

Chadsmoor C.E. (VC) Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124240
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	316514
Inspection dates	27–28 November 2007
Reporting inspector	David Anstead HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Corke
Headteacher	Barbara Herszenhorn
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
School address	Burns Street Chadsmoor Cannock WS11 6DR
Telephone number	01543 511000
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Age group	7-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Chadsmoor Junior School is of average size. The social deprivation indicator is above average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is broadly 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 overall effectiveness is satisfactory. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school was judged inadequate at an inspection in December 2005. Aided by good support from the local authority, all the weaknesses from that inspection have now been addressed. The headteacher and senior staff have instituted rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school. These have enabled the leadership of the school to prioritise the areas for development and to gauge their success in dealing with them. The performance of the school is now significantly better. Teachers assess pupils' work well and ensure all pupils are aware of their current National Curriculum levels and have good guidance on how they might improve further. The outcomes of assessment are used well by teachers in planning future work and in ensuring activities of varying difficulty are matched to pupils' different starting points. Teaching and learning are now good because of the sustained efforts of good leadership and management and the commitment of all the staff to do better. However, the impact of good teaching and learning is relatively recent and so for older pupils, who were hindered by some unsatisfactory teaching in the past, overall achievement from joining to leaving the school is satisfactory. The academic progress made by each pupil is extremely well tracked and informs the school's target setting process. Targets have been realistic until recently, considering the unsatisfactory achievement of the past, but offer insufficient challenge now that achievement is satisfactory. The school now has good capacity to continue to improve without external support.

The school's motto of 'enjoying and learning together' sums up how life is in this happy and caring community. Together with strong spiritual direction, good care, guidance and support ensure pupils' personal development is good. Pupils get on well with each other and behaviour is good. Classrooms and corridors are brightly decorated with attractive displays and make a calm and welcoming environment. When asked what they liked best about the school, pupils said that they value the way the staff care for them most of all. Pupils appreciate the wide range of lunchtime and after school activities. Participation in these is very high, especially in art and music related activities. However the overall attendance of all pupils during the school day, although satisfactory, has fallen from last year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by setting more ambitious targets and using the tracking system to ensure the school is on course to meet them.
- Work with parents to improve attendance.

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

Attainment on entry is broadly average. The results of the 2007 national tests show a marked improvement in mathematics on previous years. Standards in that subject are now close to the

national average. There has been a smaller improvement in the science results, which remain below average. Pupils were unable to sit the English tests on the specified day as a fire nearby meant the school had to be evacuated. Consequently, there are no official test results in English. The school did, however, arrange for pupils to complete the test papers a day later and paid an accredited examiner to mark them. The results of this assessment show standards in English have improved to be below average. Standards overall are now broadly average to below average. Considering pupils' starting points, achievement is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' obvious enjoyment of school life is a major feature of their personal development. Pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons, particularly enjoying active sessions, and are confident that they are making progress. Mathematics has become very popular. Both in lessons and around the school, behaviour is good. Good participation in sport helps pupils to remain healthy. Although school meals offer healthy options and pupils know about the importance of a good diet, they show a preference for less nutritious food in their packed lunches. Pupils generously celebrate each other's success in lessons, applauding spontaneously when they recognise good effort. They work well together and help others to understand. Around the school there is little unkindness or bullying, with well known procedures for dealing with it, so that pupils feel safe. Pupils' good moral sense shows in the classroom rules for behaviour that were devised by each class and are well observed. Despite the school's efforts to improve attendance, it has declined this term and is now average. Pupils contribute well to the school and local community, with the school council playing an active part, for example, in making decisions about the purchase of outdoor play equipment. Pupils share responsibility for the distribution of this equipment at breaks and lunchtimes. House captains support staff in supervision of other pupils. Pupils enjoy the good range of activities for fundraising for charities, many of which they suggest and organise themselves. Whilst independence is well developed, pupils' satisfactory achievement in core skills means that progress towards economic independence is also satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers base their planning on accurate and detailed assessment of pupils' learning. The impact of every lesson is evaluated so that future planning can be adjusted to meet pupils' needs. Teachers provide good opportunities for self-evaluation, encouraging pupils to learn from good examples by identifying and celebrating their own and their friends' good work. Clear objectives that make pupils feel secure about the purpose of lessons are used frequently as reference points to check understanding. Teachers plan a wide variety of experiences that maintain pupils' concentration by making lessons enjoyable. Skilled questioning encourages pupils to think critically and independently. Teaching assistants work very effectively with teachers to support targeted groups, including potential higher attaining pupils. However within this latter group, the school does not yet identify gifted and talented pupils and devise specific tasks for them. Although occasionally pupils are not clearly informed about the basis of errors, their written work is diligently marked, identifying strengths and ways to improve in terms that pupils understand. Teachers give pupils constant access to self-evaluation documents showing their progress towards their targets. Pupils are required to record their own assessments of

what they understand and what they have yet to master. Lessons, therefore, have a real sense of purpose and enjoyment leading to good learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum places an appropriate emphasis on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. It is well planned and adapted where necessary to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. Following consultation with parents and pupils, the school has introduced a new programme of themed topics this term. Known collectively as 'scintilla', meaning 'to spark', the themed topics promote pupils' multi-cultural awareness and creativity through activities in art, dance, food technology, geography, history and music. For instance, pupils studying the Caribbean in geography learnt to bake banana bread and were taught salsa by a visiting dance teacher. Scintilla is already beginning to make a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school and to developing their skills in using information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils learn how to research the internet, to use ICT to help them give presentations to other pupils, and to edit video footage of the outcomes of their work.

The range of lunchtime and after school clubs is excellent and pupil participation in them high. A learning mentor employed by the school oversees work in the vegetable garden and the greenhouse. Some pupils lead their own clubs under the watchful eye of lunchtime supervisors. Pupils have good opportunities to make a contribution to the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good care, guidance and support provided for pupils have a significant influence on the purposeful and harmonious atmosphere of the school. Pupils are clear that all staff care for them well, both in class and in other activities. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are broadly in place, with further staff training due in the coming term. The school promotes healthy eating in lessons and clubs, with limited success as yet, but ensures that pupils are ready for school by providing breakfast for those who want it. Teachers guide pupils very well towards improved performance. All know how well they are doing towards reaching their targets and are supported in identifying their own areas for improvement. Staff monitor carefully the progress made by all pupils, identifying those who are struggling and putting in place extra support to help them. Pupils with LDD are well supported by work that is specifically planned for them and receive good help from teaching assistants. External agencies, such as social services and the speech and language therapists, are used very effectively to support individual pupils. Groups identified for mentoring benefit well from activities that develop their self-esteem and social skills. Vulnerable pupils are closely monitored to ensure their well-being. Teachers try hard to gain the support of parents for their children's education, inviting them to attend events such as curriculum evenings and informing them in detail about their children's progress. The school broadens perspectives through good links with local churches, businesses, charities and public services, for example regular support from the community police officer and an enjoyable visit from the Fire Brigade. Good partnerships with local feeder and secondary schools ensure that pupils feel confident about transferring to the next phase in their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are well established. The progress of each class is rigorously evaluated by subject leaders, planning is checked and teaching observed. Consequently, the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses which is used well to identify the priorities for further improvement. Subject leaders play an important role in monitoring and evaluating and report the outcomes to governors. The governing body has received good support and training from the local authority. Governors are now more aware of their roles and responsibilities, more business like and better informed about the progress of the school. A strategic plan to manage the impact of a predicted fall in pupil numbers over the next three years has been well thought through. Governance is now making a good contribution to school improvement.

The system for tracking the academic progress of pupils is excellent. It accurately predicted the 2007 test results and is predicting standards will rise further in 2008, although this is partly because the current Year 6 pupils are a more able group. The school follows national guidance in setting performance targets based on prior attainment. Current targets are realistic considering past underachievement and offer a satisfactory degree of challenge to the school. However, considering the improved progress now being made by pupils, targets for future years are unambitious.

The school is well managed and runs smoothly on a day to day basis. Training needs are identified from strategic planning in ensuring staff have the necessary skills to address the priorities for development. The principles of best value are used well in the effective and efficient deployment of resources.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	3
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?	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?	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Chadsmoor CE (VC) Junior School, Cannock WS11 6DR

Following our visit to inspect your school, I am writing to tell you about our findings. I would like to thank those of you we spoke to for the friendly welcome you gave us. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. That means it has some strengths that are balanced by some weaknesses, and your responses to our questions helped us decide what is good about it and what needs to be improved.

This is what is good about your school.

- You are happy at school and enjoy your lessons.
- The range of lunchtime and after school clubs is excellent.
- The way the school checks on your progress is outstanding.
- The school looks after you well.
- Your lessons are well taught.

This is what still needs to improve.

- Your attendance.
- The targets the school sets itself are not very challenging.

You can help by coming to school every day.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Anstead HMI

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