

Cashes Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115561
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	311979
Inspection dates	27–28 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Mary Harlow HMI

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	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Wright
Headteacher	Carol Radcliffe
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Hillcrest Road Cashes Green Stroud GL5 4NL
Telephone number	01453 763598
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Cashes Green Primary School is smaller than the average size primary school. It is situated on the outskirts of Stroud and most pupils come from its local community. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few are learning English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the Reception Year is significantly lower than the expected levels for typical four-year-olds. A large number of children start school with poor basic skills and personal, social and emotional difficulties. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need. Many pupils come from homes in an area of socio-economic deprivation and pupil mobility is higher than average. A playgroup and a new Children's Centre, due to be opened imminently, are situated on the school grounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'I have been extremely impressed with the school in its care and support not only for the children but for the parents and carers.' 'Cashes Green is a good school, it gives the children a well-rounded education.' 'It is a wonderful, warm, welcoming and friendly school.'

These are the views of parents and they are right! Cashes Green is indeed a good school with several outstanding features, where pupils thrive and the adults want to be. All at the school are working exceptionally hard to do the best for the pupils and the school's motto, 'care and support helps everyone succeed' is at the heart of this inclusive, harmonious community. As a result, personal development and well-being are outstanding.

Achievement across the school is good. The children get off to a fine start in Reception, where all make good progress because of good quality teaching and care. This good progress continues across Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils attain above average standards in all subjects by the time they leave. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the excellent attention they receive. The support for improving pupils' behavioural, emotional and social development is a real strength of the school.

'I have nothing but praise for the teaching and support staff, all are approachable.' These parental comments are also apt and a fitting tribute to the consistently good and, at times, outstanding teaching and learning across the school. Lessons are planned meticulously, and taught in a lively and interesting manner. Consequently, the pupils respond enthusiastically, concentrate well and work hard. The school has identified that assessment in the foundation subjects requires some improvement to ensure consistency in practice across the school.

The curriculum is good. Every effort is made to provide the children with practical, motivating experiences that stimulate their thirst for learning. Good links are developing between some subject areas where relevant; these are particularly strong in English and mathematics. The school is looking at ways to develop greater creativity across the curriculum and to improve the provision for more outdoor learning, particularly for the younger children. The school works well with the local community and there is an excellent range of visits and clubs on offer, which the pupils, parents and carers appreciate.

'I have nothing but admiration for the headteacher; she should be extremely proud of the children' wrote several parents. And they too are right! The headteacher cares passionately for the children and their families. 'The children really do come first' and leadership and management are good at all levels. The school knows itself well and sets the right targets to make it even better. There is no room for complacency, and improvements, including the issues identified in the last inspection, have been tackled diligently with particular success recently. There are very positive signs that the pupils' achievements and standards will continue to improve when the new initiatives have had more time to become fully embedded across the school. Governance is strong and partnerships are excellent. The school has excellent capacity for continued improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children have a good start to school life and they progress well. This is because teaching is good and they experience a curriculum that meets most of the needs of young children, although the provision for outside learning requires some development. The adults have a good knowledge

and understanding of the children and they monitor their progress carefully. They interact well with the children during role-play activities; this promotes good quality learning in language and social skills. An appropriate balance of whole-class, group and individual activities ensures that all the children are involved in their learning and concentrate well, often for sustained periods of time. Activities are interesting and fun, for example, the teaching of phonics using toys and games. Relationships and care are excellent and the leadership is strong and dedicated.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen assessment in the foundation subjects building on the recent improvements to ensure consistency in quality of practice across the school.
- Improve the quality of provision for outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage, most enter Year 1 with below average levels of attainment in all areas of learning; particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. By the end of Year 2 standards remain significantly below the national average and have done so for some time. Nonetheless, those pupils who started school in Reception achieved at or above the national expectations although standards were slightly higher in reading and writing than in mathematics.

In 2007 the attainment of Year 6 pupils improved significantly from a continuing trend in recent years of below average standards. Standards rose to above the national average in English and mathematics and to well above the national average in science. This was partially owing to the consistently outstanding teaching to that year group and improved target setting. The school has embraced the Intensifying Support Programme wholeheartedly and this is having a significant impact on raising achievement across the school. Rigorous systems are now in place to check the pupils' progress and the targets set are challenging across all year groups. Moreover, they are monitored assiduously and as a result, pupils are making good progress in all classes. Those with behaviour, emotional and social learning difficulties (BESD) and disabilities achieve well because of the excellent support they receive from the talented teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The extraordinary commitment exhibited by all the adults to the development of the whole child results in pupils thriving and believing that they can achieve. Without exception, children enjoy school and feel they have a voice. All are delightful and refreshingly open in conversation, showing a highly developed sense of respect and care for others. This is particularly noticeable in the manner new children are welcomed into school; they fit in seamlessly and are included immediately.

Because the school places a high importance on developing the pupils' self-esteem, and it does so superbly, spiritual, social and moral development is excellent. Pupils benefit from a wealth of opportunities designed to cultivate these aspects, for example the poignant assemblies on 'Winning and Losing' and 'It is good to be me' where the pupils sing with great enthusiasm. The sterling work of the school council to improve play resources has contributed to the harmonious ambience at lunchtimes and the 'Dug Out Dudes' and 'Funky Friends' execute their responsibilities with great care. Cultural development is good; the pupils are benefiting from

interesting initiatives to explore life in other countries, for example links made through the Comenius 'King Arthur' project and the themed week on India. Attendance is consistently good, as is punctuality.

Behaviour is good and often exemplary. The pupils move calmly and sensibly in class and cooperate well in paired discussions and group tasks. Around the school, they say 'hello' to visitors and adults and invariably greet them with friendly smiles. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and participating in exercise. They feel very safe in school and know there is an adult to turn to if in need. When asked about bullying a pupil said 'We put our t-shirt on the washing line if we want a quiet chat with our teacher'; another older pupil reported with great confidence, 'I would say to the bully that they were wrong'. Pupils are developing good basic skills that prepare them for the next school and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Meticulous planning coupled with excellent relationships throughout the school ensure that pupils are developing good attitudes to learning. They respond well in lessons because they are interested in the topics and are allowed to work in pairs and small groups; they do this very well indeed. In the best lessons, pupils are given practical experiences to make learning meaningful, for instance the use of puppets to act out rhymes and stories, relevant, motivating investigative work in mathematics and science, carefully planned guided reading and imaginative use of information and communication technology (ICT) to stimulate ideas for poetry. Teaching assistants are of a high quality and make a significant contribution to the pupils' achievements. Marking and assessment, although strong in English and mathematics, require some improvement to secure greater consistency of practice in the foundation subjects and in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Every effort is made to provide the pupils with practical, creative experiences which whet their appetite for learning. Good links are made across subject areas and the integration of literacy and numeracy into appropriate aspects of the curriculum is developing well. The provision for children with BESD is a strength of the school and intervention strategies such as the Dinosaur Club are having success. In particular the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), is having a major influence for the better on the pupils' personal, social and health education as is the carefully tailored 'Silver SEAL' small group support programme.

Good use is made of visits, visitors and the local community to enrich the pupils' learning, for example participation in the 'Mock Trial' at the Magistrates Court in Stroud, involvement in local festivals and regular contact with senior citizens. Further development of creativity in the curriculum and outside learning is now, quite rightly, an improvement priority for the school. There is an excellent range of clubs, for example French, country dancing, chess, musical and sporting activities, which the pupils value. These are well attended and the enthusiastic participation by all the pupils was a joy to observe. Such provision is making a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' pastoral care is exceptional and this contributes significantly to their enjoyment and achievement at school. Procedures to ensure pupils are kept safe and secure, including those relating to child protection, are very well established. The breakfast and after school clubs provide a positive start and end to the day for the pupils who attend and the developing links with the playgroup ensure that the Reception children settle in happily. Pupils are clear about their targets for improvement, 'My target is my 11 and 12 times table' said a Year 4 pupil, 'If we forget, our targets are on the learning wall and in our books' said another. However, their parents and carers are unclear about these targets together with the school's policy for homework.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Exceptionally committed leadership by the headteacher, ably supported by a skilled senior and staff team, is ensuring that the school continues to move forward at a swift pace. All possess complementary strengths; discussions are refreshingly honest and based upon mutual respect and trust. The delegation of leadership is good throughout the school; it is particularly strong in the core subjects and developing well in other areas. All adults receive effective professional support; as a result, there is an infectious team spirit permeating throughout the school. The administration and support staff are excellent; they too make a significant contribution to pupils' achievements.

The school's systems for checking on its improvements are rigorous and leaders at all levels, including governors, are working tirelessly to ensure the recent improvements in standards are maintained. All have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and, most importantly, are tackling weaknesses assiduously. Partnership with parents and carers is impressive; the school genuinely values their views and acts upon them. The governors are committed and supportive.

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.

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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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

29 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cashes Green Primary School, Stroud, GL5 4NL

I am writing to say thank you very much for giving me such a warm welcome during my recent visit to Cashes Green. I was impressed with the way you greeted me so confidently and courteously with friendly smiles. I enjoyed talking with you about your work, hearing about your life at school and chatting to you at lunchtime. The performance of 'Muffin Man's jig' was a real treat to observe as was the enthralling football match between the girls and the boys. What wonderful children you are!

Your school is good and often outstanding in many ways. Here are some of the special things that it does very well indeed.

- ?
- Your school looks after you very well and the adults want to do their best for you. ?
- Your behaviour is good; at times it is exemplary. Everyone in the school cares for each other and you welcome new children into your classes exceptionally well. ?
- In Reception you get off to a good start in all aspects of your learning; you make good progress in all other year groups and achieve good standards by the time you leave Year 6. ?
- Your teachers plan interesting activities for you which help you to enjoy school. ?
- The school council take its responsibilities seriously and is doing a splendid job. ?
- There are lots of clubs and visits, which you participate in enthusiastically. You contribute well to the local community, particularly helping the senior citizens. ?
- Your headteacher and other adults are always looking for ways to make your school an even better place to be! They listen to your views and those of your parents and carers in helping them to do this.

You are lucky to have such a caring headteacher, fantastic adults and committed governors at the school. I have asked them to make the assessment of your work even better and to improve the outdoor learning area for the younger pupils.

It was a real privilege to visit Cashes Green Primary School. Keep up the excellent work and, most importantly, continue to enjoy your learning.

Best wishes for the future; I hope that you achieve great things!

Mrs Harlow HMI Lead inspector

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- ☺ There are lots of clubs and visits, which you participate in enthusiastically. You contribute well to the local community, particularly helping the senior citizens.
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Lead inspector