

Calcot Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109932
Local Authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	337401
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Kerry Rochester

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	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Colin Lee
Headteacher	Mrs Linda M McCulloch-Smith
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and held meetings with governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. They had informal discussions with some parents. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, the work in pupils' books, teachers' marking and the questionnaires completed by 30 parents and carers, 211 pupils and 21 members of staff.

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

- the current rates of attainment and progress for all pupils and whether there is now a picture of improvement across the school
- how well the quality of teaching and learning is enabling pupils to make progress and whether the focus on improving teaching and learning has been effective
- the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management at all levels in embedding ambition and driving improvement
- the effectiveness of the school's tracking systems and intervention strategies and their impact on raising standards.

Information about the school

Calcot is an average-sized junior school with most of its pupils joining from the adjacent infant school. A very large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. There are a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average, comprising mainly pupils with moderate learning or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school runs a breakfast club for its own pupils and those from the infant school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school holds the Activemark and the Healthy School award.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Pupils enter the school with average to above-average standards. They make inadequate progress in their learning as they move through the school, and standards are below average by the time they leave in Year 6. English, in particular, is a weakness and pupils' progress in this subject over three years has been inadequate. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make inadequate progress. Teachers often have low expectations and there is much to do to narrow the gap between pupils' attainment and what they are capable of achieving.

School records show that there are times when pupils' progress accelerates, for example in the current Year 6, but not rapidly enough to make up for previous underachievement. Crucially, there are significant examples of pupils standing still or, worse, regressing. This is because the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning are inadequate, despite the fact that teachers generally plan work for the different abilities in each class. Their assessments are not as precise as they need to be in order to ensure that work is always matched accurately to the needs of individual pupils. The senior leadership team does not check that teachers' knowledge of exactly where pupils are in their learning and what they need to learn next is accurate.

Leadership and management, including governance, are inadequate. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work lack accuracy, consistency and robustness and are not focused enough on securing improvement. There is a lack of clarity about how to move the school forward. As a result, expectations for improvement are not high enough and systems to secure greater consistency in teaching and learning are ineffective, with little use made of challenging targets. Monitoring undertaken by the management team has not proved to be successful in raising attainment; it does not focus on what pupils have learned and teachers are not sufficiently held to account for the progress pupils make. Consequently, leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to secure satisfactory and better progress. School governors are not holding leaders to account for pupils' underachievement. The school has made inadequate progress since the last inspection and leaders and governors are not showing the capacity to make the rapid improvements necessary.

Most pupils behave well and, despite the lack of challenge in some lessons, have

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positive attitudes to learning. Pupils say that they usually feel safe in school and attendance is average. The pupils take on a range of responsibilities across the school and the school council members are very proud of the recent work they have completed on their 'Walk Map of Calcot'. They understand how to keep themselves healthy and especially like the wide range of opportunities to develop their physical fitness through the activities and equipment provided at break times, which help enrich the satisfactory curriculum. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is a strength of the school. This helps to foster the caring and respectful relationships between the pupils and staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress by making sure that work is accurately matched to their prior learning.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning, and sharing clear guidance for teachers on how to improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - setting a clear direction and strengthening the role of all leaders, including governors, in evaluating the impact of the school's work on outcomes for the pupils.
- Improve the quality and accuracy of teachers' assessments so that they are able to challenge all pupils to do their best.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

In most lessons, pupils have limited opportunities to think about what they have learned and the progress they have made. Their understanding of what they are learning is weak and this, in turn, reduces the quality and quantity of work they produce. The school's data show that pupils' progress is uneven and inadequate overall. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, for example, made inadequate progress in reading and mathematics last year, and those in Year 5 also made inadequate progress in writing. In contrast, satisfactory or better progress was made in writing in Years 3 and 4. Work in pupils' books is of poor quality and shows that little progress has been made since the beginning of the year. Progress increases in Year 6 because of more effective teaching. In a science lesson, for example, there was a high level of challenge and the teacher used probing questions skilfully which resulted in pupils gaining a good understanding and knowledge of the key skills taught. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not have specific targets based on accurate assessment information and they make inadequate progress. Support for those few pupils who speak English as an additional language is well planned and organised, enabling them to make satisfactory progress.

Pupils are polite, respect each other and work together well. Even when the pace of lessons is slow, they persevere, but with less enthusiasm. The school's Healthy School

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award reflects the successful encouragement of pupils to follow healthy lifestyles. Pupils and staff care for each other and as one pupil said: 'The teachers are kind and caring.' The pupils contribute to their school community through taking on key responsibilities as school councilors and in undertaking tasks to help teachers.

Some elements of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good but effective multicultural links beyond the school community are underdeveloped.

Consequently, this aspect of the school's work is satisfactory overall.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Despite some pockets of good practice, teaching is having insufficient impact on raising pupils' attainment and accelerating their progress at a fast enough rate. Assessment is not used effectively to check that pupils are making the progress that they should. In addition, much of the pupils' work is pitched incorrectly as lesson plans are often based on inaccurate assessments. Too much work lacks challenge and is undemanding. The majority of pupils are unclear about what they are expected to learn and do not understand how their learning will be measured during the lesson. The guidance that

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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pupils receive through teachers' marking is inadequate. While some pupils receive feedback on how well they are doing and advice on what they need to do to improve, guidance is not consistent enough to help all pupils know what they need to do next. The curriculum offers a range of extra-curricular activities. These are enjoyed by the pupils and make a significant contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles. There is a reasonable provision for visits and visitors, which helps to enhance the curriculum. Information and communication technology is sometimes used well to support learning in other subjects. For example, Year 6 science work on thermal insulation was recorded well using a data handling program. The school has begun to develop cross-curricular links, but the use of literacy and numeracy in other subjects is not fully established. The good quality of care, guidance and support establishes secure foundations for good personal development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders do not drive and secure improvement. There is a lack of strategic thinking in identifying and tackling the weaknesses in pupils' outcomes. Recently, intervention programmes have been introduced to support underachieving pupils. However, senior leaders do not evaluate or monitor these rigorously enough to ensure they have the desired impact. The leadership team does not hold teachers accountable for the progress their pupils make. Teachers have been given guidance and support to help them analyse assessment information, but it has not been effective in enabling them to track the pupils' progress and achievement with sufficient certainty. As a result, targets for pupils' attainment are not based on a secure and accurate understanding of current attainment. Systems for monitoring teaching, learning and progress are weak. Middle leaders do not focus enough on measuring how the changes they make to the curriculum or teaching affect pupils' learning. Subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of where strengths and weaknesses lie in their subjects. Governors support the school well, but they do not challenge leaders to address weaknesses and bring about improvements in attainment and progress. As a result, they are not yet in a position to evaluate the performance of the school effectively.

The school is a harmonious community and pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. Staff are aware of the diversity of the intake; they appropriately promote respect for human rights through developing understanding about differences and valuing the

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diverse experiences within the school community. They have taken some steps to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world through their work on community cohesion. There is a clear action plan in place to extend this work further. All required safeguarding requirements are met. Parents and carers are always welcome in the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are supportive of the school. They are particularly pleased with the way staff help their children to settle and in the way they deal effectively with bullying. They feel the staff are very approachable and are confident that they will address and deal with concerns raised. Parents expressed no major concerns, though a few parents did feel that the school accepts incidents of unacceptable behaviour too readily. The inspection team considered that the relationship between the staff and the pupils is a strength and pupils' behaviour is good. During the inspection, no incidents of unacceptable behaviour were observed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Calcot Junior 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 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	59	11	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	62	9	31	0	0	2	7
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	60	10	33	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	53	12	40	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	43	15	50	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	43	14	47	3	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	43	16	53	0	0	0	0
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)	14	47	11	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	43	15	50	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	47	12	40	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	47	12	40	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	37	16	53	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	43	17	57	0	0	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



18 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Calcot Junior School, West Berkshire, RG31 4XG

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the team of inspectors when we came to your school. We really enjoyed listening to you and looking at all the work you have done. There are some things which the school does well. However, your school should be providing you with a much better education and our report explains why we think this. We have placed your school into special measures to make sure that improvements are made quickly. The school will receive regular visits from inspectors to check on how well it is doing.

There is much to like about your school and the most important aspects we would like to mention are that:

- you behave really well and care for each other
- you make good choices in keeping fit and healthy
- all adults look after you really well. You enjoy lots of activities and told us that you always try hard to do things well
- you feel your school is a safe place because all of the teachers care about you.

To help make your school better, we have asked your headteacher to ensure that you all make as much progress as you can by making sure that:

- you are always given work that is not too easy or too hard
- the quality of your lessons and the progress that you make are checked regularly and carefully
- your work is always assessed accurately so that you know what you have to do to make it better.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Rochester

Lead inspector

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