

Clutton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109063
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	309863
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Colin Lee

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	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Veale
Headteacher	Gary Williams
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Station Road Clutton Bristol BS39 5RA
Telephone number	01761 452510
Fax number	01761 452510

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how the school is improving pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 and achievement in mathematics throughout the school, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, the subject leader for mathematics, other staff, pupils and the chairperson of the governing body, and from the parental questionnaires. Lessons were observed, school self-evaluation and other documentation seen and samples of pupils' current and previous work were examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. Evidence based on the school's self-evaluation has been referred to where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than an average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The small number from minority ethnic groups all speak English fluently. Children's attainment on entry is slightly above that typical for their age. The headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

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 where pupils achieve well, both academically and in their personal development. It has undergone significant changes in organisation and senior leaders in the last two years. The headteacher has established a very clear educational direction for the school. He and the newly appointed deputy headteacher have quickly formed a strong team providing good leadership and management. Staff have adapted successfully to the recent necessary change from single age classes to mixed age classes for all pupils except those in Year 6, who remain in a single age class. The quality of education provided by the school has been strengthened by these changes and this is owing in no small part to the way that the headteacher has quickly developed an obvious sense of teamwork amongst all the staff. School improvement is sharply focused on addressing inconsistencies in pupils' achievement and standards that were evident when the headteacher arrived at the school. There were two distinct trends, namely falling standards by the end of Year 2 but rising standards by the end of Year 6. While pupils were making good progress in the Foundation Stage and very good progress in Years 5 and 6, too many pupils in Years 1 to 4 were not making enough progress in relation to their starting points when they entered Year 1. There was also marked variation in pupils' progress in mathematics across the school. A range of measures have been introduced to remedy these weaknesses, including staff development to further improve the teaching of literacy and numeracy, target setting, and an improved programme of regular checks on pupils' progress. These measures are quickly showing success. Achievement is now good because most pupils' rates of progress in mathematics, as well as in reading and writing, are not only good but are consistent year on year. This means that the current Year 2 pupils are on track to attain above average standards by the time they enter Year 3. Year 6 pupils are already attaining much higher standards than are expected at their age and they are on track to achieve the challenging end-of-year targets that have been set for them. The more able pupils in Year 6 achieve well but in some of the other year groups such pupils achieve only satisfactorily. This is particularly the case in mathematics and is because teachers' expectations are not always high enough.

Throughout the school, teaching and learning are good. Lesson planning is a strength, with tasks planned to build carefully on what pupils have previously learned. For the most part, teachers plan work that is carefully matched to the needs of pupils with different abilities. However, there is inconsistency in the teachers' expectations of the more able pupils, especially in mathematics where pupils are sometimes given work that is too easy before going on to more challenging activities better suited to their needs. Those pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities have very effective additional support from teaching assistants which helps them to achieve well. Teachers make good use of various strategies to extend pupils' learning, such as series of targets for pupils to work towards in reading and writing and this target setting is now being extended to mathematics. Pupils know their targets well and find them motivating because, as one said, 'You know what you need to be better at'.

The school has recently re-planned the curriculum. It is satisfactory at the moment because the topic approach of linking subjects together in order to make learning more interesting for pupils is more successful for Years 1 and 2 than it is for Years 3 to 6. Whilst there is strong emphasis throughout the school on ensuring that pupils acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy lessons, there is insufficient planning of opportunities for these skills to be developed in other subjects. This contrasts with the Foundation Stage, where the good curriculum has

detailed planning of every opportunity for practice of these basic skills in the childrens' varied learning activities.

Pupils show tremendous enjoyment of school. They talk with great enthusiasm about the many additional learning opportunities provided for them outside the school day. The range of these activities is exceptional for a school of this size, with opportunities as diverse as the engineering and website clubs as well as more traditional sporting and musical activities. Parents express their appreciation of the curriculum meetings held for them to learn about teaching methods. They are similarly enthusiastic about theme days when they can come into school to work alongside pupils and teachers. They, like the pupils, look forward to a repeat of 'Fluffy Thursday', when a wide range of creative activities was organised and pupils of all ages worked together.

There is well-planned provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education and they receive good care, guidance and support. The result is good personal development and well-being. Pupils have a good appreciation of healthy lifestyles as well as sound knowledge of safe practices at school and home. One of the pupils' major strengths is their excellent behaviour. They appreciate the fact that they are given important responsibilities that help them make a real contribution to the school community. Those acting as playground 'buddies', play leaders and school councillors do so very conscientiously. Older pupils work with staff to produce newsletters to be sent to parents and much of the school's website is kept updated by a very dedicated group of pupils.

The headteacher has introduced rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and works closely with staff to plan the action necessary for improving pupils' achievement and making teaching more effective. The school knows itself well and its self-evaluation judgements are largely accurate although somewhat cautious. The impact of senior staff is evident in the contribution of good numeracy and literacy leadership to the recent improvements in achievement although plans for how the whole curriculum can be used for the further development of literacy and numeracy skills have not yet been fully realised. With the exceptions of information and communication technology and physical education, most other subject leadership roles have only recently been allocated and are yet to have a significant impact on improving provision or standards. Similarly, whilst the school's last inspection identified the need for the governing body to develop its strategic role, this has only started to happen since the headteacher's appointment. Nevertheless, the overall effectiveness of the steps taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection, particularly the impact of recent initiatives on pupils' achievement, shows that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents have expressed their delight with how well staff have helped the children settle into school life. The children are taught in a class with Year 1 pupils. Good provision for the Foundation Stage leads to children's standards being above expected levels in all areas of learning when they start Year 1. The children's good progress is due primarily to good teaching and learning that matches all learning activities very closely to the needs of individual children. A strength of provision is detailed planning that identifies very clearly the many outcomes that learning activities are designed to achieve. There is thorough recording of pupils' achievements and regular checking of their progress in all areas of learning. The classroom environment is attractive and stimulating. There is a good balance of indoor and outdoor learning opportunities although the school recognises the need for further development of the outdoor learning environment and has firm plans for this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the more able pupils are given learning activities that match their needs and challenge them sufficiently, particularly in mathematics.
- Develop the curriculum by planning opportunities for pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to be applied and developed in other subjects.

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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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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?	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.

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	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	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

28 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clutton Primary School, Clutton, BS39 5RA

Thank you for making me welcome in your school and for talking with me so willingly. I thoroughly enjoyed joining you in lessons and seeing you at work. You told me how much you enjoy going to school and I think you have a good school that is doing a good job in helping you to learn. The school does many things well. This is what I particularly appreciated.

- You are making good progress in your work.
- By the time you reach Year 6, many of you are reaching high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You behave excellently and this makes your school a friendly, pleasant place where everyone helps one another.
- You are given good opportunities to have responsibilities and contribute to the smooth running of the school. Playground buddies and the school council are doing a very good job.
- You are taught well and teachers give you clear targets to help you learn well.
- You told me how much you enjoy the very good range of clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school, as well as special occasions like 'Fluffy Thursday'.
- All the adults look after you well and make sure that you are safe and get help whenever you need it.
- The school is led very well by the headteacher and all the adults work well together to improve it.
- I have two recommendations to help your school to get even better:
- Those of you who find the work easy need to have work that is a bit harder, especially in numeracy lessons.
- You need to have more opportunities to practise and improve your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

I hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Clutton Primary School to be an even better school.

Colin Lee Lead inspector