

Castleton CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112807
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	338023
Inspection dates	13–14 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Davies
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Montgomery
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed four teachers, visited eight lessons or parts of lessons and observed two assemblies. The inspector held discussions with staff, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body and pupils. He looked at pupils' books and a wide range of documentation, including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 22 parents and carers, 26 pupils and five members of staff were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment and progress of boys
- whether teaching offers enough challenge for all groups of pupils
- how effectively leaders and governors monitor and evaluate school performance, and take action to drive improvement.

Information about the school

This is a small village school with three mixed-age classes. Class 1 is made up of Reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2, Class 2 of pupils in Years 3 and 4, and Class 3 of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and virtually all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement, is below average. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school other than the usual time of admission or leaving. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The headteacher combines the leadership of the school with the role of a classroom teacher on three days a week. The school operates on a split site, with the Year 5 and 6 class being based in Castleton Village Hall. The hall is also used for physical education lessons and lunches.

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

While Castleton Primary School provides a generally satisfactory standard of education for its pupils, some elements are good. Pupils are well cared for, feel safe and clearly enjoy school very much, as shown by their above average attendance. They behave well, both in and out of the classroom. Pupils develop healthy lifestyles well, as shown by their involvement in a wide range of physical activities. They are well motivated to learn and make a helpful contribution to the school community, reflecting its strong Christian ethos, for example, by showing care for younger pupils in the mixed-age classes. Most parents and carers expressed considerable satisfaction with the school and their children's experience. Several commented that they were delighted with the approachability of staff and their children's enthusiasm for school.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly settle into the day-to-day life of the school. They make satisfactory progress and enjoy the range of activities on offer. While the indoor teaching area is adequately resourced to meet children's needs, the balance of activities favours adult-led rather than child initiated learning. The accommodation does not allow direct access to the outdoors and staff recognise the need to extend children's learning outdoors. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, continue to make satisfactory progress throughout the school and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average. Staff are correctly focused on raising standards in writing and mathematics, which tend to be below those in reading, particularly for boys.

The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory and occasionally good. The use of assessment for tracking pupils' progress is much improved, but not enough use is made of this information in planning lessons. This means that pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. In some lessons, introductory activities are too long and the best use is not made of pupils' increasing capacity for independent working. The curriculum gives appropriate attention to the teaching of literacy and numeracy while providing pupils with a range of enriching experiences. It is enhanced by a programme of visitors to and visits out of school. However, staff recognise that they could develop a more relevant curriculum that would excite pupils' interest and provide more opportunities for the application of basic skills in wider contexts. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good overall, but pupils' understanding and appreciation of different cultures within the United Kingdom and throughout the world is less well developed. School self-evaluation is accurate and, supported by the School Improvement Partner, appropriate priorities for development, such as strategies to raise standards in literacy and mathematics have been identified. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning, though regular, is not always sufficiently linked to the progress pupils are

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making so that the impact of improvement strategies on standards can be evaluated. Changes in staffing since the last inspection has slowed the drive to raise standards. Governors, although very supportive, have not been involved enough in monitoring the work of the school. Staffing is now stable and all staff and governors are keen to support the headteacher's drive for improvement. The accuracy of school self-evaluation, together with the enthusiasm of all concerned to tackle weaknesses, gives the school satisfactory capacity for continued improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing and mathematics, particularly that of boys, by ensuring that:
 - effective use is made of assessment information to plan learning activities that are appropriately challenging for pupils of all ages and abilities
 - pupils are actively engaged in learning from the start of lessons and that lessons proceed at a good pace
 - in the marking of pupils' work they are given consistent guidance on the level of the work and what they must do in order to improve.
- Develop a more creative curriculum that:
 - enables pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through a variety of topics and themes
 - provides pupils with more opportunities to develop their understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures within the United Kingdom and throughout the world.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the monitoring of teaching and learning focuses more systematically on the progress pupils are making and the impact of action taken to raise standards
 - governors are more directly involved in monitoring and evaluating school provision and performance.
- Improve the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing more opportunities for child-initiated learning activities
 - developing the outdoor learning environment.
- 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**

The small number of pupils in the school means that aggregated data about their attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 must be treated with caution. The school's results in national tests and assessments, as shown in percentages, are often influenced significantly by the addition or loss of a single pupil at the time of the assessment. On

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paper, therefore, results can fluctuate widely from year to year. Scrutiny of the progress of individual pupils, which included their work and observation of lessons, shows that attainment, although broadly average, is better in cohorts with more girls than boys. This is because boys' skills on entry to Reception tend to be below those of girls. While both groups make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6, the difference in attainment between boys and girls remains. Reflecting much skillful and enthusiastic teaching, the quality of pupils' singing in Class 2 and the instrumental playing in assembly was impressive.

Pupils are insistent that there is no bullying 'because all get on with each other' and are confident that they can get help if the need should arise. The vast majority behave well in lessons and display positive attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on the body and the value of eating a balanced diet. They speak confidently about avoiding the dangers they may encounter. Pupils' willingness to take on responsibility is typified by their work on the school council and in their work as monitors. Through their work on the eco-committee they make a good contribution to the wider community. They display attributes of patience and respect, and know the difference between right and wrong. Attendance, although above average, would be higher but for family holidays taken by a few during term time. Pupils' positive attributes, together with their broadly average attainment, indicates that they are satisfactorily prepared 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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

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 develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

While teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, most lessons include some good features. For example, teachers are knowledgeable, relationships are good and pupils want to learn. They listen attentively and are willing to try hard because they like their teachers. In the most effective lessons, careful planning ensures that the learning activities meet the needs of the differing ages and abilities in the class. However, in many lessons the work planned is not pitched at the correct level and progress slows because the tasks do not offer enough challenge. In some lessons, teachers talk for too long and this restricts the time pupils are actively and independently learning. While pupils' work is marked regularly, much commends effort rather than quality and does not provide enough guidance on the level of the work, and what must be done in order to improve.

The curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. It is enhanced well through local partnerships. Visiting specialists make a good contribution to the curriculum and the use of an outdoor pursuits centre helps to compensate for the small on-site play areas. Current events and experiences are used well as a stimulus for writing, such as the World Cup or the Year 5 and 6 visit to London. However, the school has yet to take full advantage of the scope to develop a creative curriculum in which more meaningful links are made between subjects. The curriculum is enhanced by enrichment activities such as residential visits, trips and a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities, all of which contribute towards pupils' personal development. The vast majority of parents and carers say that the school is very caring. This is borne out by inspection findings. All adults are particularly sensitive to those pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Links with support agencies and health professionals are good and contribute towards the school's provision to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school by regular visits, curriculum events and induction days.

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is satisfactorily sharing her vision for improvement. She has successfully stabilised provision following a period in which there were considerable changes in staffing. This affected the monitoring of teaching and learning and has contributed to the quality of teaching seen during the inspection. While school self-evaluation is effective in identifying areas where improvement is needed, improvement priorities are not systematically linked with performance information so that the impact of action taken on standards can be evaluated. Governors support the school well and help to give the school a positive profile in the local community. They recognise the need to be more directly involved in monitoring and evaluating school performance.

Staff and governors ensure there are good systems for safeguarding pupils' welfare, safety and security, including rigorous checks on all adults who work in the school. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents and carers. They are very supportive and feel that receiving more information on their children's targets and progress towards them enables them to be more involved in their children's learning. Equal opportunities are promoted satisfactorily. All groups are making satisfactory progress, there is no discrimination and every pupil has the same opportunities to join in all the school provides. Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. The sense of community in the school is strong as are the links with the local community, but pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom as a diverse cultural society is more limited.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Although there are some weaknesses in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage which account for satisfactory outcomes, there are also some notable strengths. Because the setting provides good-quality care, which is much appreciated by parents, children quickly settle into the school and immediately begin to learn. Children mix well with the older Year 1 and 2 pupils in the class and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. In other areas of learning, progress is satisfactory because other aspects of provision have relative shortcomings. While staff make good use of the limited indoor accommodation to provide a range of experiences across the areas of learning, children do not have enough opportunity to choose their own activities. Opportunities for learning outdoors are restricted because the outdoor areas do not provide a stimulating enough learning environment. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision are satisfactory. Children's progress is assessed and recorded regularly, and the information is used particularly well to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who spoke to the inspection team and the majority of those who returned the questionnaires were very positive about the school. A small minority indicated some concerns about their children's progress and the extent to which the school meets their needs. The inspector agrees that there is scope to increase the level of challenge offered to pupils in lessons. A few also indicated concern about leadership and management. The inspector agrees that this has been adversely affected by instability in staffing over the last three years but found that leadership is satisfactory now. Parents and carers said that their children enjoy coming to school and they are confident that their children are kept safe. They particularly appreciate the care and approachability of the staff. The inspector agrees with the parents' and carers' positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castleton CofE 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 inspector received 22 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 43 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	68	7	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	73	6	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	36	13	59	0	0	1	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	32	10	45	5	23	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	50	7	32	2	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	41	10	45	2	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	36	12	55	2	9	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)	5	23	14	64	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	36	8	36	3	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	36	12	55	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	41	8	36	2	9	1	5
The school is led and managed effectively	8	36	10	45	4	18	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	45	10	45	1	5	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.



15 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castleton CofE Primary School, Hope Valley, S33 8WE

Thank you for the help you gave me with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received me. I spoke with many of you and have told your teachers that you were really helpful and how much I enjoyed listening to your singing.

You receive a satisfactory education. Those of you in Reception settle well and make satisfactory progress. You also make satisfactory progress in other years and reach average standards at the end of Year 6. You could reach even higher standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, and especially the boys. Therefore, I have asked your teachers to make sure that you are actively engaged and really stretched in all of your lessons so that you make the best progress you possibly can. I have also asked that the curriculum is developed so that you are given more varied opportunities to develop your skills and to learn about people from different backgrounds. Most of you enjoy school, listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. You understand the importance of being healthy. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work. I have asked that when they do this they give you clear guidance on what you have to do to take the next steps in learning. You can help yourselves to make more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher and governors are determined to make things even better. To help them with this, I have asked that they make some changes to the ways in which they check the performance of the school. I have also asked that the outdoor learning environment for those of you in Reception is improved. Everyone at Castleton can work together to do these things and you will want to play your part by working hard.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector

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