

Cutthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112513
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	310909
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	105
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	13
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Louise Shipstone
Headteacher	Mr Ray Andrews
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Hill Cutthorpe Chesterfield Derbyshire S42 7AS
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Fax number	01246 234585

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Cutthorpe Primary is a smaller than average sized school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties, including pupils with a statement of special educational need, is broadly in line with that found nationally. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are no pupils at an early stage of acquiring English. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is provided for children in the Reception class. The school has gained Basic Skills, Healthy Schools, ECO School, Investors in People awards as well as Activemark for its commitment to pupils' physical activity.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Cutthorpe Primary is an outstanding school that enables pupils to achieve exceptionally well and to leave school as accomplished individuals more than ready to tackle the challenges of the future. The school benefits from tremendous support and appreciation from the vast majority of parents and one comment echoed by many is testimony to this, 'It is not possible to speak too highly of the teaching, staff and headteacher.' The school is always looking at ways of being better and it has an excellent track record of swiftly moving forward and its capacity to continue doing so is outstanding.

From broadly average starting points, pupils make exceptionally good progress and by the time that they leave school, standards are significantly above the national average and at times exceptionally high. There are a number of factors that contribute to this success story, not least of which is the pupils. They are great ambassadors for the school, behaviour is often exemplary and their desire to do well shines through. Being a healthy school has a high profile and pupils benefit enormously in understanding how to stay healthy, eat well and how to manage risks in their lives. Pupils contribute extremely well to the school as a community and they know that their contributions and suggestions are valued highly by the staff. The school recognises that the time is now ripe for pupils to play a greater role in setting and reviewing their own targets for improvement and discussions with pupils show how ready they are for this!

Highly successful schools often have significant strengths in teaching and the curriculum and Cutthorpe has them in abundance. Teaching is good, at times outstanding, because it motivates and enthuses pupils and at times leaves them hanging on the teachers' every word. High levels of respect between pupils and adults abound and staff are consistently effective at building up pupils' confidence. The curriculum provides excellent learning opportunities both within and outside of the school day and helps pupils gain a very strong awareness of local, national and international issues and perspectives. Excellent development of literacy, numeracy and computer skills sit comfortably alongside the development of investigative, enquiry and enterprise skills with the school looking to develop all these discrete skills still further across different subjects of the curriculum. Enrichment activities and after school clubs are outstanding and add another layer to pupils social skills as well as their love of school.

The pastoral care of pupils is excellent because meeting the individual needs of all pupils lies at the core of the school's work. Pupils feel safe, secure and respected with all staff going the extra mile in ensuring that pupils thrive both socially and academically. Key to this is the high levels of academic guidance pupils receive, although procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in foundation subjects are not yet sharp enough.

Leadership and management is excellent at all levels because it is dynamic, committed and always setting the bar of expectation higher. Nowhere is it better epitomised than in the leadership of the headteacher who with the staff has set an agenda of sustained excellence and enjoyment. The continued fulfilment of this agenda is in very safe and accomplished hands.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to a cracking start in the EYFS because of the high quality provision and good and at times better teaching. Practitioners work extremely well together in providing a rich and

stimulating array of learning activities both inside and in the outdoor play area. Assessment is excellent and the information is recorded and utilised very well to plan the next steps in children's learning. Teaching strikes a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led learning activities and staff frequently capitalise on opportunities to question children and to enter into role play; this approach successfully supports the development of children's communication skills. The seeds of independent, investigative learning and of excellent behaviour that are features of the school as a whole are securely planted and nurtured in the EYFS. Through snack and fruit times, baking activities, PE, and outdoor play, children gain an excellent early understanding of keeping fit, healthy and safe. It is in this very safe and caring environment that children thrive and reach above average expectations by the end of the Reception year. Plans are rightly in hand to further improve the transition from Reception to Year 1 and for accommodation and practice to be shared and utilised in an even more effective manner. The excellent leadership of the EYFS that has overseen much improvement in provision since the last inspection looks set to ensure this occurs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in foundation subjects and enable pupils to play a more active role in setting and reviewing their own targets for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Attainment when children start at the school is broadly in line with national expectations. Children get off to a flying start in EYFS and by the end of the Reception year attainment is above expectations. This good start is built on in Years 1–4 where progress is never less than good and at times outstanding. Progress is outstanding in Years 5 and 6. By the time that pupils leave, standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently significantly above the national average and some years are exceptionally high. Add to this the high standards pupils reach in the development of information and communication technology (ICT), enquiry and investigative skills and it is evident that the overall achievement and progress of all groups of pupils is outstanding. This success owes much to innovative leadership, a vibrant array of learning activities, imaginative teaching, challenging target setting and pupils who have a continual thirst for new knowledge and skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils of all ages contribute significantly to the many successes of the school. They add much to the tremendous sense of community that envelops the school. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they have an infectious enthusiasm for learning that is tangible in the buzz of fun and excitement that is a feature of so many activities. Pupils love coming to school and this is reflected in the above average attendance rates. They demonstrate an extremely mature sense of justice and fair play and highly respect the feelings and beliefs of others. They go out of their way to care for one another. Pupils have a good understanding of cultural diversity and the school is rightly seeking to expand this further through more visits and visitors from different faiths. Despite this, pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is excellent. The school and ECO councils are very proactive and have helped to make improvements to facilities, the environment, recycling and play equipment. Pupils carry out, with relish, a plethora of tasks

and responsibilities around the school and instigate fund raising for local, national and international charities. They regularly participate in local events and happenings, contribute to improving the locality and set up companies to buy and sell products as part of enterprise initiatives. Add to this pupils' outstanding awareness of what is needed to keep fit, healthy and safe and it is little surprise that pupils leave the school extremely well prepared for the next challenges in their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good, at times outstanding and the cumulative impact of this consistent level of teaching explains why pupils make outstanding progress overall. Teaching rarely dips below the good level. Across the school relationships, behaviour management and the contribution of teaching assistants are excellent. Teachers go the extra mile to make learning fun but demanding and the pupils are only too ready to rise to the challenges set. The use of ICT across the school is excellent. When lessons are at their best, there is a high level of expectation of pupils finding things out for themselves, of examining different avenues of exploration, taking risks in their learning and self-assessing and evaluating the outcomes. Occasionally, teacher talk or explanations are too long, when pupils have already grasped what they need to do and are so keen to just get on with it! There is some excellent marking of pupils' work, particularly in writing, which leaves pupils in no doubt what they need to do to improve. The school has recognised that this is a model of good practice to be capitalised on more consistently in other subjects and for pupils to play a more active role in setting and reviewing their own targets for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is rich, vibrant and exciting. The school places an excellent emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The push on writing in a cross-curricular manner has seen standards improve greatly. ICT is fully integrated into lessons and adds significantly to pupils' learning and enjoyment. Pupils are given many high quality opportunities to participate in practical activities in science and mathematics and to learn Spanish and play musical instruments. Activities are very well planned so that pupils of all abilities benefit from activities across the curriculum that are both challenging and thought provoking. Booster and extension activities keep all pupils on their toes. Innovative and exciting enterprise activities enable pupils to put their skills to the test in meaningful ways that help them prepare extremely well for their future economic well-being. The school is looking to expand such initiatives still further and adopt a more cross-curricular approach to learning. The icing on the cake for the curriculum includes the excellent personal and social education programme and the outstanding enrichment activities that include challenge days, many visits, visitors and after school clubs that range from Japanese to golf.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is an extremely caring and supportive school where the individuality of all pupils is recognised and celebrated. The very high regard shown for every pupil, and the deep concern

that they all thrive and achieve, is shared by all staff. Pupils state that there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns whatsoever. A significant strength is the voice that pupils have in school. Pupils talked enthusiastically about how they are consulted, are always kept informed and how they believe that 'we can make a difference to what happens in our school.' Very good links have been forged with outside support agencies and excellent support is on hand for pupils with learning difficulties or vulnerable pupils. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are securely in place. Academic guidance is another great strength. Pupils' progress in key subjects is tracked in an outstanding manner and older pupils have an excellent awareness of the levels they are working at and their individual targets for improvement. However, the school has accurately identified the need to sharpen the procedures for tracking pupils' progress in the foundation subjects, particularly when the school moves towards a more integrated curriculum.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides innovative, committed and forward thinking leadership. He has been the catalyst for continued and sustained improvement since the last inspection and leaves no stone unturned in the school's quest for providing an exciting learning environment where all pupils thrive academically and socially. He has been highly successful in moulding together a team of staff who share this vision and commitment and who work tirelessly in making the vision a reality. Rigorous and highly effective procedures are in place for analysing data, tracking pupils' progress, setting challenging targets and for monitoring and improving teaching. The school's self-evaluation is spot on and there is a readiness to embrace new ideas with a gusto that is tempered by the necessity to gauge their impact. Governance is excellent because governors are knowledgeable, challenging, supportive and committed to the continued success of the school. The school's drive for community cohesion is reflected in links with parents, other schools both near and far and the local community, with a commitment to embracing all in the life of the school. These factors, together with the pupils' excellent awareness of existing in a global community, are a winning combination.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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
The extent to which 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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Cutthorpe Primary School, Chesterfield, S42 7AS

Many thanks to you all for making my visit to your school so enjoyable and worthwhile and one that I will remember for a long time. I greatly appreciated the opportunities to talk to you about work and school, and a special thanks to the Year 6 pupils who met with me to discuss their views. It was great to hear how much you love school and all the terrific activities you take part in both during and outside of the school day. It was good to hear how safe and secure you feel, that bullying is not an issue and that there is always someone to talk to if you have any concerns.

I found so many good things about Cutthorpe School that I have to agree with you and say that it is an outstanding school and a great and fun place to learn. Teachers and other staff make learning exciting and in doing so help you achieve exceptionally well. The curriculum is exciting with many interesting activities on offer and lots of visits, visitors and after school clubs. The school is excellent at helping you keep safe, fit and healthy and the way that it cares for you is outstanding. Mr Andrews is a terrific headteacher and the teachers, staff and governors are a premiership team which provides a high quality of education for all of you.

There is another fantastic strength that I have not mentioned yet and that is you- the children! I thought your behaviour, enthusiasm and desire to do well were all outstanding. The contribution you make to the life of the school is something to be proud of. Add to this your knowledge about healthy lifestyles and just how well you all get on together and it is true to say you are excellent ambassadors for the school. Well done!

Even outstanding schools like yours can get better so I have asked Mr Andrews and the teachers to help check more carefully on how you are doing in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and to let you have more say in setting some of your own targets. I know you will want to continue playing your part in the success story that is Cutthorpe Primary School by working as hard and behaving as well as you do now. I wish you every success in the future. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead inspector