

Chieveley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109810
Local Authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	310105
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs P Johnson
Headteacher	Mrs H Broomfield
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2004
School address	School Road Chieveley Newbury RG20 8TY
Telephone number	01635 248281
Fax number	01635 247495

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Inspection number	310105

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Chieveley Primary School is smaller than average. Nine out of ten pupils are of White British background and nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The proximity of a military base means that the turnover of pupils is higher than usual. At the time of the inspection, a number of key senior managerial and administrative staff had been absent for some time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Chieveley Primary is a good school, where pupils are happy. The school makes the most of its excellent links with local nurseries, primary and secondary schools to ensure its small size does not prove a limitation. Most parents strongly support the school and admire the efforts of the headteacher to maintain the school's strengths. One typical comment was, 'Both my children have grown significantly in confidence due to the support and teaching of the school.' Some criticised the school's communication with parents and the safety of the school site. The inspection found no evidence to substantiate these concerns.

Children enter Reception with lower than expected skills and make good progress. Good teaching enables pupils to build well on these firm foundations and they learn well. At the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are above average. In this inclusive school, all groups of pupils achieve well. The positive ethos in classrooms is a great strength of teaching and learning. Teachers and pupils get on very well together and, from an early age, pupils develop considerable independence as they work. Classrooms are pleasant and purposeful places to learn and pupils say lessons are fun. The good curriculum provides stimulating opportunities to learn and often combines subjects to tackle interesting topics. Key Stage 1 pupils are not given a wide enough range of opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills (ICT) in other subjects such as history.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils report that they enjoy school very much. They cite enjoyable lessons, the warm relationships and the extensive outside areas as highlights of their school life. Attendance is above average. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and makes a considerable contribution to their personal and academic development. There is very little bullying and pupils know that the school deals with such incidents firmly. Pupils are happy that they receive good care and the school has robust systems to ensure their safety and well-being. Pupils are set targets, but academic guidance is not precise enough, so they have an imperfect idea of their next steps in learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets the tone of the school and, through effective monitoring, promotes consistently good teaching and learning. The school runs smoothly despite staff difficulties, due to its underlying strengths and the combined efforts of the headteacher and staff. The Foundation Stage is good and well organised under its new leadership. Governors provide consistent support and have a good grasp of the school's future priorities.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well run, and along with good teaching results in children getting off to a good start. Improved provision, such as better planning, ensures that children achieve well, most reaching the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Staff know these children very well. They assess and record their progress thoroughly and plan teaching to suit individual needs and to provide a good balance of activities. Teachers establish a calm atmosphere where children develop self-assurance and learn well. For example, a very young pupil showed complete confidence as she explained the features of her binoculars to the class and answered their questions. Staff in the Foundation Stage work well as a close-knit team. Accommodation,

including the outside area is very good and increasingly used to provide stimulating learning experiences.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set clear, personal targets for pupils so they are aware of their standards and what they should do to improve them.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT, particularly in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. Effective Foundation Stage teaching ensures that children make a good start to their schooling, developing the good learning routines that make a positive difference throughout their school careers. Their achievement, including those with behavioural and moderate learning difficulties, is good.

Standards and achievement in Key Stage 1 have been, respectively, average and satisfactory until recently. Sweeping changes to Years 1 and 2, including creating smaller classes, have been effective. Current Year 2 standards are improved and above average. Achievement is now good. The school has long shown a strong commitment to inclusion, ensuring that pupils receive the correct degree of support and challenge. This has had a positive effect on Key Stage 2 standards, which are above average, and achievement, which is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe both in and out of school and report that staff care for them well, should they be upset or hurt. They have a good grasp of healthy practices; even the youngest understand which foods are healthy. Pupils know the importance of exercise, many taking part in sporting opportunities offered by the school. 'Kinetic day' (every Tuesday) encourages pupils to walk or cycle to school and everyone is keen to get the badge which recognises their efforts.

Pupils reach above average standards in the important skills of literacy and numeracy and this is good preparation for later life. Their very strong independence and the opportunities to handle money also promote good economic well-being. The school council plays an important part in pupils' good community involvement. It provides a forum for their views to be heard and acted upon. Pupils are socially responsible, taking part in numerous village and church events. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and the outcomes are evident in this cohesive school. However, the school recognises that it should develop further opportunities to promote pupils' multicultural understanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Rigorous monitoring ensures a consistently good quality of teaching. Some good school strategies help to ensure effective classroom methods. For example, teachers are encouraged to observe excellent practitioners in other schools to help sharpen their skills.

Lessons are carefully planned and teachers display good subject knowledge. In this small school, individuals' learning needs are well known and suitable methods are used to support and challenge them as required. Good assessment tracks pupils' progress and triggers extra help when needed. These factors help ensure pupils learn and achieve well.

Pupils are keen learners and behave excellently, so the shared focus in lessons is on learning. Relationships are very positive. From their first years in the school, pupils learn how to work effectively in small groups, in pairs or independently. Classrooms are well managed and teaching assistants participate in all phases of lessons, working in close teamwork with teachers.

Teachers mark work carefully, often adding helpful and encouraging comments. At times, their advice is not analytical enough and rarely refers to pupils' academic targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and meets all requirements. The school is well placed to develop modern foreign languages, currently all Key Stage 2 classes are taught French. Numerous initiatives enliven pupils' studies. There are a variety of visitors to the school, from musicians to authors. Pupils visit places of interest, both locally and further afield. Combining subjects to study topics leads to stimulating activities. For example, the investigation of teeth by Year 3 and 4 pupils involved work in English, mathematics, science, ICT, French, dance, drama and music. The culmination was a well-received presentation made to parents. The school does not plan or offer enough opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to further develop ICT skills in other subjects.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of sporting and other opportunities offered before, during and after school, and participation rates are high.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The high level of commitment of all staff ensures pupils grow in a nurturing environment that values each one as an individual. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and help provide a safe, supportive environment. Pupils and parents rightly regard the school as caring and this underpins good personal and academic outcomes for pupils. Careful attention is paid to including those who find learning more difficult and these pupils receive good support.

Most pupils have targets for improvement and know some of them. However, these are often too wordy and complex. The school recognises this and has plans to make targets easier to understand and more personal to each pupil.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher knows the school intimately and has a clear vision, focusing strongly on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. She has created a common sense of purpose among teachers, who provide consistent support in the absence of key staff. All staff work very hard to 'plug the gaps' in the management and day-to-day running of the school left by staff absence. These strengths have enabled the school to continue to function with minimal disruption.

Self-evaluation procedures are very strong and provide a clear view of the quality of provision. The school development plan is useful and identifies the correct priorities for improvement but lacks details that would help interim checks on progress. The school sets ambitious targets for the future and has thoughtful strategies to meet them. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are well-informed and closely involved in planning for the future, including implementing a new building scheme. The school's inclusion philosophy is well supported by the recent appointment of an additional specialist teacher.

Financial planning is thorough and the school has achieved the national financial management standard. It gives good value for money. The extensive field, superbly equipped play areas and other outdoor zones such as the conservation area, provide an outstanding resource for learning. The school uses this very well. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and the school has made good progress. Its track record indicates a good capacity for improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	1
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	2
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?	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	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

10 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chieveley Primary School, Newbury, RG20 8TY

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently and for helping me during the inspection. I enjoyed talking to you and am only sorry I could not chat to everyone. You told me that you think Chieveley Primary is a good school and I agree!

You have an interesting mix of topics to study and visitors help add variety to what you do. The way you are taught is good and I agree with you that many lessons are fun. Your excellent behaviour is a great help. You work hard, are very good at working on your own and this helps you to learn well. By the time you leave school, your standards are better than in most schools and achievement is good.

You told me that you feel well looked after and I agree that your teachers take good care of you, making sure you are safe and happy. Your development is good and I know you like coming to school. You have good knowledge about important things such as how to stay healthy and safe.

Your headteacher and staff run the school well and, with the governors, have made exciting plans for the future. This good leadership has helped keep the disturbance caused by absent staff to the minimum. The links the school has with other schools in the area are very helpful. Like most schools, some things could be better. I have asked the school to improve two main areas.

- You should have better advice on how to improve your work, including easier to understand targets. If you do not know how to improve, you should ask your teachers.
- The school should give you more chances to work on computers.

Once again, thanks for all your help. It was a great pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead Inspector