

Chalfont St Giles Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110287
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	325126
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Scott HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nigel Hobbs
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Tagg
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2006
School address	Parsonage Road Chalfont St Giles HP8 4JW
Telephone number	01494 873090
Fax number	01494 874949

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2009
Inspection number	325126

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

Chalfont St Giles Junior School is an average-sized school serving the village of Chalfont St Giles and the surrounding rural area. The majority of pupils have a White British heritage, while a lower proportion of pupils than in most schools are from minority ethnic groups. No pupils have free school meals. There are a few pupils with statements of special educational needs but the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than in most schools. These include pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Chalfont St Giles Junior School is an outstanding school. It has a positive, cooperative ethos which encourages pupils to excel both in the outstanding and wide range of opportunities provided by the school and in their own personal interests and pursuits. One parent took the time to tell us, 'My children really enjoy coming to school and have grown both academically and personally - I feel the school nurtures the whole child.' This was typical of the many comments received from parents.

Pupils enter the school with standards at the end of Key Stage 1 that are above average. Standards are well above average in mathematics and English by the end of Key Stage 2 and are exceptionally high in science. Pupils make good progress overall and both standards and progress show an improving trend. This is due to the staff's positive approach and their enthusiasm to improve their own practice even further and to strive for excellence.

Pupils are very well prepared for the next stages of education and demonstrate very positive and mature approaches to learning. They speak with confidence and develop into considerate and positive role models for younger pupils. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills and this is prevalent in all areas of the school's work. The philosophy for children (P4C) lessons are particularly well focused in encouraging pupils to think for themselves, to develop their ideas, to empathise with the views of others and to communicate their considered thoughts effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural understanding is outstanding. They are very clear about factors affecting healthy and safe lifestyles and make informed choices about exercise and diet. There is very rarely any learning time lost to poor behaviour, as pupils enjoy learning so much and have very good relationships with each other and with adults in the school. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to contribute to the school community, including the effective school council and the focus groups for each year.

Teaching and learning are good and the hard work and skills of staff are ensuring that a considerable proportion of lessons are outstanding. Pupils are challenged with very probing questioning and given very clear guidance on how to make the next steps in their learning. Teachers are becoming increasingly effective at ensuring that lessons provide pupils with high-quality experiences and include the depth and detail needed for pupils to achieve ever higher standards. The care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding and is apparent in all aspects of school life. Pupils feel safe and can talk to adults in the school if they have a problem. Systems for safeguarding are robust. There is strong support for pupils' pastoral needs. The systems for tracking pupil progress have developed quickly and are increasingly effective, particularly in focusing intervention, although leaders recognise that there is scope to develop this area further still.

The school curriculum provides pupils with outstanding opportunities to develop personally and academically. The range of activities in lessons, in conjunction with the wide variety of trips, visitors and focused days and weeks, ensures that pupils are engaged in, enjoy and have a clear context for their learning. Sport, music and art are valued and pupils also look after a small brood of chicks. Hobbies Day gives pupils a chance to see and explore the hobbies and interests of their friends and to tell others, with confidence, something about their life outside school. Pupils are motivated and take charge of their learning, with teachers and other adults facilitating and supporting them well.

The school leadership is outstanding. The headteacher demonstrates a clear vision for the school, with an inclusive ethos. He is ably supported by a senior team and middle leaders who are clear about what is needed and are bringing about change to ensure that outcomes for pupils are very good or better. Leaders and managers are not complacent about the school's successes and are increasingly effective at self-evaluation at all levels. The targets set by the school are effective in raising standards but could be even more challenging for all pupils. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. The governors are increasingly effective at holding the school to account and play an active role in the school.

What the school should do to improve further

■ Further improve the extent to which pupils enjoy school and achieve by:

-setting even more challenging targets and using tracking information to ensure that teaching, including interventions, is even more effective

-developing the wide-ranging skills of teachers further, so that even more lessons are outstanding and all pupils make even better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are improving further and are well above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Based on pupils' starting points in Year 3, this represents good progress. Pupils' attainment is better in reading than in writing. The school's analysis of results in 2008 has resulted in effective teaching and interventions. The increased tracking of pupils' progress is giving the school a clearer idea of the impact of interventions. These systems are being refined to ensure that standards continue to rise. Pupils with moderate and other learning difficulties and/or disabilities are being tracked with increasing accuracy and the school is able to demonstrate that they make good progress, because their needs are well catered for with appropriate teaching, interventions and monitoring.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils develop exceptional skills in independent learning. They are polite and courteous and are able to speak clearly and with confidence about all the positive things in the school. They are encouraged to think through their own ideas and can express their thoughts in a considered way. Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are appreciative of what the school offers them and play an effective part in contributing to the community, for example through the school council. Pupils feel safe in the school and are well aware of safe practices and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Their passion for learning and their excellent behaviour ensures that they make the most of opportunities and are very well prepared with high-level skills for their future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning support pupils' development very well and are good overall. Much of the teaching is outstanding and promotes learning through excellent questioning and clear

steps to learning. These strategies encourage pupils to be critical of their own work, and self-assessment is a common practice which further supports the independent learning ethos. Pupils are clear about what is expected from them and meet the challenge with real enthusiasm. Teachers and learning assistants support pupils well both academically and pastorally. The caring ethos of the school is apparent in all areas. Pupils clearly enjoy and thrive on the successes they achieve and these are celebrated well in the school. Lessons are well planned and there is a cooperative culture in the classroom. The expectations of teachers are considerable and teachers rise well to this challenge. Teachers are further developing their skills in order to teach even better, to ensure that all pupils, particularly those reaching the higher standards, continue to be catered for as standards rise even further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has an outstanding broad, stimulating and creative curriculum which provides a rich context for learning. The learners find their lessons and other activities fun and relevant to their age, abilities and interests. For example, the raising of hens as part of the study of the life cycle in science stimulated a great deal of interest and enjoyment. Combined with careful and detailed planning, this means that lessons proceed at a lively pace and learners concentrate well. The curriculum provides opportunities for all learners, including those with moderate and other learning difficulties or for whom English is not a first language, to progress and develop well. The taught curriculum is greatly enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular clubs, visits to places of interest and visitors to school. Close monitoring of lesson coverage and standards, as well as the time given to ensure that the learners can assess their own gains in knowledge, fuels a constant drive for improvement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are excellent. As one child commented, 'The teachers are really, really nice and take good care of us.' Another pupil said, 'It's like a family here.' The comprehensive monitoring of the gains in knowledge made by each child, as well as their personal development, well-being and levels of attendance, means that the school is quick to put in place any necessary support. As a result, the needs of all groups of learners are very well provided for and everyone feels part of a caring community. Careful marking and the setting of individual next-step targets mean that learners have a very clear idea of the standards they are aiming to achieve. Continuous self-assessment supports this and informs the class teacher how quickly to proceed. The school liaises very well with outside agencies and with parents. It recognises that some parents would like communications to be even better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership of the school is effective at putting the appropriate measures in place to ensure that pupils are equipped for the future and develop into positive citizens, with questioning approaches and an appropriate degree of confidence in their ability to compete.

The headteacher has a clear direction for the school and is effectively implementing plans for sustained improvement. He is very well supported at all levels by leaders and managers who

are having a good impact on improving things further for all pupils. The determination to make things even better is clear at all levels and there is no sign of complacency in this hard-working and high-performing team. The self-evaluation of the school is very effective. The school recognises that the targets set could challenge pupils even more in order to raise standards even further and ensure greater achievement for all pupils. Governors are increasingly able to hold the school to account and to challenge the leadership of the school. They are improving their systems and are eager to develop their skills in order to support the school's innovations and ensure that it continues to grow and lead in education.

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
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

14 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chalfont St Giles Junior School, Chalfont St Giles, HP8 4JW

Thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave Christine and me when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to many of you and seeing all the exciting and interesting things that happen in your school.

Your school is outstanding. There is a strong sense of teamwork in your school, with your headteacher, teachers and support staff providing you with excellent care and an outstanding curriculum. You play your part in the team very well and make good progress because you come to school with positive attitudes and challenge yourselves all the time.

I was impressed by many things you told me, particularly on your Hobbies Day, and feel privileged to have seen that. It was most rewarding for me to see how you were able to explain the things you are interested in confidently and how you learnt from each other's experiences. This was just one of the many interesting things that go on in the school to make learning fun.

Your school is not one to sit back and relax, even though it is outstanding. The targets it sets each year will be even more challenging and teachers will develop their skills even further to allow you to make even better progress.

We wish you well, but for continued success you need to continue to take a full part in school life, to work hard in lessons and, most importantly, to enjoy your learning and make sure that you take full advantage of all of the opportunities for learning.

Take care, look after the chickens and enjoy your time at school.

Yours faithfully

Paul Scott

Her Majesty's Inspector