

Cadmore End CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110460
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	310316
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	John Laver

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Wright
Headteacher	Mr P Durrant
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Cadmore End High Wycombe HP14 3PE
Telephone number	01494 881460
Fax number	01494 883653

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, which include a range of emotional problems and difficulties with literacy and numeracy, is broadly average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. During the previous two years the school has acquired a new headteacher and has experienced a complete change of teaching staff except for the two part-time teachers sharing the Foundation Stage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

'The school has made great improvements over recent years. New leadership and a fantastic team of teachers have really raised standards.' This statement from a parent was typical of many received during the inspection. Cadmore End provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education. Staff have begun to implement some appropriate, major changes, which are bringing improving achievement, especially amongst older pupils. The school is thereby building on several strengths, both in pupils' personal development and in good provision in the Foundation Stage.

The very small number of pupils entered for national tests makes comparisons difficult, and has been a major contributory factor to fluctuating standards from year to year. The school has only recently begun to assess and track pupils' progress with any real degree of accuracy. Pupils join Year 1 with standards broadly in line with expectations, although with weaknesses in writing. Current standards of the very few pupils in Year 6 are average, and overall pupils now make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This is because the school has successfully addressed the underachievement of older pupils, a feature of recent national test results. Boys in the current Year 6 achieve as well as, and in some cases better than, girls. This has reversed a previous trend. The most able pupils, and those with a range of literacy, numeracy and emotional difficulties, make similar progress to other pupils. Sometimes they achieve well because of additional help from support staff or outside specialists.

Success in addressing past underachievement is partly the result of the impact of leadership on improving teaching. There are still inconsistencies, but no unsatisfactory teaching. In the best lessons, pupils learn quickly, due to a good level of challenge and the opportunity to learn independently. This was seen at its best in a lesson in which pairs of older pupils considered different styles of writing, using their research and computer skills to good effect. Where teaching is satisfactory, there is insufficient use of assessment to match work to all pupils' needs. Also marking is inconsistent, making too little use of pupils' learning targets, and not ensuring that pupils know how to improve their work.

Personal development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel safe, and are particularly enthusiastic about the recently introduced wide range of after-school clubs. They enjoy helping each other, for example in the playground or as monitors. The range of extracurricular activities, unusual in such a small school, is the strength of the curriculum, which is satisfactory overall. Pupils comment on the good level of personal care, and parents comment on the staff's commitment to supporting vulnerable pupils. Attendance is satisfactory and there are comprehensive procedures in place to monitor this. The school is developing realistic assessment systems to track pupils' progress more accurately, and to set personal targets. This is having a mixed impact in the classroom because teachers use this information inconsistently.

The headteacher operates without a leadership team, but is supported well by a governing body that is becoming more knowledgeable, involved and challenging. Together they deserve considerable credit for the improvements. However, leadership and management are satisfactory because several initiatives are at an early stage. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate, and the resulting planning for improvement is appropriate and realistic. In this very small school, those responsible for subject areas currently have few opportunities for monitoring, and ensuring that best practice in their subjects can be shared effectively amongst all teachers. Nevertheless, the headteacher has brought about improvements in assessment, whilst provision in the

Foundation Stage, mathematics and science has improved since the previous inspection. By building on these successes, and also on the strengths in pupils' personal development and the recent improvements in standards and achievement, the school is currently on track to meet its academic targets. There is satisfactory capacity for improvement: the school has a realistic prospect of raising achievement still further, with an enthusiastic, though still relatively inexperienced, workforce.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The small numbers of Nursery and Reception children make good progress in an attractive and well-resourced learning environment. Standards on entry vary considerably from year to year, but children reach the expected levels of skill and knowledge in most areas of skills and knowledge. Pupils currently in Reception are less advanced in basic writing skills. Teachers motivate the children, as seen when the children had great fun in learning to play African musical instruments. The majority of children develop good social skills and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1. The Foundation Stage is well led. Thorough assessment procedures enable staff to plan an appropriate range of managed and independent learning activities, which ensure good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement by ensuring more consistent use of assessment in the classroom to set targets, and plan work that meets the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the quality of marking and feedback to give pupils more guidance on how to improve their work.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching by giving leaders more opportunities to monitor their subject areas and share best practice.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory but improving. The school's recent focus on science has been successful, with older pupils in particular showing evidence of good progress, for example in the accurate writing up of experiments. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average in Year 2, with pupils making satisfactory and sometimes good progress. In the current Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, although a significant proportion make good progress particularly in reading and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Opportunities to develop spiritual awareness are taken, for example in assembly, as seen when pupils reflected on the 'water of life'. Pupils enjoy school, and talk enthusiastically about their teachers and activities both inside and out of lessons. They particularly enjoy the annual residential trip to the River Dart and after-school clubs. Pupils behave well, and show pride in their school. They appreciate

the opportunity to serve on the school council, raise funds for the school and charities, and make a good contribution to the community. Pupils show a good understanding of the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise. They say that they feel safe in school and are confident that the school will deal promptly with any problems they encounter. Improving standards and confidence, seen, for example, when pupils speak in class or assemblies, are preparing them well for the next stage of their education, although the development of basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The best teaching shows high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. It encourages pupils to work on their own or collaboratively, so developing independence. In these lessons, teachers also use objectives well and keep pupils focused with a brisk pace. Pupils say how much they enjoy these lessons. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall: in the lessons in which pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress, teachers do not match the level of work sufficiently to pupils' abilities. Tasks are 'more of the same' rather than taking pupils to the next level of challenge. Marking is often not constructive enough, since teachers make limited use of comments and targets to raise standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Parents are positive about the level of care in the school, which is supported through a well developed programme of personal, social and health education. Some good initiatives, such as the provision of French, are more recent. Although the planning of the curriculum has improved, with better links between subjects, there is not always enough progression in the level of work for pupils as they move through mixed age classes with a wide range of ability.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel confident and safe in school, despite the dangers of the busy road immediately outside the school. This testifies to the good level of personal care and support, especially for vulnerable pupils. Some of these pupils have shown remarkable gains in confidence due to the patient help of staff, and parents are very appreciative. Child protection arrangements are secure and well understood. In recent months the school has implemented an assessment system which tracks pupils' progress, and teachers and pupils collaborate in setting targets for academic and personal development. As yet, these are not used consistently enough in everyday teaching, or in marking, to have a significant impact on progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is ably supported by governors and staff, and together they have rightly identified the key areas for improvement. They have implemented several initiatives which are beginning to have a positive impact, for example in improving behaviour. The teaching staff is

mostly new and inexperienced. Although teachers have a subject leadership role, it is relatively undeveloped, and has a limited impact in the classroom. However, the headteacher does carry out extensive monitoring and this has resulted in improved teaching and learning. The school has developed some links with local schools, for example using a local secondary school for specialist support in sport. However, some of these partnerships, including membership of a 'learning community' of local schools to share expertise, are at a very early stage.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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

26 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cadmore End CofE School, High Wycombe, HP14 3PE

Thank you for welcoming me on my recent visit to your school. I had an interesting time visiting your lessons and assemblies as well as talking to many of you and to your teachers. You are very polite and friendly, and a credit to your school.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education, and things have improved considerably in recent months. Both you and your parents told me that behaviour has improved, and you are very enthusiastic about all the clubs and other activities. These have increased considerably. You also told me that you enjoyed the residential visit to the River Dart. I know that you are well looked after, feel safe in school, and are very thoughtful in the way you help each other, including those younger than yourselves. I was also impressed by how you talked about the work of the school council and helping in activities such as being classroom monitors.

Your teachers work hard to teach you a range of subjects, and you told me that you enjoy this aspect of the school, although some of you think that occasionally the work is too easy for you. Mr. Durrant has done a lot to change the school in a short space of time. This has helped to improve it, with the result that many of you are doing better in your work than you used to.

I have asked your teachers to use your targets more, and when marking your books, to make sure you have an even clearer idea about how you can improve your work. You can help in this by making sure that you follow up their comments. I have also asked your teachers to make sure that they give you work that makes you think even harder, for example by working on your own, and finding out things for yourselves rather than relying on the teacher. This already goes on in some lessons, and could be done more often.

I have asked the school to give teachers more opportunity to help each other in working on how to make these improvements.

Once again, thank you for your welcome into the school, and I wish you well for the future.

John Laver

Lead Inspector