

Calton Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115486
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338592
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2010
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Webb
Headteacher	Sarah Bunce
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2007
School address	Calton Road Gloucester GL1 5ET
Telephone number	01452 527689
Fax number	01452 300622
Email address	admin@calton-inf.gloucs.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2010
Inspection number	338592

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent about two-thirds of their time looking at pupils' learning, including visits to 13 lessons and observations of eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at school self-evaluation documents, external monitoring reports and development planning. Thirty-seven questionnaires completed by parents and carers were analysed as well as those from school staff.

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

- the achievement of higher attaining pupils in writing and mathematics
- the extent to which improved assessment has led to greater precision in teaching
- the quality of provision and pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT)
- the school's success in promoting community cohesion

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. About a fifth of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English, although this proportion is below average. About twice the national average of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have some form of language learning difficulty.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are included in the Reception classes. There is a privately managed play group operating from the school site which was not inspected by the team.

The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status.

The new headteacher joined the school eight days before the 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

2

Main findings

Calton Infant is a good school. Over the past three years standards have risen and pupils' progress has quickened, especially in writing and mathematics. When children start in Reception their skills and knowledge are below the expected levels for their age; by the time they leave for junior schools their attainment is above average. These results are due to the good quality of provision and effective leadership and management. The new headteacher has made a resolute start and within the space of a few days has renewed the ambition and drive of all staff and the governors.

Development planning is based on accurate and rigorous school self-evaluation so that the priorities for school improvement are well chosen. Prospects for continued improvement are good because everyone, staff, governors, parents and carers and pupils, pull together to make the best of every opportunity to improve.

There are a number of other key strengths in the school, which parents and carers acknowledged in completing their questionnaire.

- Pupils behave well, they have good relationships with each other and the staff and are enthusiastic workers.
- There is an interesting and fun curriculum. Provision for ICT has improved well and basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are promoted securely in other subjects.
- Care, guidance and support are effective in ensuring equality of opportunity and the elimination of any form of discrimination. The school is also effective in its work to safeguard all pupils.
- Community cohesion is promoted well and pupils have a strong sense of their own community and the lives and cultures of others elsewhere in the United Kingdom and across the world.

Inspectors judge most things in school to be good. There are three main exceptions, but nothing is problematic.

- Attendance is average. Nearly all absence is due to childhood illness. The school has substantially reduced the number of holidays taken in term-time which was identified as a relative weakness in the 2007 inspection report.
- The use of assessment to support learning is satisfactory and improving, but it is not yet consistent across all classes and subjects. This is one of the two key areas within this report identified for improvement.
- Governors work soundly to support and challenge school leaders to ensure best quality education and pupils' rapid progress. There is a well-structured development plan already in place that emphasises the improvement of governors' strategic leadership.

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

The other area for improvement identified by inspectors arises within areas of the school's work that are judged to be good. While teaching quality and pupils' progress are both good, they could be better; the school's aspiration is for these to be outstanding. At present, pupils have too few opportunities to discuss their work together and to decide how to manage it. Much of the work is directed closely by the staff, although in the Early Years Foundation Stage there is already good practice in giving children ample opportunities to make choices and decisions and to plan the approach to their own activities. Progress in Reception is good as a result, and is accelerating quickly. The school has set itself the target to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in their assessments and recognises that greater independence in learning should increase the challenge for all pupils, and hence, raise attainment further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to show independence in learning.
- Achieve a finer balance between adult-directed work and that where pupils show initiative and independence of approach.
- Raise the amount of time pupils spend together planning their learning
- Give more emphasis to problem solving and investigation.
- Make sure every opportunity is taken to maximise the challenge in the learning tasks.
- Strengthen assessment to support learning.
- Ensure pupils have ample time to talk to each other about their learning targets before they start work.
- Give them more chances to discuss the success or difficulty of the work as the lesson unfolds.
- Give more opportunities for the pupils to review the progress made in the lesson and identify the main points for development in the next lesson.
- Add thoughts about the next steps in learning to the teacher's comments when marking work.

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

The school has a good track record in improving attainment. Reading standards are above average and most pupils talk confidently and eloquently in lessons about their work. Whenever they read, whether from books, the computer screen or from displayed work, they do so fluently and accurately. Pupils have good strategies for unscrambling unfamiliar words. The quality of writing is good in books, with accurate spelling and reasonable neatness. Pupils have good number skills and can explain their workings clearly. By the end of Year 2, most have the arithmetic skills necessary for junior school. The school has increased its expectations of more able pupils and is working successfully to increase the proportion that reaches the higher levels in assessments, especially in writing and mathematics. There are things that can be done still to reach these targets, as the key area for improvement in pupils' independence in learning

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

shows. Pupils have good skills in design and technology and show flair in drafting, manufacture and evaluation. Their skills in ICT are improving well and are at the expected level by the end of Year 2.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their improved attendance. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their good behaviour and enthusiastic attitudes to learning. Pupils are polite and friendly. Their good behaviour and smiling faces create a welcoming environment. They especially enjoy weekly 'Golden Time' activities where they are rewarded for good work and behaviour. They feel safe in school and say all the adults take good care of them. They enjoy raising money for various charities such as Children in Need, and conscientiously undertake their roles as school councillors. Inspectors agree with senior leaders that pupils could be even more involved in school life and learning. Pupils enjoy being part of the local community and happily take part in the Gloucester Carnival. Pupils' good academic progress and personal qualities prepare them well for later learning.

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
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?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

Lessons are taught well and pupils' learning is improving, although, in the school's eyes this is not yet totally successful. Occasionally a few pupils become a little restless when the adults talk for too long or control the work too much. When given opportunities to make decisions and choices and to talk about their work, the pupils rise to the event and show clearly their reliability and competence to work independently. Nonetheless, lessons are mostly brisk, purposeful and productive sessions where pupils enjoy learning. Teachers plan well and have good subject knowledge. The contribution of teaching assistants is good in ensuring, for example, that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as the other pupils. The use of assessment to support learning has improved since the previous inspection, and teaching is now planned more precisely to provide appropriate activities for pupils of different ability. Staff are rightly determined to consolidate the use of assessment into a consistent system that sets greater challenge, encourages pupils themselves to evaluate their work and provides valuable insights into the next steps in learning.

All pupils, whatever their background or specific needs, are welcomed into the school. Each pupil is known and valued. Clearly targeted support for all pupils has resulted in improved attendance. The key to the good progress that the most vulnerable pupils make is the sensitive care they get from all staff and in particular from the learning mentor, who makes them feel secure and happy. Adults go the extra mile to ensure every child's needs are met and work hard to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

The curriculum is well planned to provide the necessary balance between work focused on the development of basic skills and coverage of all other subjects. The themed approach shows well in classrooms, where displays celebrate work as diverse as pupils' knowledge and appreciation of space, Alice down the rabbit hole and Muslim faith and culture. The curriculum is enriched well, particularly through Friday 'Golden Time' which is the source of great enjoyment in learning.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

During the interim period between the previous and present headteachers the school was led and managed capably. Its existing strengths were sustained and some improvements made. The new headteacher has quickly grasped the key strengths and areas for improvement, despite the break to routine imposed by a snow-related school closure. Her own high expectations are respected and welcomed by staff, parents and

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

carers, governors and pupils. Everyone in school is determined to make the school stand apart as one of the best. The quality of partnerships with parents and carers and with local businesses and other agencies is good. These partnerships usefully support the development of good educational provision and pupils' equality of opportunity.

Governors have responded well to the raised expectations nationally of their work. Their business is conducted efficiently and purposefully. They are building the skills and confidence to hold school leaders to account for pupils' success and to set out a convincing and appropriate strategic plan for school improvement. They ensure that the school meets the current statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils, promoting equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting community cohesion. There is improved frequency of reviews and updating of policies, and financial management is secure.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a central strength of the school. Provision in Reception is innovative, includes some outstanding features and is planned very successfully to provide the same good quality approach in all six areas of learning. Children's learning is monitored with precision and their next steps charted carefully. In response, children enjoy their time in Reception and are keen to do well. In lessons, they are confident learners and not afraid to talk about what they like and do not like and to make choices. The activities provided for them, such as planning a party and devising their own number rhymes give them great scope to develop initiative and

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

independence in learning. However, the school acknowledges the need for more focus on problem solving in Reception, especially to improve children's mathematical development.

The outdoor areas are well equipped and are used appropriately to broaden children's experiences, although snowy weather reduced the amount of outdoor work during the inspection. The Forest School initiative is used effectively to develop children's adventurous, inquisitive and exploratory approach to learning. It also allows them opportunities to take 'guided risks' which are very well supervised and risk-assessed. The leadership of Early Years Foundation Stage is effective in ensuring children have fun in learning and make good progress. By the end of Reception most children reach the expected learning goals.

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

With very few exceptions, parents and carers hold positive views of the school. In their comments, a very small number of parents were concerned about the job-share arrangements for teaching in Year 2. Inspectors judge teaching to be good in Year 2, which other parents and carers recognise. The inspection team also identified that the school monitors Year 2 teaching and learning as rigorously as for the other years. All parents and carers say the school keeps their children safe and that it is well led and managed. Whilst a few parents and carers say their children do not enjoy school, this was not apparent during the inspection. Virtually every parent and carer says they are happy with the school's work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Calton 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 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 174 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	62	10	27	3	8	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	25	68	12	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	46	18	49	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	46	18	49	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	70	9	24	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	46	18	49	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	49	18	49	1	3	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)	17	46	16	43	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	43	19	51	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	46	18	49	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	43	18	49	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	46	17	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	54	15	41	2	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 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 pupils' 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 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Calton Infant School, Gloucester, GL1 5ET

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. You were very helpful and polite and talked happily to us about your learning.

We think your school is good and that it has a number of strengths:

- You reach above average standards because you make good progress.
- You are well behaved and enjoy school.
- You are taught well and your lessons are often fun.
- Children in Reception settle well in school and are keen to do well.
- Your new headteacher has lots of ideas to help you learn even more.
- Your school is led and managed well.
- It is improving all the time.
- Your parents and carers agree you go to a good school.

We have listed two areas where your school could be improved:

- You could be given more chances to decide for yourselves how to complete your work.
- Your teachers could give you more time to talk to other pupils about how well you are doing.

We know you will help your teachers to make these improvements. You can do this by sharing your ideas with your teachers about the things you find hard and those you find easy. You could also talk about what you like and do not like about your school. Tell your parents and carers too.

We wish you good luck in your school work.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.