

Cleeve Prior CofE (Controlled) First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116794
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	312405
Inspection dates	20–21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Watters HMI

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Evans
Headteacher	Sarah Newbury
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003
School address	Main Street Cleeve Prior Evesham WR11 8LG
Telephone number	01789 772276
Fax number	01789 772276

Age group	4-10
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Cleeve Prior First is a small school, with pupils coming from the village of Cleeve Prior, other neighbouring villages and the nearby town of Evesham. 29 per-cent of the pupils are from Traveller communities. Most pupils come from generally well-advantaged social backgrounds. Six per-cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average of 16.9 per-cent. There are 29 per-cent of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average of 19.2 per-cent. The headteacher took up her post on 1 September 2007, following a year as the acting headteacher. At the same time, a teacher for Class 2 joined the school on a permanent basis. The Class 3 teacher resigned at the end of the autumn term 2007 and a replacement teacher started work at the school on 1 January 2008. This teacher also has a permanent contract.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Cleeve Prior First School provides a satisfactory quality of education, although it recognises that pupils' achievements should be better. After a period of significant instability in leadership and teaching, the school is in a more secure position to improve at a faster rate than in the recent past. While standards are broadly average overall, attainment in writing in Years 3 to 5 and in mathematics in Year 5 is too low. Pupils' achievements are generally satisfactory, although there are groups of pupils who are not achieving as well as they might, particularly those who are more able and pupils in Year 4. Pupils' progress in writing is not as good as it might be. Pupils from the Traveller communities make satisfactory progress relative to their own prior attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make generally satisfactory progress.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers provide well for the pupils' personal development, although lesson planning does not take enough account of the pupils' different starting points and capabilities. The pupils' behaviour and their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are confident young people who have good social skills and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is satisfactory. The curriculum is generally satisfactory and visitors to school help broaden the pupils' experiences. Care, support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory, although academic guidance is not as strong as pastoral support. Feedback in marking does not always give enough guidance to pupils about how to improve their work and pupils' individual targets are not closely enough linked to the work they do in lessons. Most parents support the school and are happy with the quality of education provided.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recently introduced procedures for tracking pupils' achievements and raising standards are providing the school with a mechanism to increase the rate of progress for all pupils. Monitoring and self-evaluation are secure, although not sufficiently focused on how well actions are contributing to raising standards and pupils' achievements. The headteacher and new teaching team, with the support of the governing body, demonstrate the capacity to improve further. The school has made generally satisfactory progress since the last inspection, against a background of significant recent upheaval and changes in staffing.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The children have a satisfactory start to their school life in a secure, safe and happy environment. Their attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. It is currently average but in the recent past has been below average, with a wide spread of attainment levels in each new group who join the school. The children receive good levels of care and really enjoy their lessons, making satisfactory progress overall by the time they move into Key Stage 1. They make consistently good progress in their personal, social and emotional development but much less in their language and mathematical development. There is a good range of stimulating activities linked to a common theme, such as The Gingerbread Man and the storybook characters Meg and Mog. This linking of activities through a theme helps the children to make sense of their different learning experiences and provides opportunities for independent learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards overall, particularly in writing in Key Stage 2 and in mathematics in Year 5.

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in writing in Years 3, 4 and 5, for the more able pupils and those in Year 4.
- Improve the quality of lesson planning to take greater account of pupils' different capabilities and starting points and also, when marking pupils' work, provide them with clearer guidance about how to improve.
- Sharpen procedures for self-evaluation, making sure the impact of actions is measured against raising standards and pupils' achievements.

A small proportion of the 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

While the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are generally average, their attainment levels and achievements are inconsistent. For example, progress for the more able pupils in writing is not as good as it could be and there is some underachievement in Year 4. Similarly, standards in mathematics in Year 5 are below average. Standards in handwriting, sentence structure and the written presentation of pupils' work at Key Stage 2 are too low, given the pupils' capabilities. Some pupils in each year group achieve well: in writing in Year 2, in reading in Year 5 and in mathematics in Years 2 and 3. All the pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach at least average standards by the end of the year. This is a positive sign as, in the recent past, standards in the end of Key Stage 1 national assessments have declined and are currently below average. The progress of pupils from the Traveller community is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make generally satisfactory progress, often from a low starting point.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school and meeting their friends and teachers. They play together well and the older pupils take good care of the younger children. Pupils are courteous, polite and welcoming to visitors. They are confident, mature and good-humoured young people who enjoy conversation and welcome the chance to talk about their school. They know that adults will listen to them should they have any concerns and they appreciate belonging to a small village school. Pupils feel safe and well cared for and delight in talking about eating healthily and the benefits of regular exercise. They are tolerant and respectful of adults and each other, although their understanding of Britain as a culturally diverse society is limited. Nevertheless, their spiritual, moral and social development is good. While pupils demonstrate some good personal qualities, such as perseverance and a positive work ethic, that prepare them well for the next stage in their education, opportunities for promoting independence in their learning are limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and relationships are good. Teachers provide good levels of pastoral care for all pupils and classrooms are happy and safe environments.

Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, and most try hard to do their best, even when their work is too easy or too difficult. While the pace of learning is generally satisfactory, the pupils' work does not match their different ability levels and starting points well enough. This slows their rate of progress and limits opportunities for effective independent learning. While teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, there is not the same high level of expectation for the pupils' academic achievements. Teachers' marking and assessments are good when pupils can see what they need to do next to improve their work. However, this is inconsistent. For example, pupils are not receiving enough help to improve their writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broadly satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. A good range of after-school clubs enriches the curriculum, and these are well attended and appreciated by the pupils. Curriculum planning is generally satisfactory, although there are some gaps in medium- and long-term planning in the Foundation Stage. Similarly, weekly lesson plans lack sufficient focus on what different groups of pupils should achieve. There is satisfactory provision for information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy, although planning to raise standards in writing is not good enough. The curriculum provides a sound range of opportunities for pupils to achieve satisfactorily, including those from Traveller communities and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils are fully involved in the life of the village and church and really enjoy opportunities to share their school life with the local community. The school takes great care to include all pupils, regardless of their background and circumstances, and is successful in doing so. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 5, pupils are prepared well in terms of their personal development, and satisfactorily in relation to their academic achievements.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Adults ensure that pupils enjoy coming to school, feel safe and well cared for. Pupils' social well-being and self-esteem are good. Their commitment to equality reflects in the good and harmonious relationships they enjoy with each other and with adults. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and risk assessments are reviewed annually. The pupils receive effective pastoral support, which encourages and praises them for their efforts. Academic guidance is not as strong. Pupils have targets for improvement but these do not always relate to their work in lessons. Very few pupils know which level they are working at and what they need to do next to improve their key skills, for example, in writing. End-of-year and key-stage targets are generally challenging and should help raise expectations. Links with learning support agencies are satisfactory. Nearly 50 per-cent of parents responded to the inspection questionnaire and most of these were positive in their support of the headteacher and the staff. The inspection found no evidence to support some more negative comments and issues raised by a few parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. After a very recent period of instability in staffing and unrest among the school community, the headteacher, new teaching team and

governors are in a secure position to drive improvement at a faster rate than previously. The headteacher demonstrates a sound understanding of most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She recognises that while monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory, there is not enough priority given to evaluating pupils' progress in lessons and the impact of teaching on the pupils' achievements. Strategic planning is satisfactory. While the school development plan is a sound framework for further improvement, some success criteria are not sharp enough to help the headteacher and governors measure how well the school is doing, for example, in relation to pupils' progress and raising standards. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and pleased with the new leadership and teaching team. The chair of governors recognises that the governing body now needs to act more robustly as a critical friend in holding the school to account for the standards achieved by the pupils.

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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	3
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

22 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cleeve Prior First School, Worcestershire WR11 8LG

Thank you for your very kind welcome when I visited your school. You are all very helpful, cheerful and polite. I spoke with many of you who impressed me by how much you enjoyed talking about your school. You told me that you enjoy your lessons and know that, should you have any problems, you can talk with your teachers or the other adults who work with you.

Your school does really well helping you feel safe and well cared for. I could clearly see that you are positive about yourselves and your teachers, and you told me how much you like being in a small village school. You play together very well and those of you who are older look after your younger friends well, particularly on the playground.

There are things that your school can help you improve. I have asked Mrs Newbury and the governors to make sure

- You all get on faster with your work and reach higher levels, particularly for the older ones in class 2, all of you in class 3 and those of you who find your work quite easy.
- You do even better in your writing and for some of you in class 3, in mathematics as well.
- Your work is always interesting and challenging, that the teachers check carefully to see how well you are doing and then tell you clearly what you need to do to improve your work.

You can help your teachers by letting them know if your work is too easy or you cannot quite understand what they want you to do.

Thank you again for being so kind and friendly and I hope you do really well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Watters Her Majesty's Inspector

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