

Chesterfield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131528
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	315823
Inspection dates	12–13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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	721
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Nicholas
Headteacher	Ms Jenny Jones
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chesterfield Road Enfield EN3 6BG
Telephone number	01992 710 778
Fax number	01992 652 010

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than average and serves a mixed area with large pockets of high deprivation. The majority of pupils come from a variety of ethnic minority backgrounds. About half of pupils have English as an additional language which is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than usually found. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties is above average as is the percentage with a statement of educational need. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is also very high. In September 2006, Chesterfield Infant and Junior Schools were amalgamated. The headteacher of the junior school became the leader of the new school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The headteacher of Chesterfield School is a strong yet sensitive leader who has handled the amalgamation skilfully. This has been particularly successful because of her enthusiastic and determined approach. She, along with her senior team, has created an atmosphere in which leaders at all levels are able to work together successfully. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and have rapidly addressed the legacy of underachievement in Key Stage 2. This indicates that the school's capacity to make further improvements is good.

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and most parents are very supportive. One, echoing the views of others said 'I am happy with the way the school is run and my child seems to enjoy school and loves going each day.' Because the school places a high priority on the personal well-being of its pupils, they are polite and well behaved. They are knowledgeable about healthy living and spoke enthusiastically about taking exercise and eating the 'right food'.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Many pupils enter the school with weak skills and understanding for their age but they develop well in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress from their low starting points and standards by the end of Year 2 are rising steadily. However, standards by the end of Year 6 have slipped to well below average in the last two years. Despite this, these pupils have made satisfactory progress considering their particularly low attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. Currently, most pupils in Year 6 are on track to meet their challenging targets.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but inconsistent. On the whole, pupils are interested in what they are learning and are encouraged by their teachers to produce their best work. This highly effective approach to teaching in some lessons is not always evident in others where pupils are not always sufficiently engaged in their work or challenged effectively. This is particularly the case in mathematics and science where the quality of teaching is not always good enough to compensate for previous underachievement and the low starting points of pupils.

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. The school is currently working hard to make it more engaging for pupils. The impact of this can be seen particularly in Year 1 where good creative links are made between subjects to help pupils to see the relevance of their learning. This approach is still developing in other year groups.

Most parents are confident that their views are valued. Parents are effectively involved at the start of their child's education and beyond. One parent praised the school's 'drop in sessions' as being very useful, and others wrote about how much communication has improved.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. Children are quickly integrated into school routines so that they feel confident and enjoy school from the start. They make good progress from their low starting points because they are provided with stimulating and enjoyable activities. As a result, the majority now achieve expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception year. Some do particularly well in their physical development. Teaching is good and teachers use assessment well so that children are able to take the next steps in their learning.

Resources are used highly effectively to extend and enrich children's learning in both the indoor and outdoor areas. A particular strength is the way the parents are involved in their children's learning. One parent commented, 'I could not have found a better school for my child. Teachers are wonderful and help me to help my child.' Knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership has brought about considerable improvements in recent years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement throughout the school, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching by consistently challenging and engaging the pupils particularly in mathematics and science.

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

Many pupils start from a very low baseline of knowledge and skills, and there is much ground to be made up. Despite the school's efforts, standards in Year 6 have been well below average and in 2006 and 2007 were exceptionally low. This is because of a legacy of poor performance in Key Stage 1 before the two schools became one. The work and test results of pupils currently in Year 6 however, show that, while still below expected levels, standards are improving.

Standards at the end of Year 2 are also improving year by year. The school is very effective in identifying groups of pupils who need particular and intensive help, and in organising well-designed programmes for them. Initiatives such as 'High Five' have a marked impact in accelerating the progress of the participating pupils. Where pupils from minority ethnic groups are falling behind, they too receive the extra support they need. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils enjoy lessons and have good attitudes to school. 'All teachers are nice, there is a good atmosphere and we enjoy learning.' said one. Most are polite and helpful, and have good relationships with each other, and with adults. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall with cultural development being a strength. Pupils are confident that adults will help to sort out everyday disagreements quickly, and will tackle any incidents of bullying effectively. Attendance is improving, but it is still below the national average. This is because a small number of families do not respond to the school's diligent efforts to ensure regular attendance. Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy diet, and of the importance of keeping safe in the community.

Pupils' views are promoted well through the school council and they support a variety of charities, and engage in several recycling projects. The 'Dreamcatcher', 'Aim Higher' and 'Human Utopia' projects are effective in helping to raise children's aspirations for the future. Pupils are introduced to the world of work through inspirational visiting speakers. However, their economic well being is hampered by the standards achieved in their basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

School leaders have a clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school. At their best, lessons capture the pupils' interest, involve them in challenging and creative activity and elicit intense and sustained concentration. Teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Work is carefully planned to meet their varying needs and caters well for those with learning difficulties. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, pupils were taught the skills they needed to investigate and solve problems independently in a systematic way. Where this happens pupils learn a great deal in a short time but sometimes they spend too long listening to teachers' explanations, and have too little opportunity to express their own ideas, show initiative, or to use apparatus. They are well-behaved, and try hard to learn, but their enjoyment and achievement are not as good as they could be. The school is redesigning its work programme to make it more appealing to the pupils. As yet it has only been implemented in one year group, but will be in place across the school by the end of the year.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has put in place an improved curriculum for all pupils since its amalgamation in September 2006 to ensure that they are more actively involved in their learning. There is a strong focus on raising achievement through personalised programmes for pupils of all abilities. These programmes are being used to ensure that pupils who are underachieving are identified early and are supported effectively by the nurture group, learning mentor and 'Place 2B' group. Although these are beginning to bear fruit the school has not had enough time yet to show the full impact of all these initiatives on standards. Provision for pupils' personal development is good and ensures that they have a good understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles and are supportive of one another. A good range of visitors, for example, a local sculptor and an African drumming specialist group, enrich the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall with outstanding pastoral elements. Staff work very effectively with outside agencies to provide maximum support for a wide range of needs. Procedures to ensure all pupils' health and safety are in place including those for child protection. Any pupils at risk are quickly identified and very well supported by both teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are well-prepared for transfer to secondary schools and feel confident about this move. The arrangements for tracking progress and setting targets are in place but these are not yet consistently effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher had run the junior school successfully for many years and is now successfully addressing the legacy of underachievement in Key Stage 1. Through highly effective self-evaluation, a fully comprehensive plan for raising standards has emerged to which all staff

and governors are fully committed. The school has an accurate understanding of what it does well and what it needs to improve. The school improvement plan provides clear guidance on relevant issues for raising standards. A particular strength is the way in which the school analyses information to identify and target extra support for groups of underachieving pupils. As a result, new programmes are set up to raise achievement, as seen in the school's 'personalisation project'. The governing body makes a good contribution and their challenging questions are effective in supporting school improvement. Middle managers play a full part in monitoring their areas and they ensure that good practice is shared amongst all teachers. At senior level, monitoring of teaching and learning focuses well on what is happening in classrooms and helps teachers to improve their work.

Some responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that a small minority of parents feel that they are not kept fully informed about the school or their children's progress, and that behaviour is not good enough. However, during the inspection this was not found to be the case.

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3
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?	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	3
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	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	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

25 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chesterfield School, Enfield, EN3 6BG

We all enjoyed our short stay at Chesterfield. It was good to see you at work, and to know you enjoy school. We noticed how well you all get on with each other, and how well behaved you are. Well done!

Your teachers get to know you very well, and take great care of you. They keep an eye on how you are feeling, help you when you have problems and make sure the work they set is right for you. We saw how excited you sometimes get when lessons really interest you. You work specially hard then and learn a lot. We are asking your teachers to plan more lessons like these.

We have asked that your teachers work hard to improve how well you do in mathematics and science. You can help too by always working as hard as you can so that you learn as much as possible. Put all you've got into your lessons, so you really make the most of your time at Chesterfield School!

We expect you know how lucky you are to have your school run by such good staff in the headteacher's team. They work very hard to do the best for you, and it really matters to them that every one of you does well.

Thanks you for helping make our visit so interesting. We'll remember the African drumming lessons for a long time!

Kind regards

Glynis Bradley-Peat
Lead Inspector