

# Castle Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115569
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311981
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Cox

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Harvey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Rowlinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Abbotswood Road Brockworth Gloucester GL3 4NU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01452 863380
<b>Fax number</b>	01452 863380

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the effectiveness of the school's procedures to track pupils' progress and how this information is used to determine actions taken to raise standards in writing; the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation and monitoring procedures at all levels in determining areas for improvement and the success of actions taken to address these; and the key elements that contribute to the strengths of pupils' personal development and well-being. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; the school's assessment records; observation of the school at work; discussions with pupils, staff, parents and governors; and analysis of parental questionnaires. All classrooms were visited. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

In this average size school, the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The main needs are communication and behavioural and emotional difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents are correct in their view that this school provides their children with a good education. One of the key reasons for the school's many successes is that the headteacher's inspiring leadership enthuses others to have the highest possible aspirations for the school and its pupils. Over a number of years she has skilfully built an effective staff team who are committed to school improvement. All parents speak in glowing terms about the school's many achievements. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'The headteacher and her team provide an excellent environment for all the children to achieve their best.' Others say that they are very impressed with 'this happy and friendly school,' which they, 'would recommend highly to any parent.' This is a school where every pupil is valued, everything is done to include them in all activities and they are made to feel special. Children in the Foundation Stage have a very happy start, make good progress and attain the expected standards for children of this age on entry to Year 1. Good achievement continues as pupils move up the school, so that they reach challenging targets by the end of Year 6 and attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. These standards represent especially good progress and achievement for pupils with communication, emotional and behavioural difficulties, who receive good support with their learning. A recent successful focus on improving pupils' writing skills has resulted in higher standards. A fundamental reason why pupils achieve well is due to the good quality of teaching throughout the school. By pitching work and support precisely at pupils' own levels, staff ensure that all pupils enjoy their work and feel they are successful. There are impressive strengths in how work is planned, how skilfully pupils are involved in their learning and in staff's high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The team of talented and highly competent teaching assistants provide good support to teachers and pupils. They are much valued staff members and confidently take responsibility for leading many activities. The school collects a considerable amount of assessment information, which helps staff to effectively match pupils' learning to their various capabilities in lessons. However assessment information is not kept in a form that is easy to interpret. Therefore, pupils' overall rate of progress from the time they enter the school to the time they leave is not easy for staff to ascertain without looking in several files. This makes it difficult for staff to spot any potential dip in standards. Pupils are very clear about what they are to learn in lessons and are developing a good understanding of what they need to have achieved by the end of a lesson. Teachers' marking is excellent and clearly tells pupils how they can improve their work. Relationships and pupils' behaviour are exemplary and, consequently, pupils are motivated and learn well. Teachers' good planning builds very effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and differing needs and ensures that lessons are lively, exciting and enjoyable. Pupils are understandably very proud of their school and their teachers, saying such things as, 'Lessons are fun, pupils are very kind and if something goes wrong and somebody is upset, the teachers and children help them feel better.' Pupils say they love school, and this is reflected in their improving attendance which is now slightly above average. Despite the school's best efforts, a number of parents take their children out of school for holidays during term-time. Pupils get on extremely well together and enjoy taking responsibility for helping to run the school. They are very keen to be school councillors and playground buddies and they raise considerable amounts of money for charity. They have been very involved in improving the outdoor area. For instance, after noticing that the trim trail was losing its appeal, they raised funds and purchased new equipment to renew pupils' interest and enjoyment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and lies at the heart of the school's work. Their good skills in literacy, numeracy and information and

communication technology (ICT) and excellent personal development prepare them well for later life and learning. However, success in national tests has not compromised the wider curriculum, which is good. It is effective and relevant in meeting pupils' diverse needs, aspirations and capabilities. Imaginative links between subjects make learning practical, relevant, challenging and exciting. Good improvement has been made to the provision for ICT, which is now used skilfully in all lessons by staff and pupils to extend learning. There are outstanding opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in the wide range of exciting clubs and enrichment activities, including exciting theme weeks for art, drama and science. Pupils' personal development is excellent because the care, support and guidance provided by the school are outstanding. Pupils have an excellent awareness of, and commitment to, personal safety and healthy and active lifestyles. Good links with a wide range of outside agencies, nearby schools and parents ensure good support to further the pupils' academic and personal well-being. Staff and governors share the headteacher's positive approach and enthusiasm. Governance is good. Strong leadership and management are evident in rigorous and accurate evaluation of every aspect of the school's performance, which leads to considered and effective action. Teamwork is very strong. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Consequently, the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve even further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress from starting points that are lower than those expected for their age when they enter the Reception class. By the end of the Foundation Stage standards are broadly in line with those expected in all the areas of learning. Children have many opportunities to explore, investigate and discover together. The experienced staff know children and their families extremely well and ensure that individual needs and interests are taken into account so that all children achieve well. They plan an interesting and exciting range of activities, but the outdoor area is not as exciting for the children as the indoor classroom. The school has started to implement plans to develop a more stimulating outdoor environment. Children's spoken language develops well as adults are readily at hand to extend and develop children's learning. Staff work as a highly effective team and have excellent knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of young children. This ensures that children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and their general well-being. The good curriculum provides constant pleasure, excitement and adventure. Parents appreciate the interesting classes provided for them to support their children's early reading and writing skills. They also praise the reception staff's excellent understanding of children's needs, their strong caring qualities and greatly appreciate the good feedback they receive.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Simplify the assessment data so it is easier to track pupils' progress through the school.

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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?	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?	2
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 <sup>1</sup> 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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



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

2 June 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Castle Hill Primary, Brockworth, GL3 4NU You will probably remember that I visited your school not too long ago and I am writing to let you know what I found out. Before I do, I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. You are all extremely polite and friendly and are great ambassadors for the school. A special thank you to the two Year 6 pupils who did a brilliant job of showing me around the school. I agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school. The quality of teaching is good and the staff make learning fun and enjoyable so that you reach above average standards in your work. You have an excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. You are really well cared for at school and you receive excellent support in your learning and in your personal development. Another strength is the effective way in which the headteacher leads the school and makes sure it is a very welcoming, happy and successful community. You, yourselves are another huge strength with your excellent behaviour, your hard work and your contribution to school life and in the mature way in which you care for each other. The headteacher and the leadership team have many good ideas to make the school even better. I agree with their plans and also feel it would be helpful if senior leaders made it easier to track your progress throughout the school so that they can quickly spot if any of you need further support. The headteacher and all the staff want the school to continue to improve. Having met you I am sure you will play your part as well by continuing to work hard and by keeping up your excellent standards of behaviour. I wish you every success in the future. It was a real pleasure and privilege to meet you all. Yours sincerely Joyce Cox Lead inspector

**Annex B**

2 June 2008

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**Inspection of Castle Hill Primary, Brockworth, GL3 4NU**

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The headteacher and the leadership team have many good ideas to make the school even better. I agree with their plans and also feel it would be helpful if senior leaders made it easier to track your progress throughout the school so that they can quickly spot if any of you need further support.

The headteacher and all the staff want the school to continue to improve. Having met you I am sure you will play your part as well by continuing to work hard and by keeping up your excellent standards of behaviour.

I wish you every success in the future. It was a real pleasure and privilege to meet you all.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cox  
Lead inspector