

Caversham Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109925
Local Authority	Reading
Inspection number	337397
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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 of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Hester
Headteacher	Gail Ray
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were seen and eleven teachers and practitioners were observed. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan and also pupils' work. In addition, 54 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

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

- whether there is any difference in the attainment and progress of boys and girls
- how well the teaching is tailored to meet the needs of all groups of pupils in each class
- the quality and range of the curriculum and its impact on progress in literacy
- the role that teachers play in the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Information about the school

Caversham Park Primary is a one-form-entry primary school. Most of the pupils live in the immediate vicinity. About three quarters of the pupils are of White British heritage and there are a few from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils that have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

There has been a significant turnover of senior staff recently. The substantive headteacher was seconded to another school for the last school year and the deputy headteacher became acting headteacher. Following the resignation of the substantive headteacher, the deputy headteacher was appointed to the permanent headship from the beginning of the current school year. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed to the school from September 2010. The school has gained the Healthy School award and Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is improving and has a number of good features. Parents and pupils speak positively of the school and the staff are rightly proud of its inclusive nature and the warm and welcoming environment in which pupils feel safe and are valued. This, aided by the good levels of care and support, results in pupils' good personal development. Pupils are polite, they invariably behave well and have positive attitudes to school and learning. This is reflected in their good levels of attendance.

Children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage because their welfare is given a high priority. Provision is satisfactory and children make steady progress. However, too much of the work is adult directed and there are not enough opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. Furthermore, the staff's planning for the outside area does not always include activities that cover all the required areas of learning.

In Years 1 to 6, progress in learning is satisfactory and strengthening. There has, in the recent past, been some underachievement of groups of pupils. For example, in Year 6 in 2009, the attainment of boys was significantly below that of girls particularly in mathematics. In addition, the attainment of the Year 2 pupils was exceptionally low. However, due to the concerted effort of the staff, these weaknesses are being overcome and there is now no significant pattern of low achievement by any groups of pupils. There are pockets of good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in the school. For example, in mathematics a number of pupils in Year 5 are already working at levels above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. This is because they are given good quality investigational tasks to extend their problem-solving and thinking skills. This good practice is not yet embedded across the whole school. In English, pupils' attainment and progress in reading are good and result in above average standards in reading at the end of Year 6. However, even though the school is strengthening pupils' writing skills, these still lag well behind reading. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects in some classes.

Senior leaders are focusing well on driving up the impact of teaching on the pupils' learning. Pupils are now making better progress because much of the teaching is of good quality and it is occasionally outstanding. Nevertheless, inconsistencies in teaching remain. Teachers sometimes spend too long introducing lessons and, although in the best lessons teachers ensure that work is challenging for pupils, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough particularly for more-able pupils. Teachers' use of assessment information is satisfactory and improving, although their marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Although it is invariably thorough and

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supportive, teachers do not always provide comments that guide pupils towards what they need to do to meet their targets.

The successful steps that are being taken to address deficiencies in pupils' progress are based on an accurate evaluation of the school's provision and learning. This has resulted in the school being on a secure footing as the basis for further improvement. The senior leadership team is effective and, although more needs to be done, the recent improvements in teaching and learning demonstrate a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 by July 2011 by:
 - ensuring that more opportunities are provided for contextual and extended writing in a range of subjects.
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills
- Accelerate pupils' learning by establishing greater consistency in the quality of teaching, in particular by:
 - reducing the amount of time that teachers take to introduce lessons
 - lifting teachers' expectations of what the more able pupils can achieve
 - making sure that marking focuses on lesson success criteria and that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Strengthen provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing more opportunities for children to follow their own interests
 - ensuring that the outdoor space provides exciting and interesting activities across all areas of learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning, particularly when teachers provide challenging activities that enable them to work closely together in pairs or small groups. This was the case in an outstanding information and communication technology (ICT) lesson when pupils thoroughly enjoyed the task of deciding how to design spreadsheets using the auto-filter function to sort data relating to rivers of the world. The challenge was high for all groups of pupils and led to them developing new skills quickly, as well as consolidating their understanding. However, although the quality of learning is strengthening, this picture is not consistent throughout the school and consequently progress is satisfactory overall rather than good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are helped to enjoy their learning and make satisfactory progress towards their targets

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because their needs are analysed well and they receive suitable support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as through the influential school council which provides a good forum for pupils' voices. The good system for older pupils of 'buddying' younger ones helps to cement positive relationships across the school as well as giving older pupils the responsibility for helping younger ones in the dining hall, on the playground and also with their reading. Pupils enjoy the good opportunities that they have to apply their basic skills such as during a recent enterprise week when there was a competition to see how much profit each class could make from selling articles they had made at the school. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to conduct a healthy lifestyle and this is reflected in the school recently gaining the Healthy School award. By the time that they leave the school, Year 6 pupils develop into thoughtful and mature young people who accept and respect each other's differences. They are prepared appropriately for their move to secondary education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Teaching is satisfactory and is strengthening. There are some good aspects throughout the school. Classrooms, for example, present a calm and purposeful atmosphere where relationships are good and pupils' behaviour is managed well. In good lessons, teachers provide interesting tasks that are challenging for pupils' different abilities and teaching assistants are deployed well to provide support for those that need extra help. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to assess their own learning, although this is not consistent throughout the school. The school's priority to focus on ensuring that work is suitably challenging for all groups of pupils, particularly the more able, is well founded. This is because sometimes assessment is not used effectively to match methods and tasks to the learning needs of all pupils

The school's curriculum has some strengths although is satisfactory overall. A broad and balanced curriculum is provided that is generally matched well to pupils' interests.

Information and communication technology is used well to support learning and teachers' planning is thoughtful in drawing together and making links between different subjects. This is evident, for example, in the rich and compelling range of activities that the pupils prepared after their visit to Hampton Court. Displays of this and a wide range of work help to enhance the school's attractive learning environment. The staff are in the process of revising the curriculum with the aim of making sure that pupils are provided with activities that focus more strongly on developing their skills in learning. This is because at present the curriculum, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, is too heavily focused on developing the pupils' knowledge at the expense of their skills and understanding. Recent revisions to the English curriculum mean that it has strengthened as teachers now place more emphasis on providing writing activities across the curriculum. This is not yet sufficiently established across the school and it is too early to judge the impact of this work. The curriculum for numeracy is appropriately based on national guidelines. The school is fully aware of the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in practical situations and is now starting to address this issue. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy the good range of after-school clubs, which are mainly sports and arts based. They also appreciate the opportunity for them to have a residential visit.

Good care, guidance and support are provided for pupils. They are well cared for and parents are very appreciative of this. Those that responded to the questionnaire were unanimous in saying that their children enjoy school and the staff keep their children safe. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-targeted support which enables them to participate fully in the life of the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>The quality of teaching</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	<p>3</p>

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2
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How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher provides good leadership and management and she has been successful in leading the school's drive to arrest a downward trend in achievement and progress. Although the scope for making changes was limited during the period of her acting headship, she has quickly established a climate in which all staff share her determination and vision to improve the school. Senior staff play a positive role in the monitoring and evaluation processes, with the recently formed senior leadership group being effective in these areas. Even though there are many teachers who have recently taken on new subject responsibilities, they have a good understanding of their roles and are starting to influence the school's strategic plans. In particular, they play an important part in the school's monitoring and evaluation processes. The staff are supported well by the governing body that is much more actively involved in the checking of provision and learning than previously. The new chair of governors works effectively and closely with senior staff. Governors too are committed to the further improvement of the school. They also make sure that there are good and secure arrangements for ensuring the pupils' welfare and safety and that there are effective safeguarding arrangements in place. This results in the school providing a safe environment for all.

Staff strive to ensure that pupils have equal access to all the opportunities that the school has to offer and there is no discrimination. However, the school recognises that it needs to sharpen its provision to ensure that more able pupils are provided with activities that consistently challenge them. Good and recently revised systems ensure that that pupils' progress is tracked well and information gained is used to take action to eliminate differences in pupils' progress. This is already starting to impact on learning. The school's good partnership with parents has been strengthened by the recently established parent-staff association which has resulted in increased parental attendance at school events. Parents say that they are particularly pleased at the many opportunities that they have to share information about their children's progress. The school's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory. There are good links with the immediate community. The school recognises that more needs to be done for pupils to gain a meaningful insight into what life is like beyond the locality. There is a good and well-founded action plan to tackle this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3

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The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the school with levels of skill that are similar to those typically found though their personal, social and emotional skills are strong. The children are looked after well by all the staff. There are good induction arrangements that help them to settle quickly and establish good relationships. Children's progress is monitored well and there is a good system in place for the early identification of any children falling behind or displaying concern. However, this information is not used sufficiently well to steer what children will be learning next. This is one reason why teaching is no better than satisfactory overall. Provision is further hampered because the staff do not provide enough opportunities for the children to learn and explore for themselves. This, in turn, limits opportunities for the children to practise skills taught or to develop independent learning skills. In addition, the outside area is not providing sustained scope for children to learn. However, children make satisfactory progress in their learning and, by the time that they enter Year 1, most attain the expected learning goals.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are very positive about the school. Many express positive comments about their children's teachers and almost all say that they are happy with their children's experiences at the school. A number of parents commented positively about the school's leadership, for example the parent who simply wrote, 'Excellent headteacher!'

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Some parents suggested that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. This issue was investigated as part of the inspection. There is no evidence that this is the case. The teachers' management of pupils' behaviour in lessons is a strength of the school and this leads to positive relationships. The school has a robust policy to deal with unacceptable behaviour and behaviour is consistently good around the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Caversham Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 197 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	57	23	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	69	16	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	44	25	46	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	39	30	56	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	50	25	46	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	46	27	50	1	2	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	44	26	48	2	4	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	48	25	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	41	29	56	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	24	32	59	6	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	31	30	56	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	46	24	44	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	54	22	41	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Caversham Park Primary School, Reading RG4 6RP

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school to see you at work. We were really impressed by how much you enjoy your work. We agree with your parents and carers that you are in safe hands.

Caversham Park is a satisfactory school, which is now improving in many ways. You get on well with the teachers and adults in school and your friends. You know how to lead safe, healthy lives and your behaviour is good. You are making satisfactory progress in your learning.

There is still a lot of work to be done to make Caversham Park Primary as good as it possibly can be, but your headteacher knows how to improve it. We have asked the governors, headteacher and staff to continue to improve your progress by doing the following things:

- giving you more chances to develop your mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills
- making sure that you practise writing when you are doing your topic work
- make sure that teachers give you activities that challenge you and spend only as much time as they really need to when explaining things at the beginning of lessons
- giving you clear guidance about future targets when they mark your work
- for staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage class to give more chances for children to choose activities for themselves and to make sure that there are more things to do in the outdoor area.

You can continue to help by working hard towards your targets. We hope that you enjoy your future learning.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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