

Chaucer Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112568
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337968
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	279
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Smith
Headteacher	Catherine Beattie
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed six teachers and made 13 classroom visits. Meetings were held with a representative of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils. Informal meetings were held with a small number of parents in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the start of the second day of the inspection. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body, who was overseas during the inspection. Inspectors looked at some of the school's policies and procedures, pupils' written work and the tracking data used to monitor pupils' progress. Fifty four completed parents' questionnaires were analysed as well those completed by staff.

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

- progress and attainment in reading and writing, particularly of those pupils close to the nationally expected Level 2
- attendance and the effectiveness of measures taken by the school to improve it
- the quality of teachers' oral feedback to pupils during lessons
- the achievement of the more able children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Due to a recent increase in the number of pupils on roll, the school is now a larger-than-average infant school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a very small proportion belongs to minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is small and few of them are at an early stage of learning it. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average as is the proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds an Activemark in recognition for its work in promoting sports, an Eco-Schools award and has National Healthy Schools status.

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

Chaucer school provides a satisfactory quality of provision. It has some good features, particularly its success with developing pupils' personal qualities. Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Their behaviour is good. They understand well what they have to do to stay healthy. The level of care provided by the school is good and ensures pupils are given clear advice and support to overcome barriers to their learning. As a result of the school's persistent efforts, the rate of attendance has improved and it is now average.

By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, their attainment is broadly average and it has been over many years. Most children make good progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but the progress made by most pupils from their entry to Year 1 to the end of Year 2 is mainly satisfactory. The quality of teaching mirrors this variability, being mostly good in the Nursery and Reception classes and mainly satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Effective questioning and detailed oral feedback are most apparent in good lessons. In many of the satisfactory lessons, feedback is insufficiently precise, not enough is demanded of the more able pupils and there is little evidence of assessment informing teachers' planning. In general, there are limited opportunities for pupils to exercise their initiative in organising and assessing their own learning. The excessive use of worksheets and teachers' long introductions are limiting influences. The curriculum caters for most pupils' needs and interests.

The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are adequate enough to ensure that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. However, they are not always robust, particularly in examining the impact of teaching on learning. Consequently, at times the school's self-evaluation is too generous. Skills of leaders at all levels are insufficiently fine-tuned and the systems are incomplete. Governors are supportive of the school and some of their visits, particularly those linked to subject leaders, have been productive. However, at this stage, their evaluation of the school's implementation of some of the key policies and procedures is insufficiently systematic.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Bring rigour to monitoring and evaluation in the school to inform its self-evaluation more precisely by:
 - refining the monitoring and evaluation skills of all leaders
 - strengthening the role of middle leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching, particularly in evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in lessons

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and in their written work

- demonstrating that the findings of monitoring and evaluation activities inform future plans
- extending governors' involvement in the process.
- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 to at least good by:
 - using the good practice that already exists in the school as a model
 - giving clear feedback to pupils on their progress during lessons
 - using assessments made in lessons to inform subsequent planning
 - planning and providing greater challenge for the more able pupils.
- Promote pupils' independence in their learning by:
 - enabling them to take greater responsibility for their own learning, particularly in planning and organising their work
 - reducing the excessive use of worksheets
 - engaging them with assessing and improving their own work
 - shortening long introductions to allow more time for pupils to work on their own.
- 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**

In lessons, most pupils show interest and work steadily on the tasks given to them. They particularly enjoy activities that they are able to relate to. For example, in one Year 2 lesson on the theme of the seaside, pupils were excited by an array of interesting and practical cross-curricular activities which brought learning alive. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons in Years 1 and 2 and some of them make good progress. This pattern of progress is repeated in their written work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, because their needs are clearly identified and additional support is provided to meet them. Similarly, those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress, as a result of the focused attention they receive in lessons. Over the last two years, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been mainly broadly average. The 2010 National Curriculum assessments indicate that pupils' attainment is broadly average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. This represents satisfactory overall progress from their broadly average starting points on entry to Year 1.

Pupils rise to the occasion when they are given the opportunity to exercise responsibility within the school. Relationships are good and pupils get on well with each other. Most pupils know well what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. They regularly learn about their own cultural heritage and their understanding of other cultural traditions is

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steadily developing. They are keen and willing to help others in the community and raise funds for good causes. The sound grounding in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and the strong personal qualities they develop at school, prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their 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	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Examples of both good and satisfactory teaching were seen across the school, but overall its quality is satisfactory. In all lessons, teachers secure most pupils' willingness to stay on task and pupils who find learning difficult are supported effectively. The use of the interactive whiteboard is a common feature which helps teachers to explain ideas and give pupils clear instructions. In the better lessons, teachers' questioning is more precise, which helps them assess pupils' understanding. Pupils are given clear and manageable benchmarks which they can themselves use to see whether they have successfully completed the tasks given. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers' introductions are often far too long and leave limited time for pupils to work independently. Planning does not take into account what pupils already know.

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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Occasionally, this leads to a lack of challenge for pupils, particularly the more able. The curriculum includes a sufficient range of experiences to meet the varied needs of most pupils. Enrichment activities are extensive and pupils thoroughly enjoy their participation in them. Educational visits and visitors to school provide ample first-hand opportunities for pupils to acquire new knowledge and practise their basic skills. The focus on increasing pupils' awareness of their environment has been rewarded with an Eco-School award. The curriculum is suitably tailored to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language. The use of too many worksheets in Years 1 and 2 restricts opportunities for pupils to respond creatively and use their initiative in learning. Pupils are well supported. Arrangements to identify pupils who need additional support, either with their learning in basic skills or with managing their behaviour, are working well. These groups, and others who are considered to be potentially vulnerable, are known to staff and they receive carefully planned support, from within the school and/or from external agencies. Links with the parents and carers of these pupils are nurtured to give their children the best deal possible. Effective induction and transition arrangements ensure a smooth start to school and transfer to junior school.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff are keen to bring about improvement in a range of areas, which are reflected in the school's current priorities. As a result of their focus, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been maintained at broadly average levels for the last three years. The deployment of additional staff reflects the headteacher's commitment to improving the provision for pupils who find learning difficult. Monitoring and evaluation rely on an adequate range of evidence. Often, this provides leaders with an insufficiently precise view of the quality of teaching and learning to secure further improvement. Monitoring of pupils' progress through data analysis is regular and assists the school in keeping track of pupils' performance as well as the setting of challenging targets. Governors are supportive of the school and, in general, know its strengths. However, their knowledge about the school's weaknesses is not as strong. Although safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, the governing body and headteacher recognise that further rigour is needed in the monitoring and evaluation of its practices to ensure that they match recommended good practice.

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The school enjoys good relationships with parents and carers. They are kept well informed about their children's progress and the school helps them to support their children's learning at home. Partnerships with local services and sports organisations contribute to pupils' learning and enjoyment. The commitment to tackle discrimination is strong and the school ensures its pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable do well. However, some of the more capable pupils are insufficiently challenged to achieve their potential. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion and operates as a harmonious community. Through its international links and celebration of various cultural events, the school is broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity, at home and abroad.

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
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children make good progress from their starting points, which are usually below those expected for their age on entry to Nursery, especially in their communication skills. Children achieve well in all areas of learning due to good overall teaching and they leave Reception with broadly average attainment. The learning of the more able children is sometimes constrained because work planned for them is insufficiently challenging. They settle quickly as a result of effective induction, the care adults show for their well-being and the parents' willingness to work with the staff. The regular focus on developing children's early literacy and numeracy skills ensures that they begin to link sounds and letters and count with growing confidence. Children enjoy painting, working with play-dough and recreating roles in the home corner, such as those when taking on the role of pirates. They particularly enjoy listening and moving to music. Their personal

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and social skills are good because adults give them numerous opportunities to work and play together. Good use is made of outdoor provision to promote learning across the curriculum. At times, children sit too long listening to adults, which limits opportunities for them to work on their own. Observation and assessment of children's progress are frequent and carefully recorded to inform effectively the next steps in their learning. Leadership and teamwork are good and adults are adept in adjusting the provision to meet the diverse needs of children. Leaders have recognised the need to provide more opportunities for children to develop independence and greater challenge for the more able.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost one fifth of parents and carers returned the questionnaires. Of those who responded, an overwhelming majority are highly appreciative of the school's provision. They feel that their children enjoy being at school and are kept safe. There were very few isolated concerns but they were heavily counterbalanced by the positive response across all questions asked of parents and carers. In terms of pupils' progress, the quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school, parents and carers are more positive than the inspection findings. The inspectors found evidence that, although all these aspects have some strengths, overall they are satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chaucer Infant 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 279 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	70	15	28	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	74	14	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	56	22	41	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	67	14	26	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	67	18	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	63	20	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	67	18	33	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)	31	57	21	39	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	54	23	43	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	44	26	48	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	46	25	46	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	67	17	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	70	16	30	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

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.



30 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chaucer Infant School, Ilkeston, DE7 5LN

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We enjoyed looking at and talking about your work. Your school provides a satisfactory education.

Here are some of positive things about your school

Most of you make at least satisfactory progress in lessons and reach average standards by the end of Year 2.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but most of it is good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes.

You say that you feel safe at school.

You behave well in lessons and in and around the school.

Adults in the school take good care of you.

You are aware of how to look after your environment and the school has received an Eco-Schools award.

You say you enjoy being at school and your attendance has improved this year.

Here are the things that the school needs to improve

Senior staff, other teachers and governors should check more thoroughly how well you and your school are doing.

Teaching should be good or better in Years 1 and 2.

There should be more opportunities in lessons for you to work on your own so that you learn to be independent.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector

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