

Caen Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113138
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311121
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Knight
Headteacher	Karen Crutchfield
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2004
School address	Caen Street Braunton EX33 1AD
Telephone number	01271 812786
Fax number	01271 815781

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a large village comprising mixed social and private housing. Some pupils' families are members of the armed forces: these pupils often join and leave the school other than at the usual times. Most pupils are of White British origin. Few speak a language other than English at home. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average.

The headteacher took up her post in April 2007 following a period of leadership by acting headteachers. There are currently no other senior staff in the school, although appointments have been made for September 2008. The school received a Healthy Schools Award in April 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Since the last inspection standards attained by pupils in national tests and assessments in English, mathematics and science have declined markedly. In 2007, attainment was extremely low at the end of Year 6 and, while there has been some improvement in Years 5 and 6, standards in English, mathematics and science remain inadequate. As children enter the school with the skills and knowledge expected of those of their age, their achievement in school is inadequate. There are a few encouraging signs of improving progress by some of the current pupils, most notably in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, but overall progress remains inadequate. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make inadequate progress because their needs have been diagnosed at too late a stage, and some are working inappropriately with others who are considerably younger.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance is above average and they have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Their behaviour is satisfactory; there is little aggression or bullying and older pupils help the younger ones, for instance by cutting up their food at lunchtime. In some lessons, however, pupils show a lack of respect for the teacher and do not respond quickly to instructions. This is because the pace of lessons, which frequently start late because pupils do not settle quickly, is often slow. The activities do not stimulate pupils because they are not well matched to their abilities; hence, teaching and the curriculum are inadequate. Teachers do not make sufficiently clear their expectations of pupils' behaviour and of the pace of learning. The curriculum has some good features, notably in sport and physical education where an external coach is highly valued by pupils, and in some outdoor activities such as 'Forest School'. There is evidence of improving teaching and curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, which in turn is leading to improved progress.

The headteacher took up her post in April 2007 following a period of temporary leadership. Her analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate and she has identified correctly the priorities and actions needed to bring about improvement. Her analysis is not fully accepted by all staff, many of whom find the pace of expected change difficult to cope with, resulting in low morale. There are no other senior leaders on the staff. Subject leaders, although improving with support from the local authority, are not yet able to provide adequate strategic support to the headteacher and to class teachers. Consequently, leadership and management overall are inadequate. For instance, understanding of performance data and its use to identify pupils' needs and to plan work that promotes good progress is very limited. The accuracy of assessment is variable across the school, as is the quality of marking, so these aspects of the school's work are inadequate. The concept of using targets for improvement has been introduced recently following local authority support. Pupils have a good understanding of these targets and are keen to use them, but only in Years 5 and 6 are they beginning to lead to improved progress.

The governing body, which in the past too readily accepted anecdotal evidence of the quality of education provided by the school, now has an improved understanding of its role. In part,

this is due to good support from the local authority and the headteacher. The authority identified the school as causing concern in November 2007 and has since provided wide-ranging and good quality support for classroom teachers. However, the quality of management support for the headteacher has been more variable, particularly the failure to address her lack of day-to-day support within the school. Although there are some signs of very recent progress, there has been no overall improvement since the last inspection. The school is not in a position to ensure that improvement takes place with the pace and degree needed to ensure that current pupils receive an adequate education.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Positive change has happened recently in the Foundation Stage leading to rapid improvement, following good support from the local authority and the headteacher. The Foundation Stage leader is enthusiastic, relishing the role and the challenge. She is developing a stronger team. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with the expected skills and knowledge in all areas of learning, and satisfactory progress is made except in creative development and aspects of communication, language and literacy. There are good links with the pre-school on the site, which help children settle into Reception very quickly. The children are offered a range of activities with a good balance between those that children choose themselves and those which are led by adults. The children have a lot of fun in school especially in the outside area. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to help them make progress by talking with them at length. Work on phonics has just begun and is not yet fully integrated into the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their children's education, by being welcome in the classroom, by contributing to the journey books and attending curriculum workshops.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science and improve pupils' progress
- Ensure that teaching promotes high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate through interesting activities that motivate pupils to learn.
- Strengthen leadership and management by developing an effective team of leaders and managers to support and implement necessary change.
- Develop systems to identify the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at an early stage, and provide them with appropriate work and support.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, at the end of which most attain the expected goals. In Years 1 to 4 they make slow progress which is sometimes difficult to judge because of inaccurate assessment. For example, pupils in Year 2 were assessed as able to write in sentences but were not using full stops routinely. Sometimes pupils make no progress in lessons because they are given activities such as 'colouring in' while the teacher works with another group. In Years 3 and 4, pupils assessed as being able to sequence numbers to 1000 were not able to do so. At the end of Year 6 in 2007, the proportions attaining the nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science were well below average, and the proportions attaining the higher Level 5 were exceptionally low. There is evidence in current older pupils' work of some improvement in standards and recent assessments show improvements in Year 5. Due to inaccurate assessments, the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is uncertain.

The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also inadequate due to weaknesses in assessment, monitoring of their progress and the suitability of the work they are given.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils have a good understanding that, in order to keep healthy, they need exercise and a good diet. They also know of the dangers of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Many exercise by walking, cycling or scooting to school. They understand the need to wear cycle helmets, and their broader understanding of safety matters is satisfactory. Pupils are friendly, their behaviour is sometimes unruly but not dangerous, and they report little bullying; that which occurs being successfully resolved. In class, pupils often have a casual attitude towards staff and follow instructions in their own time. Their attendance is good and they enjoy meeting friends at school, but in lessons they can become bored and restless due to the lack of challenge in the work. A group of Year 4 pupils reported that they were sometimes given challenging work in mathematics, but not in English or other subjects where worksheets were often used. As a result, the development of the skills pupils will need in adult life is inadequate. This is true of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, mainly due to outdated equipment which is limited in quantity. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through the school council and by helping younger pupils, but opportunities to contribute to the wider community are more limited.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a satisfactory understanding of the wider world, but aspects of the school such as the scruffiness of some classrooms and the acceptance of lateness by teachers do not promote a good working ethos.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching is inadequate overall. In the Foundation Stage, recent improvements in the understanding of the way young children learn has improved teaching, which is now satisfactory. In Years 1 to 4, there is insufficient understanding of the use of assessment to track pupils' progress and set them appropriately challenging work. The headteacher has implemented changes in the management and use of teaching assistants who are now working more effectively in some classrooms. In others, however, the teacher and assistants give good support to very small groups or to individuals, but leave much of the class to undertake mundane or pointless tasks, hence these pupils make no progress.

In Years 5 and 6, lessons are more interesting, partly because these teachers have better access to ICT than their colleagues. Teaching here is often good. Recent training for all staff and the introduction of targets to show pupils what they need to learn are beginning to improve pupils' progress. Marking across the school is weak, and rarely shows pupils how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The fundamental weakness in the curriculum is the failure to assess pupils' needs quickly and accurately and then to provide suitably challenging work. Classes include pupils across two year

groups with the full range of ability. While some staff manage this successfully, in other classes older and more able pupils report that work is often too easy or repeated from the earlier year. They also say homework is boring. Pupils enjoy a satisfactory range of additional activities, especially in sport. There are satisfactory opportunities to learn music, a modern foreign language and art, and visitors and outside experts are used well to enhance the curriculum. 'Forest School' activities are giving some pupils an opportunity to explore the wider world, and Foundation Stage pupils enjoy trips and visits. However, most pupils have few opportunities to expand their learning outside the school grounds.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

The inadequate aspect of this area of the school's work is the failure to identify pupils' learning needs at an early stage and to monitor their progress with accuracy. This applies especially to those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In other respects, care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils are cared for well, the school meets all requirements to safeguard and protect pupils and, following the introduction of learning targets, academic guidance is beginning to improve. There are good relationships with the pre-school on the site and the local secondary school so in most respects transition from one phase of education to the next is a smooth and effective process.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate because the potentially effective headteacher has insufficient help to carry out the wide range of improvements she has correctly identified as necessary. Because of this, coupled with the fact that there are no other senior leaders to support her in her work, the school's capacity for improvement is inadequate. Many staff find the pace of change too rapid and their morale is low. They do not support the headteacher as the leader of necessary change, reducing the impact of management action. Nevertheless, there has been some progress since her appointment in 2007. Training is beginning to improve the skills of subject leaders and teachers. Monitoring is more rigorous and evaluation is used to identify priorities. The governing body is more effective in monitoring the school's progress, for instance through a group with governor, staff and local authority representation which meets regularly. These actions have led to improvements in pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. Improvement planning is limited to a short-term plan to improve the school, so there is no articulation of the headteacher's clear vision for the school's long-term future, in which staff, parents, governors and pupils can share.

Targets set in the past were unrealistic and were not achieved. There is limited understanding of the use of data beyond the headteacher, although this is changing slowly and is leading to more effective target-setting. Subject leaders are beginning to implement a more strategic approach to subject development. The inaccuracy of assessment remains a stumbling block to progress. Action has already been taken to improve the identification of and support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although this has yet to have an impact on their progress.

Many parents recognise that the school is experiencing difficulties and cite problems in communication with the headteacher. Inspectors found much evidence of good communication with parents, including regular, accessible newsletters and notes of meetings.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
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	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

07 July 2008

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Dear Pupils

Inspection of Caen Community Primary School, Braunton, EX33 1AD

We very much enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work when we visited your school recently. Thank you for spending time with us. We especially enjoyed discussing your work and hearing what you think of your school.

We decided that your school needs extra help so that you can all make the best possible progress. Other inspectors will visit the school from time to time to see that this is happening.

The best things about the school are:

- The Foundation Stage (Reception) and Years 5 and 6 are beginning to make better progress.
- You know a lot about how to keep healthy; congratulations on getting the Healthy Schools award.
- You play well together and the older ones help the younger ones.
- You know your targets and are keen to use them to improve your work.
- You enjoy sport and PE and do well in the activities.
- You come to school regularly so your attendance is good.
- The school is a safe place and you are cared for in a satisfactory way.
- The headteacher knows what needs to be done to improve things but she needs more people to work with her.

The main things that need to be done to improve the school are:

- Teachers finding out exactly what you know and can do and then giving you challenging work to help you learn more.
- Making your work more interesting, for instance by using ICT in more lessons and by going outside the school more.
- Having more senior staff to help the headteacher to improve the school quickly.
- Making sure that those of you that sometimes find learning difficult are given the right help.

You can help too. Try to always get to your lessons on time and settle down quickly. If an adult asks you to do something, do your best to do it straight away. When you are stuck ask politely for help, or let the teacher know if the work is too easy.

Yours sincerely Paul Sadler Lead Inspector