

Cherry Tree Hill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112751
Local Authority	City Of Derby
Inspection number	338009
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Thomas
Headteacher	Kathy Mayer
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by 3 additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with the head teacher, governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at samples of pupils work in books and on display, school monitoring files, the school development plan, the school's self evaluation form, minutes of the governing body, records of external monitoring, the school's assessment and tracking records, and 46 responses made by parents to the Ofsted parental questionnaire.

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

- How well all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with gifts and talents make progress.
- How well the school meets the requirements for community cohesion and the regulations for child protection and safeguarding.
- How effectively the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps children to learn.
- Whether the strengths reported at the last inspection have been sustained and/or extended further, and whether the areas identified for improvement have been fully addressed.

Information about the school

Cherry Tree Hill is a large school, with an Early Years Foundation Stage taking children into Nursery and Reception Years. It serves a mixed socio-economic area adjacent to the city of Derby. Very few pupils enter or leave the school other than at the usual time. The very large majority of pupils are of white British origin, and a small proportion of pupils do not speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is low. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The school hosts a pre- and after-school Kids Club which is not managed by the governors and which is subject to a separate inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Cherry Tree Hill Infants is a good school. It has sustained the strengths identified at the previous inspection, and has addressed fully the areas identified for improvement. Boys and girls are doing as well as each other in reading and writing; information and communication technology (ICT) is used confidently and independently by pupils to underpin their learning; and the school successfully ensures that pupils have a good understanding of life in multicultural Britain.

Pupils make good progress both academically and personally. The quality of teaching is good, though a few lessons are less effective because pupils are not actively engaged in tasks that challenge them. The curriculum is good and is being adapted to ensure that the needs of all pupils continue to be met well. The school's provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is excellent. It is built on a thorough knowledge of individual pupils and their families, and excellent trusting personal relationships. Pupils say that they are happy and feel safe in school, a view supported by their parents who express high levels of satisfaction with the school's work.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Leaders are fully committed to developing and improving the school further. The school has a well understood and reliable system for regularly collecting accurate information on the performance and progress of pupils and this ensures that the school's self evaluation is accurate and individual needs are met well. However, the information gathered is not analysed, evaluated and used with sufficient rigour to enable the school to fine tune the effectiveness of improvements they have implemented. This slows down plans to make pupils' learning even greater. Though governors give generous support to the school, they have not provided the challenge necessary to drive the school's effectiveness to the highest possible levels. All other aspects of the leadership and management of the school are good. The partnerships the school has with other agencies to support and promote pupils enjoyment of learning are good. The schools has a notable openness when engaging with parents.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better lessons by ensuring that all pupils are challenged and actively engaged in learning.
- Improve the rigour with which leaders, including governors, monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness of interventions they have planned for improving pupils' learning.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy being in school and they behave well both in class and at break times. These good attitudes contribute positively to their learning. They work well in lessons, are attentive and well motivated. They respond very well to any opportunities they get to learn through investigating and exploring. In discussions, pupils told inspectors that they enjoy their lessons 'because teachers help us to learn lots'. They also reported that they find the school building 'warm and shiny', and that they can join in 'lots of other good stuff' after lessons, including visits to museums and parks, making displays, and giving performances. They are proud to be members of Cherry Tree Hill School, and contribute strongly to the community spirit within the school, and within its local area. Pupils' attendance is average. It is affected by a small number of persistent absentees and the usual childhood illnesses.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. As a result of the school's clear focus on dealing with, and valuing, each child as an individual, pupils show great respect and tolerance for each other. They know very well the difference between right and wrong, they listen politely to each other's views and opinions, and their multicultural awareness is raised by visits to mosques and temples.

In 2008, teachers' assessments showed that attainment was above average overall and broadly average in mathematics. Unvalidated teacher assessments for 2009 are higher than in 2008. The school's detailed tracking shows that, in relation to their starting points, these pupils made good progress. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make similar progress to their peers. All groups of pupils are gaining the well-developed skills they will need as they get older, and have an aspiration to succeed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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

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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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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school's arrangements for the care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Staff know the pupils, and their parents or carers, very well. Very detailed academic and pastoral records are conscientiously maintained. These allow adults to spot quickly when pupils are experiencing difficulties, and ensure that prompt and effective steps can be taken to help. This is a key element in maintaining the confidence parents have in the school.

The quality of teaching is good overall but has some inconsistencies. All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between teachers and pupils. The best lessons move forward rapidly, and encourage pupils to work independently at tasks which closely meet their learning needs. In a minority of other lessons, teachers spend too long explaining things and give pupils too little time to find things out for themselves. Teachers accurately measure what pupils have learned, but do not always use this information to plan and set tasks which present enough challenge to all pupils. The curriculum is good, and pupils say they like what they learn about. The development of speaking and listening skills is a constant focus. The school brings topics to life by engaging in practical activities such as Art Week, and Health Week, and by maintaining active links with Yamba Junior School in Tanzania. A strong programme of personal, social and health and citizenship education, along with a residential visit in Year 2, supports pupils' personal development very well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and all other adults share a strong common vision. They are successful

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in ensuring that all pupils enjoy school and achieve well. The stable and experienced staff have created a positive and welcoming learning environment, their morale is good, and there is a very happy team spirit in the school. In consequence, the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and there is a powerful atmosphere of learning. Targets are realistic and challenging. Planning enables the school to tackle improvements needed in teaching systematically. Lesson monitoring is rigorous, though has sometimes focussed on teaching without enough investigation of its impact on learning and progress. The school's self evaluation is accurate, but the information which underpins this is not analysed and evaluated sharply enough to define the individual steps needed to help the school move up to the next level of performance. A deputy headteacher has recently been appointed to a vacancy unfilled for a year, but as yet there has not been time for this to have an impact.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements fully, and are rigorously applied. The governing body meets all its statutory requirements, but whilst all members support the school well in a variety of ways, few are able to hold the school fully to account for the progress pupils make. Provision for promoting community cohesion is good. The school has a strong focus on ensuring that all forms of inequality are addressed, and that diversity is recognised. That it is successfully raising aspiration and ambition in the community it serves is shown by Year 1 pupils speaking, with some understanding, about 'Aiming High'. The school gives good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Children enter the Nursery having had a wide range of previous learning experiences. Their skills are close to, but usually a little below, what is normally expected for children of their age. Their inter-personal, speaking, and counting skills are usually stronger than their writing and calculating skills. Because provision is good, with experienced staff setting interesting learning tasks, children make good progress, and by the time they leave Reception class, most are working within the Early Learning Goals, and some have exceeded them.

Leadership and management are good, though the formal monitoring of learning lacks rigour. Staff work well together and record pupils' learning automatically as it occurs, but this information is not always used to best effect. In the majority of sessions, a wide range of different activities, for example to consolidate number work, engage children well in learning. Experiences of weighing, measuring, counting, drawing, reading and writing, both indoors and outdoors, using water, sand, conkers, pine cones and such, give first-hand experiences for children to talk, read and write about. They select their own learning activities, move around peacefully and without argument, and are trusted to work independently. The very large majority do. This successfully promotes their personal development as well as improving their basic skills. Recent refurbishment has improved the outdoor learning environment. Children relate well to each other and relationships with adults are a particular strength. Behaviour is good. Children are safe and secure, and welfare requirements are met. Parents are welcomed daily and are positive about the provision their children receive.

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

Forty six parents returned questionnaires, which is a fairly low response rate. All of these respondents felt that the school keeps their child safe, and all indicated that they were happy with their child's experience at the school. A small minority felt that the school did not give them enough help to support their child's learning. Inspectors found that the school gives as least as much guidance and advice as would normally be expected in schools of this type. A very small number indicated that the school was not meeting their child's particular needs. This did not involve any special educational needs, and they felt happy overall with their child's experience.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cherry Tree Hill Infants 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	79	9	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	81	8	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	70	12	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	65	13	30	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	72	11	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	63	11	26	4	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	74	11	26	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)	27	63	11	26	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	70	11	26	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	72	10	23	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	60	15	35	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	84	6	14	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	84	7	16	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



23 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Cherry Tree Hill Infants School, Chaddesden, DE21 6WL

Thank you for being so nice and helpful to us when we inspected your school. We were really impressed with your very good manners in the dining room, and the way you concentrate and try to work things out for yourselves in lessons.

We found that Cherry Tree Hill is a good school. It is very good at making sure you all get the right help so that you can develop safely into happy and confident young people.

We also found that under the good leadership of your head teacher, all the other adults in the school help you to move forward well in your learning about reading, writing, mathematics and all the other interesting subjects you study.

However, the school could do some things better, which would help you to make even more progress than you do now. So I want the school to do the following things:

Make sure that more lessons are good or better, by using all the time available to make learning exciting and challenging for every one of you. You can help by continuing to try as hard as you can.

Check more closely that all the activities the school does are actually helping you to learn more quickly.

Please continue to be the happy and hard working young people you already are, and may I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Terry McDermott

Lead inspector

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