

Caroline Haslett Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110394
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	337487
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Ian Nelson

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	433
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kath Keilor
Headteacher	Mr Paul Hussey
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment information, teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, individual education plans, pupils' books, and 147 questionnaires from parents, and 99 from pupils.

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

- how effectively the school has addressed the issues raised at the previous inspection about raising standards in writing
- whether the impact of the curriculum and care, guidance and support is outstanding
- how well children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- whether the school has successfully tackled the occasional lack of challenge and pace in some of the teaching.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary school and serves an area of mixed privately-owned and shared-ownership properties. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average with the largest numbers being of Indian, African and Pakistani backgrounds. An above average proportion of pupils have languages other than English as their home language. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has a language department for 10 pupils with identified language needs. There is a before- and after-school club that is not managed by the governors.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Pupils, staff and parents are very proud of this outstanding school. One parent summed up the views of many in writing, 'The school delivers a robust, well balanced and effective education. It demonstrates an awareness and effective response to the requirements of the children in an educational, emotional, social and sporting perspective. As parents, we have been continuously impressed with the teaching, management, and ultimately our child's progress. This school speaks volumes for state education.' Pupils echoed these sentiments with a typical comment being, 'My school is very good because the teachers help me to learn a lot. Also, my teacher listens to me when I ask a question.'

They are right to be proud of and pleased with their school because it is helping pupils to make outstanding progress and reach high standards by Year 6. Children get an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which has improved since the last inspection. The excellent provision through Key Stages 1 and 2 ensures that pupils build upon this excellent start exceptionally well. Teaching is outstanding. It is never less than good with teachers planning effectively to meet the needs of all pupils whatever their circumstances. As a result, the most able receive challenging tasks that encourage them to think and work hard while those who need extra help get well-targeted support. This focus on knowing each pupil and treating them all as unique individuals lies at the heart of the school's outstanding care, guidance and support and leads to exceptionally good behaviour and attitudes from pupils. The outstanding curriculum places an appropriate focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. It complements these with a very good range of enrichment activities and after-school clubs, which pupils thoroughly enjoy.

Schools do not become as successful as this one by accident. The outstanding leadership at all levels has been the key to its continuous improvement. The headteacher, staff and governors have a very accurate view of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to keep improving. They have very high aspirations for the future and set very challenging targets for improvement. The school is therefore exceptionally well placed to carry on getting better. The leadership has developed a policy on promoting community cohesion, in line with requirements, but has not yet devised systematic methods for evaluating the impact of that provision on the communities it serves.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop effective procedures for systematically evaluating the impact of the

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school's strategies for promoting community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils reach high standards by Year 6. The school is successfully tackling the weaknesses in writing identified in the last inspection report. The work seen during the inspection was of a high standard not just in English, mathematics and science, but in other subjects too, including art and information and communication technology. The school's successes in sport also show high standards in physical education. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and concentrate exceptionally well on collaborative or individual tasks. For example, a Year 4 class worked really hard on designing an advertisement to include the key features they had discussed as a class. While some wrote and drew their advertisements, others used laptops to design theirs, producing high quality work. Pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes play a large part in helping them to learn so well.

All pupils make excellent progress in their learning and personal development. There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including pupils attending the language unit, make exceptional progress. Few pupils fail to reach the expected standards by Year 6 and above average numbers exceed them. The inspection evidence shows that pupils regularly make more than the expected progress through Key Stage 2 because of the challenging targets the school sets them.

Pupils have an outstanding commitment to healthy living, as shown in their enthusiasm for the after-school sports clubs the school offers. They say they feel exceptionally well cared for in school and free from any bullying or harassment. They are confident that staff will help them to deal with any issues or concerns they may have. Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to the school and wider community. They hold responsibilities for various aspects of the smooth running of the school, like switching computers on for lessons, and have been heavily involved in projects like litter picking and bulb planting locally. The combination of their high academic standards and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that they are exceptionally well prepared for their next school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Outstanding teaching, curriculum and care ensure that pupils make excellent progress. Teachers know their pupils very well and check rigorously how well they are doing. Lesson plans show clearly what pupils are to learn based on what they learned earlier. Tasks are planned at different levels of difficulty to match the various needs of individuals and groups within the class. The excellent support provided by the dedicated and hard-working teaching assistants means that all pupils get the help and challenge they need to do well. Teachers set pupils challenging targets and check regularly how well they are progressing towards them. They give pupils helpful feedback about their work so that they know what they have done well and how they could improve their work. Teachers make excellent use of information and communication technology to make lessons interesting. Pupils often use computers in lessons and they really enjoy the chance to discuss their ideas with their partners. Staff check pupils' progress and record systematically how well they are doing. They use this information very effectively to ensure that tasks are well matched to all abilities in the class.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about the activities the teachers provide to help them to learn. They particularly like the trips out and were very animated when recounting their visits to Sulgrave Manor, Brighton and France. The curriculum includes a strong focus on basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills but also promotes pupils' personal, social, emotional and physical development very successfully. Teachers link subjects very effectively using computers regularly in a range of subjects, and including discussion and role play in lessons. The high quality teaching assistants enable the school to split two classes from a year group into three smaller groups for

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some sessions to ensure pupils get more individual attention.

Outstanding care, guidance and support mean that pupils feel highly valued as individuals. The pupils' voices scheme gives them the opportunity to make their views known and they feel that the teachers listen to what they say. The school has excellent systems for identifying pupils who need extra help and putting that support in place to ensure they succeed. Those with language difficulties make excellent progress because of the high quality support they receive. The school gives highly effective support to pupils whose home language is not English, with the result that they attain very high standards in the national tests for Year 6. Pupils who have particular gifts or talents are recognised and staff work hard to meet their particular needs, sometimes in partnership with other agencies. For example, some attend special events for able pupils at a local secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, governors and staff know their school well. They have effective systems for checking the school's performance based on a rigorous analysis of the outcomes for pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. Staff know that while much teaching is excellent it is not perfect and are keen to keep on improving. The governing body makes an outstanding contribution to the school's performance. Governors know how well the school is doing and set a clearly defined strategic direction. They are confident enough to challenge staff and to ask hard questions about the school's performance. They visit regularly to see the school in action and understand fully the information the school receives each year on the results of national tests. The school has a very successful way of devolving leadership roles and getting staff to work in teams. This results in highly effective leadership at all levels and high staff morale. As one very perceptive pupil said in discussion with inspectors, 'The teachers are all friends and laugh a lot together.' The excellent emphasis on knowing each individual's needs ensures outstanding equality of opportunity where all pupils get the support they need to succeed and are free from discrimination. Staff analyse assessment information regularly and rigorously to ensure that no groups or individuals are disadvantaged. The school's systems for ensuring pupils' welfare and safety are exemplary. While the school has a clear policy on promoting community cohesion, it has not yet developed effective methods to evaluate the impact of that policy. The school's continuous drive for

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improvement through ambitious targets ensures that pupils reach high standards and make excellent progress in their academic and personal development. Clearly, the school goes from strength to strength. This is because of the very effective leadership of the longstanding headteacher who is highly respected by staff, pupils and parents. One parent summed up the views of many people in writing, 'I hope that the new headteacher leads and manages as effectively as Mr Hussey, he has been a tremendous asset to the school. I love the sense of community the school engenders through class layouts to sharing experiences and performing to the peers or younger years. Any concerns or queries have been addressed and suggestions taken on board and implemented where appropriate.'

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach high standards by the time they enter Year 1. Highly effective links with parents ensure that children settle quickly into school routines. They are happy in school and thoroughly enjoy the activities the staff prepare for them. Children have a good balance between activities they choose for themselves and those directed by the teacher. As a result, they become increasingly independent and able to show responsibility in choosing sensibly, sharing with others and concentrating on tasks for extended periods. The classroom is arranged to encourage a free flow of movement from indoor to outdoor activities. Teaching is excellent and the curriculum covers all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is an appropriate focus on early reading, writing and

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mathematical skills balanced with work in the other areas of learning. The welfare of the children is at the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and excellent systems for checking how well children are learning ensure that tasks are matched to learning needs. The outstanding leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has led to it improving since the last inspection so that children get an excellent start to their schooling.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents have overwhelmingly positive views of the school. A small number of parents raised specific issues including concerns over a lack of homework for pupils who are away from school with an illness, head lice, the amount of sport, homework, and information on how well their children are doing. However, others wrote effusive comments praising the headteacher and staff like the following:

'I would like to highlight that I have been continuously impressed with the school since my son started in foundation. The standards of teaching, combination of structure, and more relaxed activities, plus the focus on good behaviour and discipline have exceeded my high expectations.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Caroline Haslett 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 151 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 433 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	104	68	41	27	5	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	99	65	47	32	4	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	37	84	56	6	4	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	43	76	51	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	82	53	64	43	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	39	75	50	13	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	45	74	50	6	4	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)	59	38	76	51	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	40	84	56	2	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	41	75	50	5	3	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	33	84	57	9	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	89	59	55	37	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	82	53	66	44	2	1	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.



14 December 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Caroline Haslett Primary School, Milton Keynes, MK5 7DF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school in December. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

We think your school is outstanding. The teachers work very hard to make lessons interesting and to plan exciting activities for you to do. As a result, you make excellent progress in your learning and reach high standards in your work. The youngest children settle very quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make excellent progress too. Those of you who find some of the work difficult get really good help, with the teaching assistants giving particularly effective support so that you can do well.

You told us that the school is a very happy place where there is no bullying. You also said that the staff look after you very well indeed so that there is always someone there for you if you have worries. We were very impressed with how well you behave and get on with each other. You concentrate on your work and try hard to please your teachers.

The school is as good as it is because the headteacher, staff and governors are always checking on how well it is doing. They want the best for all of you and set very challenging targets for improvement. They are always looking for ways to make the school even better. That is why we have asked them to develop a system for checking the impact of their plans to help the school and the area it serves to become an even more joined-up community.

We enjoyed our time in your school. Thank you for taking the time to talk to us and let us watch your lessons. You can help to make sure your school continues to be outstanding by continuing to work as hard and behave as well as you did during our visit.

Yours sincerely

Ian Nelson

Additional inspector

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