

Carrington Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110274
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	337459
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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 of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Gregory
Headteacher	Mrs E J Plaskitt
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons or parts of lessons were seen and 10 teachers observed. Meetings were held with staff, pupils, governors and school improvement staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, tracking information, and looked at pupils' work (especially from Year 6 as these pupils were out of school), planning, self-evaluation and 42 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether teaching is challenging enough to reduce the differences in progress in subjects, and between different groups of pupils
- how well the school supports and checks on the progress of vulnerable pupils
- how urgently the school is striving to improve standards and progress.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. Pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds and there are small numbers of pupils from Caribbean, Pakistani, Indian and Chinese heritages. A very small number are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These pupils have mainly dyslexia, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, speech and language difficulties or hearing impairment. The school also has an eight place specialist unit for autistic pupils in which there are currently seven pupils. There is an independent nursery on site.

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

This is a satisfactory school. Attainment is broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Progress is improving and variations in performance between English, mathematics and science and between different groups of pupils have been partially reversed. Progress made in mathematics by average ability pupils is improving and is catching up with the good progress made by more able pupils. However, in English, but also in science, the most able pupils do not do as well as they do in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory and improving progress. The pupils with autism in the specialist unit make good progress because of the effective support they receive. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school, despite the worries of a small number of parents. They are respectful and friendly to adults and are considerate towards each other. A large proportion of pupils takes on responsibilities and carries them out well and pupils make good contributions to the local community. They have a good understanding of environmental issues and understand the importance of healthy eating, exercise and rest. They feel safe and their attendance is above average. Their social skills are good and along with sound development of literacy and numeracy skills they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.

Relationships in lessons are good and contribute to pupils enjoying learning. In the best lessons, work is well matched to pupils' needs and the pace of learning is fast. In these lessons, activities engage pupils' attention and interests, encourage their creativity and enable them to work independently. The best marking gives a very clear picture of how well pupils achieve, gives guidance on how to improve and checks on whether they have followed the advice given. Sometimes, work is not fully matched to the needs of pupils, which slows progress, and occasionally there are too few opportunities for pupils to work independently or to explain their understanding. Some pupils are confused by the changes in the assessment schemes. They know what their targets are but are not sure whether they are making any or enough progress, or what they need to do next. The curriculum is enriched with residential trips and visitors and a wide range of out-of-school activities are well attended by pupils. Links between subjects are improving, but investigation activities and work to challenge the most able are not consistently planned into schemes of work.

The quality of personal care, guidance and support given to pupils is good. The support for vulnerable pupils is effective and based on extensive links with support agencies and families. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory and improving because the school works closely with agencies to ensure

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early identification of learning needs. Bullying and racism are dealt with well.

The headteacher provides sound direction for improvement and middle leaders have a good grasp of how to raise standards in their subjects. The school has accurately identified where it needs to make improvements. The pace of change in attainment and progress has been too slow but there are improvements in mathematics, the beginnings of similar efforts to improve performance in English and a resolve to establish a consistent assessment scheme. Governors are very supportive but through their monitoring, recognise that the pace of change has not been fast enough in recent times. The capacity for further improvement is satisfactory and there has been sound progress in addressing the issues from the last inspection. Links with parents are good. Efforts to promote community cohesion are satisfactory and the school has some good links on which to build.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and science by the time of the 2011 end of Key Stage 2 tests, especially for the most able pupils, by ensuring work is consistently challenging.
- Improve learning to the quality of the best by making sure lessons give regular opportunities for pupils to:
 - work independently
 - initiate their own investigations and problem-solving activities
 - explain their knowledge and understanding.
- Implement a consistent assessment scheme urgently, and at the latest by July 2010, so that all pupils know how well they make progress, and what the next steps in their learning should be.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

The learning seen was generally satisfactory and pupils work hard on tasks they are set. Attainment is slowly rising but fluctuates slightly from year to year because of variations in attainment on entry to the school. Most noticeably, attainment has improved in mathematics as the school has introduced approaches to challenge pupils of all abilities. Underperformance by the most able pupils in English has been identified but implementation of approaches to raise their attainment has varied in pace between classes and so the impact of efforts is inconsistent. Slower progress by the most able pupils is also evident in science. New leadership of the subject has recognised the problem, but is at a very early stage in addressing the issue, and in enabling pupils to initiate their own investigations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and this is improving as their learning needs are identified sooner after entry to the school than they used to be. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils enjoy school. They are confident to ask adults for help if they need it and to

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express their opinions. Some pupils feel that the behaviour of older pupils is not always good enough, but they say unacceptable behaviour is dealt with well by staff. Inspectors saw only good behaviour. Most pupils are keen to take part in physical activities and they have a good grasp of issues to do with staying healthy and safe. Pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities, for example the school council makes suggestions about how the school can improve and the eco-committee encourages other pupils to conserve energy and recycle resources. Involvement in the wider community is sound and improving. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

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?

Pupils like lessons and find learning fun especially when there are activities that motivate them. For example, end of lesson mathematics games and opportunities to email each other in information and communication technology (ICT) lessons captured pupils' enthusiasm. In the best lessons, pupils respond positively to demanding work and they rise to the challenge eagerly. This is especially so when activities demand pupils to be imaginative, plan some of their own learning, present what they have found

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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out, and evaluate their own progress. However, pupils find recognising their own progress difficult because the assessment system has changed and they do not have a clear picture of what levels they are reaching. Occasionally, teachers give too much information and direction to pupils and do not expect them to explain their understanding.

The curriculum is improving, especially in establishing links between subjects so that they are relevant to pupils' lives. Provision for ICT is satisfactory and improving. However, activities to enhance the performance of the most able pupils and to help the development of independent learning are not fully embedded in planning. Visiting physical education specialists and links with local secondary schools widen pupils' experiences. The wide range of out-of-school sports, drama, music and booster classes are well attended by pupils. The high quality personal, social and health education programme plays an important part in developing pupils' good social skills.

Pastoral care is good and the school has effective, well-established links with social services and other external agencies to support pupils. Parents and pupils feel well supported. Support for autistic pupils is particularly good and these pupils are integrated into classes throughout the school successfully. Liaison with homes is good and links with infant and secondary schools are well organised to ensure smooth transition between the different stages of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a sound drive for school improvement, and particularly so for the promotion of pupils' well-being. She is well supported by staff and there is a clear recognition of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Weaknesses in mathematics have been acted on successfully. Progress of all groups of pupils is improving, but the pace of improvement in areas other than mathematics has been too slow. Governors are well informed and set challenging targets. They take an active part in evaluating the school's performance and play a significant part in helping to develop school policies. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory although the most able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged. A whole-school approach to promoting community cohesion is at an early stage. The school has examined its current provision and identified where there are gaps, and plans to improve are based on extending existing good practice. Links with parents are good and the school strives to sustain them and to

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involve parents in pupils' learning. At the time of the inspection safeguarding requirements were met and governors continually check the school's procedures to ensure pupils' safety.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents' views were predominantly positive although in about one third of the questionnaires returned, parents felt that the school did not deal with disruptive behaviour well enough. Inspectors generally agreed with parents about the strengths seen. In the case of dealing with unacceptable behaviour, inspectors saw only good behaviour. Pupils commented that there was occasionally disruptive behaviour, usually by older pupils, but that the school dealt with it well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Carrington 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	45	23	55	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	41	25	59	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	36	25	60	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	43	24	57	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	41	23	55	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	24	27	64	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	24	31	74	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)	11	26	26	62	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	33	24	57	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	24	18	43	10	24	3	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	24	24	57	4	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	31	23	55	3	7	2	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	41	24	57	1	2	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.



19 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carrington Junior School, High Wycombe, HP10 9AA

Thank you for making us so welcome. You were very helpful and gave us a good idea about what you think of your school. We judged the school as satisfactory. It does some things well but needs to improve in some areas.

- You make satisfactory progress overall, and some of you make good progress in mathematics.
- Some of the teaching is good but there are a few areas where it needs to improve.
- You like school, behave well and enjoy learning. Your attendance is above average. You are friendly and polite to adults and treat each other with consideration.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of a good diet, exercise and rest.
- You take on responsibilities readily and carry them out well.
- The school takes good care of you.

In order for the school to be even better, we have asked your teachers and governors to do three things.

- Improve how well you do, especially in English and science, by making sure the work is always hard enough for you.
- Make sure all lessons are equally good and give you opportunities to work independently, to use your own imagination to plan investigations and to have opportunities to explain how well you understand what you learn.
- Make sure you understand how your work is assessed so that you know how well you are making progress, and what the next steps in your learning are.

You can help by telling teachers if you find the work too easy, and by asking about how well you are doing and how to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley

Lead inspector

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