. The school works very effectively to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their ability or particular circumstances, develop their self-confidence and feel valued members of the school's community. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good with some outstanding features. As a consequence of this and the good teaching and curriculum, pupils make good progress. As a parent commented, 'Teachers know each child really well, which helps with their emotional and educational development.'

On joining the school, some pupils have standards above those expected but a significant number are below. Pupils make good progress during Key Stages 1 and 2, and achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The relatively large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also make good progress and many reach the nationally expected standards.

Classes are well managed, and the clear teaching, with a variety of interesting activities, motivates and involves the pupils. There is some good marking that involves pupils in assessing their own work, and gives clear advice about how to improve, but this is not yet done consistently. Pupils have curricular targets for improving writing and mathematics, but occasionally they are not well matched to pupils' individual learning needs. The school has very good relationships with a range of other organisations, including two local secondary schools and other small primary schools, which enhance the curriculum and provide considerable support for individual pupils. The curriculum encourages pupils to live healthy lives. All pupils learn French and many attend the good range of after-school clubs.

The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and important improvements made since last January are starting to impact on the quality of provision and pupils' learning. It therefore has a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children in Reception are taught in the same rooms as Years 1 and 2 by a teacher and teaching assistant. Their progress is satisfactory and a majority reach the expected standards. Children make particularly good progress with their personal, social and emotional development, and are confident members of the class. The ongoing assessment of children's progress is good,

and identifies some next steps in the learning of individual children. Adults and children often have good conversations that develop children's learning but, occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend children's ideas. Adults ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully involved in learning activities. In some instances, good use is made of learning resources but a minority of resources are not organised to make them readily accessible and interesting enough to the children. Curriculum planning does not always make clear links to the Early Learning Goals or include the use of the outdoor area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision for the Foundation Stage so that children's achievement is consistently good.
- Improve the attendance of the identified pupils.
- Ensure that marking and the setting of curricular targets are done consistently well to help pupils achieve as much as they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

During Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress because of the more consistently good teaching and their enthusiasm to learn. Many pupils join the school during Key Stages 1 and 2, and they quickly start to make good progress because they are rapidly integrated into the school's life and there are good systems for assessing their starting points for learning at the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because there is a good range of specialist provision including the effective use of outside agencies. At the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. Pupils' standards at the end of Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science, where they generally meet the challenging targets set for them. Pupils' achievement is good at both key stages, and the high quality tracking of individual pupils' progress is starting to improve this further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social and moral development is outstanding. They relate extremely well to the school's staff and to each other, and have positive attitudes to differences between people. Their behaviour is exemplary, and they are all keen to learn. They have a good understanding of their own culture and, through a variety of subjects, learn about a number of other cultures. They are, however, less aware of the richness and diversity of cultures in Britain. Pupils make very strong contributions to the school and village communities. For example, older pupils run games in the playground at break times and younger pupils did maypole dancing at the village hall. The school's attendance rate is below average because of the unsatisfactory attendance by a relatively small number of pupils. Given pupils' levels in key skills and their outstanding social skills and self-confidence, they are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good teaching has a number of common strengths. It is effective in involving all pupils in learning, and good support is given to individuals. Classes are well managed, and lessons include a variety of interesting tasks that motivate and interest pupils, such as hot seating and short, sharp paired discussions about specific questions. Learning objectives are usually clear and shared with pupils and, in the best lessons, based on assessment. Questions involve many pupils and help them develop their thinking. The concluding parts of lessons help pupils to assess their own learning. Work is marked regularly, and provides pupils with better guidance about how to improve their learning in English than in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good start has been made to making links between subjects in the broad and balanced curriculum. French is taught in each class. The curriculum is supported by a good range of visits and visitors, and there is an annual residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6. A high proportion of pupils take part in the after-school clubs, about which a parent wrote, 'After-school clubs are great, lots of choice'. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, some of which are complex, and this is underpinned by what a parent described as the school's 'friendly, family environment for children'. Staff know the needs of individual pupils really well, and make good use of external experts to support pupils with particular learning needs. In school, there are special groups to help pupils with particular needs. Teachers use a sound range of methods to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs, although there are instances when these are not effective enough.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The high quality care, especially for vulnerable pupils, contributes to pupils' active involvement in the life of the school and their good achievement. Vulnerable pupils are quickly identified and then effectively supported to keep them engaged in learning. One parent wrote, 'Teachers have helped my son greatly with time and lots of patience and understanding'. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and meet requirements. The required health and safety audits are carried out. An outstanding system for tracking the progress of each pupil and following up any underachievement was introduced last January but has not yet had enough time to have its full impact on pupils' achievement. Pupils are set curricular targets for literacy in all classes and for mathematics in most classes. Occasionally, these targets are not well matched to pupils' individual learning needs. There is inconsistency in the way that pupils' progress towards their targets is monitored. The school is using a good range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance but does not have an Education Welfare Officer at present to assist this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher is fully involved in all aspects of the school's work, and has rapidly introduced some key improvements. He has given stability, confidence and direction to the school after a short period of difficulty. Other teaching staff each carry several responsibilities effectively. Leadership and management are very effective in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. The inclusion of all pupils is at the core of the school's work and ethos, and is very effective, especially for pupils with complex learning difficulties and disabilities. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses, particularly in the rates of progress made by individual pupils through the excellent tracking system. There is a good programme of monitoring and evaluation, but there has not been enough time to complete the cycle of activities fully. Good improvements are being made to the school's building, and it will be important to complete these for the heating of the Reception and Key Stage 1 rooms. There is good financial management of the impact of the decline of pupil numbers on the school's budget. The governing body is involved in the school's strategic planning and acts well as a critical friend.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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.

Annex A

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

3 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chelsfield Primary School, Orpington, BR6 6EP

I really enjoyed visiting your school this week and meeting you, Mr Foley, the staff and some of the governors. Also, I learnt a great deal during the enjoyable space assembly. I am very grateful to your parents for returning the questionnaires. It was interesting to hear from you that you enjoy school, feel very safe, have lots of support from your teachers and like the use of the laptops.

You achieve well because of the good teaching and because you are very well behaved and keen to do your best. There is a very good family atmosphere in the school and this helps you all to become self-confident and to be fully involved in the school's activities. The school council does a good job in helping pupils eat healthily. All adults make sure that you are all really well cared for. Some of you do not come to school frequently enough.

Good improvements are being made to the school's building and resources, but more needs to be done for the Reception class. You have all started learning French this year, and many of you attend after-school clubs. Your learning is helped by a good range of visits to places such as Chislehurst Caves, and by links with both secondary and primary schools. There is an excellent system for checking that you are doing well enough with your work. Teachers' marking often makes clear how you can improve your work. You are glad that you have targets to help you improve your work in English and mathematics, although sometimes these are not as helpful to you as they could be.

You can help the school to get even better by making sure you attend school regularly and by acting on teachers' comments in your books and thinking carefully about how you can achieve your targets in English and mathematics.

With best wishes for the rest of the school year.

Mike Milton

Lead Inspector