

Clifford Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124654
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	328185
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Mr R McKeown HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Chris Bally
Headteacher	Mr Steve Wood
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 January 2006
School address	Clifford Road Ipswich IP4 1PJ
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide selection of documents including plans, reports and records. The inspection team also took account of the 62 parents' questionnaires that were returned and the 21 questionnaires returned from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well teaching matches pupils' learning needs
- the attainment and achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and how well their support is managed
- issues from the last inspection, in particular, communication with parents and the role played by governors in evaluating the performance of the school.

Information about the school

Clifford Road is situated in the heart of the local community and is surrounded by terraced housing. Most pupils live within walking distance. There is an increasing number of pupils joining the school with little or no spoken English. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is located in the Nursery, which children start part time, and the Reception class, which they join in the term in which they are five. Several classes are currently being taught by temporary teachers. An independently run breakfast and after school 'crash club' operate in the school building each day. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2008.

Further information about the school

	School's figures	School's figures compared with other schools
School size	375	Above average
Free school meals	11%	Below average
Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	9%	Below average
Proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups	20%	Average
Proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language	13%	Average
Proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	1%	Average

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Clifford Road Primary School is improving steadily and pupils enjoy coming to learn here. Currently, its overall effectiveness is satisfactory, although several aspects of its work have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The new headteacher, senior leaders and governors are working well together to take the school forward purposefully, demonstrating a good capacity to improve. This is reflected in the strong working partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Support for pupils' personal development, care and guidance are strong and the school provides particularly well for pupils from other countries or who need to learn to speak English. Securing more consistency in the quality of teaching and learning and improving the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties are its key priorities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attainment and achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by:
 - identifying their needs earlier and more precisely
 - planning and providing regular and high quality support to enable them to make good progress
 - monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the support they receive and adjusting provision accordingly.
- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching and learning by ensuring all teachers:
 - plan work that is precisely matched to the learning needs of all pupils to enable them to make good progress
 - involve pupils in assessing their own learning and in looking for ways to improve their work
 - use their assessments to inform future planning.
- Improve outdoor provision for children in the EYFS so that they are able to extend their learning and enjoy good quality experiences outdoors.

How well does the school meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils?

3

Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is average and their overall achievement is satisfactory. Children start school with skills and aptitudes that match the expected level for their age and leave the school with standards that are broadly average. The unvalidated national test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2008 were an improvement on 2007 and pupils met their targets. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but in some classes where the teaching is good or outstanding, their progress is better. Pupils who start school with little or no spoken English make good progress and achieve well; this is because the support they receive is very good. In contrast, the school acknowledges that pupils with learning difficulties have underachieved and their progress has not been good enough.

Pupils feel safe at Clifford Road and know staff will deal with any problems they may have. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Support staff say that playground behaviour is much better because pupils have purposeful activities to enjoy at lunchtime. The headteacher has started an extreme sports club for some pupils with more challenging behaviour; this is very popular with those involved and helps boost their personal development.

Pupils appreciate the importance of being healthy and learn about eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise; the school runs daily 'activate' sessions and has good provision for swimming. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and put forward their views through the re-launched school council. Pupils raise money for charitable causes and make harvest collections for members of the local community. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is good, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.

Pupils respond well to the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Many take part in the sport and cultural opportunities the school provides, such as football coaching sessions. Pupils get on well together, show due consideration for each other's feelings and beliefs and help new children to settle in well. Assemblies and personal, social, and health education lessons help pupils to learn about managing their own behaviour and to reflect on the different lives of people in their local community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
Pupils' attendance and punctuality	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. About half the lessons observed during the inspection were either good or outstanding, the remainder were satisfactory. Inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning is affecting pupils' overall achievement. The school acknowledges that teaching and learning could be improved. The main improvements required in lessons which are simply satisfactory are:

- matching planning more precisely to pupils' abilities and learning needs
- involving pupils more in assessing their own responses to enable them to appreciate what they have learned and to see how to improve
- using assessments to inform the planning of subsequent lessons.

Pupils' progress is tracked systematically and there is a good system in place for setting targets for pupils which are shared and reviewed with parents. However, too little emphasis has been placed on keeping a close check on the progress and achievement of pupils who have learning difficulties.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with more flexibility introduced in timetables this year, although the impact of the change has yet to be evaluated. An interesting humanities project has begun with another local primary school to introduce more creativity into the curriculum. A good range of enrichment activities are organised for pupils at lunchtime and after school and these are well attended. The school has an underground museum which contains an amazing array of Second World War memorabilia which pupils use when studying history. The support, guidance and care of pupils are good. Staff and pupils are especially good at welcoming and supporting new entrants, some of whom are recent arrivals to this country. Regular checks are kept on pupils' attendance and behaviour and the school's learning mentor gives helpful support for individuals who need personal guidance. All safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	3
Effective assessment and academic guidance	3
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	3
Support, guidance and care	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management have been strengthened recently. There is a much stronger emphasis now on giving members of the school community a say in how the school can be improved. Almost all staff who returned their inspection questionnaire were positive about working at Clifford Road and felt their contributions were valued. Parents, governors and pupils have contributed their views to the process of drawing up a clearly focussed three year development plan. Leaders acknowledge that more detail is required in the plan to show how and when the impact of the actions taken to bring about improvements will be measured. A number of key leaders make effective contributions. For example, through the tracking of pupils' progress and in reports from subject leaders that provide suitable evidence from which the school can evaluate its performance. In contrast, the management of the identification and support for those pupils who have learning difficulties has been weak in the past and is undergoing reorganisation to make it more effective. Community cohesion is promoted well and this has a positive impact on pupils' understanding of difference and diversity. The well informed and perceptively led governing body is determined to make Clifford Road a successful school. The setting up of a performance and attainment committee following the last inspection has strengthened governors' role in calling the school to account. Recently, governors have increased the contact and communication they have with parents, pupils and staff to enable them to know more about the views of the school community. Governors and key leaders are making a concerted effort to enhance provision and improve outcomes for pupils. Together they demonstrate good capacity to improve.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement to outcomes for pupils	3
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	3
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	2
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	3
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the EYFS is satisfactory. When children start school their attainment is as expected for their age. They make sound progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, so that by the end of the EYFS many have reached the learning goals set for them. Some younger children who have less time in Reception have tended not to do as well. The school has realised this and is providing extra support in the EYFS classes to help accelerate progress. Children are cared for well. They settle quickly

and soon become confident learners. Staff have high expectations and consequently children behave well. Children enjoy a suitable balance of adult led and self-initiated activities, such as making cheese muffins in the Nursery and completing problem-solving activities in Reception.

In the Nursery, the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory, with staff beginning to plan more activities to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. There is scope to improve the activities provided to include more challenge and stimulation in learning. Teaching and learning in the Reception class is more effective and some outstanding teaching was observed in this class during the inspection. Exciting and well matched learning tasks, excellent relationships and pertinent questioning to assess learning are helping to accelerate progress.

There is a contrast between what is provided indoors and outdoors. The indoor areas are well resourced and attractive. In contrast, the outdoor area for the Nursery, although reasonably well-equipped, is not accessible in all weathers and the Reception classroom does not have direct access to a dedicated outdoor learning space. Staff do their best to provide Reception children with regular planned activities outdoors but these are limited. Leadership and management of the EYFS are currently satisfactory with suitable monitoring procedures in place. Several improvements have been introduced this year in order to boost achievement and EYFS staff meet together regularly to discuss ways in which provision can be improved further.

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?*	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?*	3
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?*	2
How effectively is the provision in the EYFS led and managed?*	3

* Common judgements made across all inspections of the EYFS

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about the work of the school. There was small number who felt that they did not have enough information to enable them know how well their children are doing. On a few questionnaires, parents had commented on aspects of the school's work that they felt could be improved, although these did not form any significant recurring issue. There were positive testimonials written on a number of returns expressing parents' support for the school and an appreciation of the work of the new headteacher.

Improving communication with parents has been a key priority for staff and governors in the last few months. Regular newsletters, a school website and

curriculum briefing notes from each year group help to keep parents well informed. Parents' discussion forums are planned for later this term and the introduction of a community based television channel is planned to show parents and visitors the full range of provision at Clifford Road.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2006-7, 14% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2006-7, 46% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing for its pupils suitably. In 2006-7, 34% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2006-7, 6% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



7 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Clifford Road Primary School, Ipswich, IP4 1PJ

Thank you for helping us with our inspection work when we visited your school. We enjoyed the two days we spent with you. Please thank your parents for completing the questionnaires about their views of the school. It is our judgement that your school is satisfactory at the moment, but improving steadily. Mr Wood, the staff and governors are working hard to make Clifford Road an even better school.

Your behaviour is good and we found everyone to be polite and helpful. It was interesting to hear about the things you do in lessons and in clubs. The river project you are working on with another primary school looks very interesting. We thought that the underground bunker museum was an amazing facility, something to share with as many other schools as possible. There was some very good art work on display and we enjoyed listening to the choir singing. We were pleased to find out that you learn about working together, staying safe and keeping healthy. The playground zoning and play equipment available at lunchtimes are a great idea. We were impressed with the way you all look after new children and help them to make friends and settle in quickly. All the adults at school also care for you well.

Before we left, we asked Mr Wood and your teachers to make sure every one of you makes good progress and that the work you have in lessons is exactly right for you and helps you to learn well. We also asked the adults to try and organise more outdoor learning opportunities for the youngest children.

You have a lot to look forward to in the rest of the year; I hope you do your best and enjoy it.

With best wishes,

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector

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