

Clifton-upon-Dunsmore CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125670
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315282
Inspection date	21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Bower
Headteacher	David Briggs
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Station Road Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Rugby CV23 0BT
Telephone number	01788 542027
Fax number	01788 541351

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects: how well leadership and management were improving pupils' writing across the school; mathematics and the more able in Year 1 and 2; and the effectiveness of the school's assessment procedures.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. 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 form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Clifton-upon-Dunsmore is slightly smaller than the average primary school. Most pupils are from a White British background. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2007 and the deputy headteacher in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Clifton-upon-Dunsmore C of E Primary is a good school. It has some outstanding aspects to its work. Across the school, pupils achieve well because of an excellent start in the Reception class, good teaching and an outstanding curriculum. By the end of Year 6, standards are consistently above average in English, mathematics and science. High quality care, guidance and support lead to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Parents are very pleased with both the care and education provided for their children. Children's good progress, the improved learning environment, attractive displays and the school's very positive atmosphere all come in for praise. Parents are particularly impressed with how the new senior leaders steer the school, the good teamwork being developed and the positive changes they have made. Parents commented, 'Impressed with the effectiveness, enthusiasm and energy of the head' and 'The headteacher and his deputy are first class'.

Good leadership and management is the key to the school's success. The relatively new headteacher brings infectious enthusiasm and outstanding educational direction to the school. He has quickly gained the confidence and respect of pupils, parents and staff. He is very well supported by the new deputy headteacher and senior leaders. The leadership of English is effective. A strong reading culture contributes to high reading standards and there have been good improvements to the provision for writing. Some subject leadership roles are still developing, particularly in terms of monitoring. Teamwork among the staff is strong and there is a positive commitment to continuous improvement. The school reviews its performance systematically and the findings are used effectively to plan improvements. Recent improvements to assessment and individual target setting and a whole-school focus on writing are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, improvements are too recent to have had a full effect on achievement and standards. Governors are committed and supportive and have a good understanding of the school's performance.

Teaching and learning are good, with elements of outstanding practice. Teachers have excellent relationships with their pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic and respond exceptionally well to the high expectations of behaviour and learning. The purpose of the lessons is clear and teachers provide specific guidance which enables pupils to review their own learning. As the pupils correctly reported, 'Teachers plan good lessons and make them fun'. Clear instructions, demonstrations and explanations promote learning well. Teachers use checks on progress to match activities and tasks to pupils' abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged well and make good gains in their learning. By the end of Year 2, standards have been above average in reading, writing and mathematics for some time, but too few of the more able pupils attained the higher levels in mathematics and writing last year. Past inconsistencies in assessment and teaching have now been remedied, so these pupils now achieve well. Improving writing is a whole-school priority and more able pupils now make good progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 because of sharper assessment and challenging mathematical tasks being matched to their needs. Current work and assessments indicate that more pupils are reaching above-expected standards in writing and mathematics. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to learning, particularly for those pupils who need a bit of extra support. Occasionally, there is an over-reliance on worksheets, which restricts pupils' ability to plan and organise their own work. Classrooms are attractive and bright, with high quality displays of artefacts and pupils' work reflecting a varied and exciting curriculum.

The curriculum promotes good progress for pupils and makes an excellent contribution to their personal development. While there is strong emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics, there are many other strong aspects such as art, music and sport. Good links between subjects add meaning, relevance and enjoyment to pupils' learning. Opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their writing skills are much improved. These successfully include topics which appeal to boys such as a visit to the Coventry City football stadium and the designing of a shirt-making machine in Year 4. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved considerably and is used to support teaching and learning in a range of areas. A productive partnership with the local secondary school successfully enhances provision in art, drama, ICT and music. The school environment is very attractive and used creatively to support learning. An excellent natural area provides opportunities for reflection and scientific study. An exceptionally good range of clubs, ranging from basketball to cheerleading, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these aspects of school life.

Pastoral care is excellent and there are highly effective systems to assess and track pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils have specific personal learning targets in writing and mathematics so they know what they are working on to improve. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. From the Reception Year onwards, pupils thrive in the school's very positive atmosphere. Pupils are considerate to others and reflect on important issues such as peace and hope and what changes they would like to see for Lent. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected by their high attendance and enthusiastic participation in all activities. Behaviour is exemplary because of the high expectations of all staff and outstanding relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and show an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating, exercising regularly and keeping safe. They thrive on the additional responsibilities given. For example, those on the school council have contributed to improving playground facilities and have recently set up a 'healthy tuck shop' in partnership with a supermarket chain. At Clifton, pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education because, by the time they leave, they have good skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In addition to these, their personal and social skills are exceptionally well developed.

The school's self-evaluation routines are robust and senior leaders have used it well to address some past weaknesses in assessment and writing. The maintaining of above-average standards and recent improvements to assessment, ICT and writing demonstrate a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children's overall attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is usually typical for their age. Outstanding leadership by the Foundation Stage teacher, high quality teaching and an exciting curriculum enable children to make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. A wide range of stimulating activities is planned both inside and outside the classroom. The teacher and assistants provide an effective blend of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. The school's drive to improve writing begins effectively in Reception and there are very good systems to assess the children's progress. The learning environment and the activities provided are highly stimulating and these inspire and motivate the children. By the end of Reception, children have acquired good levels of knowledge and skills, which prepares them extremely well for the next stage of their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching and planning provide pupils with enough opportunities to plan and organise their own work to help them make even quicker progress.

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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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

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

22 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clifton-upon-Dunsmore C of E Primary School, Rugby CV23 0BT

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I have found. Yours is good school with some outstanding features.

These are strengths of the school.

- Children in Reception get off to an exceptional start.
- You all thoroughly enjoy school and your attendance is outstanding.
- The school is an extremely friendly, caring and pleasant place to be.
- Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school.
- Teaching is good, which is why you are learning so well.
- Clear assessments and learning targets are contributing to your good progress.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are consistently above average.
- An outstanding range of learning activities is provided for you.
- The learning environment and displays are excellent.
- You show an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe.
- The school is extremely well led by your headteacher and he receives very good support from other senior staff.
- You show considerable care and respect for other pupils and adults.
- Staff take excellent care of you and give you outstanding support.
- Your parents are very pleased with the care and education provided.

There is just one area that the school could work on to make it even better.

- On occasion, your teachers could give you more opportunities to plan and organise your own work.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the very best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts Lead inspector

Annex B



22 February 2008

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OBT**

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With kind regards

Derek Watts
Lead inspector