

Chellaston Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112754
Local Authority	City of Derby
Inspection number	338010
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brad Ames
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona McLaughlin
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons or part-lessons, and held meetings with the Chair of Governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment data, individual education plans, monitoring and evaluation documents and policies and procedures. In addition, 123 parental questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- the quality of outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and its impact on children's standards and progress
- the impact of strategies to boost the standards of boys at the higher levels
- the impact of tailored speaking and listening programmes and other strategies to support the well-being and achievement of vulnerable pupils
- the rigour of the school's systems for monitoring teaching and learning and the quality of the plans for developing it further.

Information about the school

Chellaston is larger than most infant schools. Most pupils live locally and the majority are White British. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises four Reception classes. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark and Artsmark (Bronze), and Eco-Schools.

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

2

Main findings

Chellaston Infants is a good school, which is well regarded by parents and carers.

Good provision in Reception ensures that children settle happily. They adapt quickly to the routines to become confident and self-reliant learners. The personal and social skills they acquire at this stage provide a firm foundation for their later learning. Pupils also make good progress in Key Stage 1 to reach above average standards by the time they transfer to junior school. Some minor weaknesses remain in the achievement of more-able pupils, especially boys, for example, in writing.

Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. They plan very effectively together to ensure pupils enjoy the practical activities in their lessons. On some occasions, the teaching does not fully stretch the more-able pupils. Pupils' natural curiosity is reflected in their good knowledge of foreign countries but their knowledge of differing faiths is limited. The curriculum has strengths in ensuring that pupils practise the principles of a healthy lifestyle and pupils know exceptionally well how to stay safe. The successful emphasis which the school places on pupils' physical well-being is underlined in the daily aerobics sessions, which all pupils (and staff) take part in enthusiastically. Activities of this type foster the clear sense of shared enterprise and the good relationships pupils have with each other and adults.

The school has maintained its good provision since the last inspection and a few elements of its work are now outstanding. The successful leadership of senior staff is reflected well in high quality provision for pupils' welfare. The drive to improve standards is shared well by the staff. This is exemplified in the way that the Key Stage 1 team successfully implemented measures to raise attainment in mathematics, which had dipped slightly in 2008. These factors demonstrate that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Very new arrangements for developing a team-based approach to monitoring provision in curriculum areas have, however, not yet bedded down. Partly because of this, some of the good ideas for developing pupils' skills in writing lack a really sharp focus. Monitoring arrangements for pupils' progress are extensive and support most pupils, including the most vulnerable. These detailed records, however, do not generate really stretching targets for the most able pupils, and this constrains the schools' aspirations to raise standards. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Partnership work with other agencies and local schools in the extended services cluster is good, but work to develop local and global links with other faith groups is still in the planning stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise pupils' attainment, particularly that of boys, by
- setting more challenging targets for them in Key Stage 1
 - ensuring that teaching consistently challenges the more-able pupils
 - providing a sharper, coordinated focus to the strategies for developing pupils' writing skills.
- Accelerate the implementation of the school's plans to make stronger links with schools of a different profile locally and nationally and in so doing
- enhance pupils' cultural awareness by providing them with more first-hand experiences of meeting pupils of different faith groups.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Children's skills, knowledge and understanding when they start Reception are slightly below those expected for their age. When they enter Year 1 they have made good gains in all areas of learning, particularly in their personal and social development and their speaking and listening skills. Standards have been significantly above the national average from 2006 to 2009, although there was a slight dip in 2008. Lessons seen confirmed a continuing picture of pupils' good progress and above average standards.

Pupils do well in all subjects and especially so in reading. They develop their interests and skills well in guided reading lessons. Their progress in these lessons is closely tracked, so that they are soon ready to move on to more challenging texts. A strong focus on developing L2L (Learning to Learn) skills has been successful in improving pupils' thinking and reasoning skills in mathematics. Pupils write copiously, sometimes using imaginative vocabulary based on what they have read, but their skills in handwriting and in structuring sentences and paragraphs are average.

Support for vulnerable pupils, including those pupils benefiting from tailored speech and language programmes, is targeted very well to help them keep up with their learning.

Pupils speak positively about their enjoyment of school and this is reflected in their exceptional attendance. Year 2 pupils, in particular, demonstrate mature skills in being able to work well in small groups. They express themselves confidently, concentrate well and persevere in their work. These factors contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning and stand them in good stead for the next stage of their education.

Despite their young age, pupils can explain fully about potential dangers to health and safety and there is a good up-take of the varied opportunities to engage in physical activity.

Pupils behave well because they enjoy coming to school and feel well supported by the staff.

Assemblies are used very effectively to promote pupils' maturity, self-esteem and good sense of team-work. This was conclusively demonstrated in a Year 1 class assembly observed during the inspection, which was a testament to the hard work of all concerned.

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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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers set the tone for a good climate for learning by managing pupils well and by ensuring that pupils get opportunities to become involved quickly in lessons, for example, through volunteering to help the teacher illustrate a new teaching point. This technique is effective in securing pupils' interest and concentration and supports their learning well by enabling pupils to learn in a practical way. Teachers question pupils well and quickly clear up any misunderstandings. As a result, pupils develop the confidence to answer well and provide good reasons for their answers. Planning is consistent across classes within year groups which ensures no groups of pupils are disadvantaged. A further positive feature of the teaching is the good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, which enables the latter to be pro-active in assisting pupils with additional needs. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk. On a few occasions, insufficient use is made of a variety of resources, such as new technology, to accelerate learning and challenge more-able pupils. Marking supports pupils' progress effectively. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. Standards are closely monitored to highlight areas of relative underperformance and to establish new priorities. Good plans

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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have been carried out to raise standards in mathematics. Currently, the school is developing cross-curricular themes and 'boy-friendly' approaches. These are proving successful in enhancing motivation and enjoyment and in reducing some gaps in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils enjoy their educational visits and trips and there is a good range of clubs, including those which are targeted at specific groups or individuals, to cater for pupils' interests.

Pupils' individual welfare requirements are central to the work of the school and all adults work hard to ensure these needs are fully met. All aspects of care, guidance and support are at least good, and significant elements are outstanding. These include the support for pupils with speech and language difficulties and those with behavioural barriers to learning. The learning mentor's highly effective work with individual families and outside agencies has been an important factor in sustaining a high rate of attendance and in improving punctuality.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

In spite of a few recent changes to the leadership and teaching team, there is a good awareness at all levels of the strengths and the key priorities for the further development of the school's work. The school is in the process of devolving responsibilities at middle management level to teams of teachers and support staff. This accords well with the school's adoption of a more topic-based approach to the curriculum. It is proving beneficial in unlocking talent, developing new skills and in making a wider range of staff accountable for pupils' progress. At this stage, the teams have not had the opportunity to embark on a new round of monitoring and evaluation activities. Consequently, there is some uncertainty in how best to pull together the threads of the good ideas to raise standards, for example, in writing.

The school promotes equal opportunities well, particularly with regard to the well-being and progress of vulnerable pupils. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are of good quality. These ensure that careful checks are made on adults and that health and safety procedures are secure.

Senior leaders are supported well by an effective and knowledgeable governing body, which has been pro-active in keeping up-to-date with training and in developing more avenues to strengthen its links with staff and pupils. It discharges its statutory responsibilities effectively, while recognising it needs to accelerate its work in developing

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community cohesion.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good gains in their learning and development from entering Reception with skills slightly below those expected for their age. They quickly settle in their new environment and become curious and responsible learners. They engage readily in collaborative play and nearly all share and take turns well. An important feature of their good progress is the capacity they develop at an early stage to persevere with tasks which require a high degree of concentration. This enables them to develop their motor skills well and to produce drawings and sketches of good quality. Children with weaker speaking and listening skills are very effectively supported and sessions on linking letters and sounds have been used well to improve children's literacy skills. By the end of Reception, a small majority of children have achieved nearly all the early learning goals. Consistently good teaching ensures that children's learning and development are good, despite some weaknesses in both the quality of, and ease of access to, the outdoor environment. This restricts the time children can spend outside and their opportunities to choose freely which activities to pursue. Care, welfare and the transition to Year 1 are all good. Reception staff have built up a variety of good links with parents and carers which are used well by both parties to support children's good achievement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Standards have improved in the last two years and the new leader is well set to carry on the good work.

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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

Just over one third of parents and carers returned a parental questionnaire. Their responses indicate a very high measure of satisfaction with the school, in particular, with regard to its capacity in keeping their children safe and in promoting their healthy lifestyles. Virtually all agreed that their children enjoyed school.

Some individual concerns were raised regarding communications with parents and carers, including about pupil's progress, and the school's handling of the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils. The inspectors judged that the school took considerable steps to keep parents and carers up-to-date on school news through, for example, monthly newsletters and text-messages, and noted that written feedback to families on pupils' progress towards individual targets was imminent. Inspection evidence indicated that there had been instances of poor behaviour in the past, due to prolonged staff absence. No untoward behaviour was observed during the inspection either in the playground or in classrooms.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chellaston 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 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 359 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	51	58	47	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	45	65	53	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	15	86	70	13	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	31	74	60	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	35	75	61	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	37	71	58	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	37	76	62	1	1	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)	24	20	77	63	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	27	82	67	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	21	67	54	14	11	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	15	80	65	9	7	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	24	20	82	67	8	7	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	41	73	59	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

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

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

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

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chellaston Infant School, Chellaston, Derby DE73 6TA

Thank you all very much for making us so welcome in your school. We will remember how friendly you all were and how keen you were to talk to us about your interests and your school.

Chellaston Infants is a good school and these are the things we found your school does well.

You get off to a good start in the Reception classes and make good progress there and throughout the school. This is because teaching is good and you enjoy coming to school.

The staff look after you really well and work hard with you to help you become grown-up and confident. A good example of that was the Year 1 assembly I saw.

Everyone played a full part and you and your parents can be really proud of your efforts.

You behave well and feel safe in school. You have a super understanding of how to stay safe in school and how to stay healthy. This is helped by lots of activities to keep you fit.

All the staff know the school well and are working together to make sure it keeps on getting better.

We have asked the school to improve further the progress made by those who find learning easier by:

- making sure you are always stretched to do your best in lessons
- giving you higher targets to aim for
- giving you better chances to develop your writing skills

We have also asked the school to give you more chances to get to know about the lives of people of different faiths.

Best wishes for the future and keep up your super attendance.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken

Lead Inspector

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