

Claydon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124575
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	314969
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Miller

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Field
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Brown
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
School address	Lancaster Way Claydon Ipswich Suffolk IP6 0DX
Telephone number	01473 830439
Fax number	01473 834009

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school, taking pupils from a number of local villages within a semi-rural community. Most pupils are White British, and the percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language is low. There is a higher proportion of boys on roll than seen nationally. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are broadly as expected for their age. The percentage of pupils who have additional learning needs is below average although the proportion with a statement of educational need is above average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory overall. This is because pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress as they move through the school. By Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and in mathematics. By Year 6, standards are average in English and they are above average in mathematics and science. Standards have levelled out overall and have not improved in recent years. There are weaknesses in English, particularly in writing, which have not been resolved fully since the last inspection. The school is focusing on improving pupils' writing and it recognises that girls have underachieved in English tests over the past two years.

The school has some emerging strengths, which include pupils' good personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Staff teamwork is enabling the development of a good curriculum, which increasingly captures pupils' interest. Consequently, attendance and enjoyment in learning are excellent, and parents commented very positively on these aspects. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and roles as future citizens.

There are secure arrangements for safeguarding children, and pupils confirmed that they feel safe in school and supported well by adults. There is good pastoral support. However, care and guidance are only satisfactory because of two key factors. First, although pupils are adamant that bullying is rare and there is prompt and effective action taken by staff, the school has not maintained records of such incidents. Secondly, the use of assessment to ensure effective target setting and support learning is not rigorous enough to raise achievement. Consequently, although there is some good practice, learning and teaching remain satisfactory overall.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory overall. Parents and carers have much praise for the headteacher because of her approachability and the good links that are forged with pupils' families. However, aspects of the school's self-evaluation are not yet precise enough. In particular, monitoring procedures are not yet sufficiently rigorous. Nevertheless, through elements of its own development planning, the school is increasingly recognising that it needs to improve standards and aspects of its provision. The school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The Foundation Stage is managed appropriately. Children enjoy school because teachers are cheerful and welcoming. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Many aspects of teaching are good and there is a proper emphasis on building language and thinking skills. Independence is promoted well and staff work hard to ensure the children are nurtured in a supportive environment. Plans are in hand to improve the limited facilities for outside play. However, the school does not have a full analysis of children's attainment on entry when they join the school at the start of each new term. New tracking systems have been introduced this year and staff are working well with parents to assess children's learning. Inspectors judge children's skills at the start of the Nursery and Reception years to be broadly average but weaker in language and communication development. Children make satisfactory progress so that standards are broadly average by the end of Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rigour of the school's monitoring and self-evaluation procedures in order to assess more accurately children's attainment on entry, the quality of pupils' learning and the progress they make as they move through the school.
- Raise standards in English, particularly in writing.
- Improve the consistency of teaching through the more effective use of assessment and target setting.
- Ensure the rare incidents of bullying, and how they are dealt with, are recorded.

A small proportion of 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

Standards in the 2007 national tests were average but in Year 2 the school fell short of its targets and the results in writing were below expectations. In the Year 6 tests, standards were above average in mathematics and science, although the results for English were again average and below expectations in writing. This reflects the situation at the time of the last inspection. There was some good performance from boys, but significant underachievement amongst girls. The school accepts that its support for this group of girls was not effective enough. It is now working to ensure earlier intervention to assist those potentially underachieving. There are improvements feeding through into pupils' written work in Years 5 and 6 because of new school initiatives. Pupils requiring additional learning support achieve satisfactorily overall, as do the more able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have very well developed social skills, working together cooperatively and responsibly to develop their creative thinking skills. They show good awareness of healthy lifestyles and are motivated to eat well and keep active. Behaviour is generally very good and pupils adopt safe practices around the school. They respect and support each other well and show respect to staff. Pupils talk enthusiastically about all the opportunities the school offers and the fun they have. This love of school is one of the reasons why the pupils' attendance and their enjoyment of learning are excellent. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community in many ways. The role of the school council is effective in giving all the pupils a voice in school improvement. Pupils are developing well the inter-personal skills they will need in the future. The school is working to raise standards of literacy to support pupils' future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Whilst there are examples of good and outstanding teaching, it is not yet of a consistently high standard because planning and the quality of marking vary between classes. Therefore, teaching has not yet been effective enough in improving learning and raising achievement, particularly in English. In some lessons pupils learn

quickly because they are challenged to explain their thinking and encouraged to assess their own learning. Such teaching encourages pupils to work collaboratively by sharing and discussing their ideas. Teachers have good subject knowledge and some ask searching questions of their pupils. However, whilst pupils are told the key aim of lessons, teachers do not assess regularly what has been learnt against these aims in order to evaluate pupils' progress. Teaching assistants are not always used effectively at the start of lessons but work well with small groups to support learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good curriculum has been established because of hard work by staff. As a result of its review, the school is aware the curriculum will require further refinement as it works to raise pupils' achievement. As it develops, the curriculum is supporting pupils' needs increasingly well. Good developments have been made in identifying links between subjects to create interesting and exciting themes. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their literacy and research skills in many different subjects. Standards in reading are improving as a result of initiatives such as 'Reading Day'. The refurbished library is inviting with good quality books to inspire a passion for reading. Other strong features are the personal, social and health education course and good opportunities for pupils to learn French. An impressive range of clubs and visits contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pastoral care is good. The school works well with external support agencies to promote children's welfare and learning. There are good transition arrangements with the main partner secondary school. Suitable safeguarding procedures are in place. The school records properly any racial incidents and it maintains a record of behaviour issues. However, although pupils confirm that the school deals sensitively with the rare incidents of bullying, it does not record them specifically. Nevertheless, pupils feel confident that they are able to learn in a safe environment because adults show good concern for their physical and emotional needs. Academic guidance is satisfactory but it is not consistent or robust enough to ensure pupils are guided effectively as to how they can improve. The school collects assessment information on pupils' attainment, although this is not used sufficiently to analyse and evaluate pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Good aspects of leadership are reflected in the school's development planning. Leadership, management and improvement since the last inspection, are satisfactory overall. This is because initiatives to ensure the efficient use of assessment information are only recent and have yet to have an impact on achievement. As a result, senior leaders do not always have a precise enough picture of pupils' achievement. Target setting is satisfactory, but not always reviewed regularly or rigorously enough. Furthermore, the monitoring of lessons has tended to concentrate more on teaching rather than pupils' learning. Consequently, some aspects of the school's self-evaluation have been over-generous. Nonetheless, there has been good improvement in the ways subject leaders carry out their roles and responsibilities. Good teamwork is an emerging

strength of the school. The headteacher and other senior leaders ensure the school runs smoothly and this is appreciated by parents and pupils alike. Governance is sound and this helps to make sure resources are managed well. Key governors are involved effectively in school life but they have rightly identified some areas where they need to strengthen their roles.

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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?	2
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	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	2

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?	2
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

6 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Claydon Primary School, Ipswich IP6 0DX.

We would like to thank you all for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons. You showed us that, as it says on your new website, your school has a strong sense of community in which each of you is a valued and respected member. This is a satisfactory school with some real strengths.

These are the things we found are best about your school.

- You are enthusiastic about school and your enjoyment in learning is excellent.
- You are very friendly and play an active part in school and community life.
- You are polite, behave well and care about the school.
- The adults at your school look after you well, in both your work and play.
- What you are taught is being developed well by your teachers.
- Your teachers and governors are working hard to help you make better progress.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Develop further the ways your teachers gather and use information about your learning in order to help you make even better progress.
- Help you to improve further your standards in English, particularly in writing.
- Ensure the ways your teachers mark and assess your work always help you to know what to do to improve and to understand better your targets.
- In addition, we have suggested a better way for your headteacher and governors to note and record the very rare cases of bullying which may occur at your school.

During the inspection you showed us some of the T-Shirts you had prepared for your 'Reading Day' with various interesting words and quotations printed on them. You asked us what we would choose to help you with your literacy work. Let us leave you with the words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) who wrote:

'Prose = words in their best order;- poetry = the 'best' words in the best order.'

(from: 'Tabletalk' by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, dated 12 July 1827, published 1835) Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, 4th edition [electronic version], Oxford University Press

With all best wishes for your future,

Michael Miller Lead inspector