

Carrant Brook Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115750
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338656
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Savory
Headteacher	David Forster
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work and looked at its improvement plan, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 39 parents and 115 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and the progress they make as they move up through the school
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals with a particular focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how consistently well teachers check the progress of different groups of pupils in each year group and how well they inform them about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in sustaining improvements in the outcomes for all pupils.

Information about the school

Carrant Brook is similar in size to other junior schools. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few are at the early stages of learning English. Relatively few pupils come from disadvantaged homes and the proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. There are an above average number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly related to moderate learning difficulties.

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

Carrant Brook is moving rapidly in the right direction under the clear direction of its effective headteacher. Very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, he inspires staff and pupils to get the best out of themselves and others so there is a very real sense of working together as a team. Pupils are right to be proud of their school and relish all it has to offer. The school has continued successfully on its journey of improvement since the last inspection.

- Results in national tests are steadily improving and have risen sharply in science. All groups of pupils make good progress as they move through the school and their attainment is above average.
- Sensitive and watchful pastoral care ensures that by the time pupils leave in Year 6 they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school.
- There are exemplary systems in place to monitor the progress of individuals and groups of pupils as they move through the school. This, together with highly successful interventions, ensures that few pupils fall behind.
- A very positive atmosphere permeates the school and relationships are exceptionally strong. Consequently, behaviour is impeccable and pupils have a high regard for both their class-mates and for the adults who work with them.

Pupils achieve well not just because teaching and learning are good, but also because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and 'aim high'. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, give clear explanations and plan their lessons well. They use questioning in lessons skilfully to promote learning and to analyse and improve pupils' performance. Consequently, pupils are very well motivated, come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. Teachers mark books and set targets for improvement carefully and regularly. As a result, the advice teachers give to pupils as to how to improve their work is very effective and pupils are clear as to the next steps in their learning. In a minority of lessons, learning is held back because teachers do not always ensure that pupils are given sufficient time to work independently and to talk about their findings. Sometimes, tasks set in lessons do not provide maximum challenge for all pupils. Despite their great enjoyment of school, pupils' attendance is average. This is because, against the very strong advice of the school, many parents take their children away for extended holidays in term time, and this holds back their learning.

There is a strong sense of teamwork and pride in what has already been achieved, coupled with a total absence of complacency. School self-evaluation is accurate. Most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey of

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improvement. This, together with the successful action leaders have taken to ensure attainment continues to improve since the last inspection, means the capacity to further improve is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better in the overwhelming majority of lessons by:
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class
 - making sure that there is a sharper match of work to pupils' different abilities.
- Improve pupils' overall rate of attendance so that it is consistently 95% or better by working even more closely with parents to reduce the number of term-time holidays.

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

Pupils enjoy their learning, build confident key skills and benefit from a 'rounded education' right from the moment they start in Year 3. As a result, their progress is good and improving, with pupils working at levels above those expected for their age throughout the school. Pupils begin school with broadly average attainment and make good progress. They respond well to the challenges they are presented with. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, all groups of pupils made rapid progress in solving multi-step problems and really enjoyed the challenge of the task. Pupils worked speedily and accurately within the time limit set and accomplished a good amount. They acted confidently to identify clear learning gains in their ability to solve problems and to spot often-made mistakes. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or difficulties make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy, because of the good support they receive.

Pupils have a very good knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and take plenty of exercise; they do not always carry this knowledge through to their dietary choices. Pupils have an excellent understanding for their age of how to be safe in the community. They eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in the wider life of the school and their locality. Pupils are very well informed about other people's needs, particularly due to the school's strong and imaginative themed 'citizenship weeks' and growing links with a similar school in Spain. They relish responsibility and this is shown through the mature attitude of the school council, the use of school prefects and the pupils' eager participation in imaginative and thought-provoking assemblies. Pupils develop impressive social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. This, together with above average attainment in basic skills, means that they are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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	1
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 quality of teaching is overwhelmingly good and outstanding in some lessons. However, the very best lessons were not spread evenly through the year groups and the most effective teaching is concentrated in Year 6. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable and create a well-ordered and calm environment. Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them make sense of their learning. Teachers enjoy very warm relationships with pupils and manage behaviour very positively. In the small number of lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not plan adequately enough for the range of abilities in the class, with the result that a minority of pupils are either not challenged enough or they struggle to comprehend. Occasionally, teachers talk too much, which limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning. This results in slower progress and less time to articulate what they have learnt. All teachers confidently carry out termly assessments of pupils' work enabling them to track pupils' progress accurately. They are becoming very effective in assessing how well pupils make progress in lessons and intervene quickly when any show signs of falling behind.

The curriculum contributes positively to pupils' good learning and personal development. There is a strong focus on assisting pupils to build basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Learning is meaningful because the school carefully plans themes with strong links between subjects. Visits and visitors

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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significantly enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world. Curricular planning does not always make clear enough the activities that will give higher attainers the opportunities they need to meet their additional expectations.

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, receive good support. Effective partnerships with outside agencies ensure that the needs of these pupils are well met. The school has good procedures in place to monitor and promote good attendance but recognises that there is more for it to do to alter the culture in which some children's education is disrupted by family holidays.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Clear sighted leadership and management are at the heart of the school's success. Leaders communicate high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. Leaders check the school's performance rigorously, offer constructive advice and training and use their highly effective teachers very well to extend and share good practice. In this way, the quality of teaching and learning is rapidly improving. A climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. Members of the senior leadership team and the subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities very well. There is no hint of complacency and there is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the many gains of recent years. In this way, the school promotes complete equality for all pupils.

The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff with all safeguarding arrangements found to be highly effective. It holds the school to account well for its work. Leaders have worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others and that a set of common, shared values is embedded in every child and so community cohesion is good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of those parents who returned the questionnaire. Almost all respondents felt that the school keeps pupils safe and helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A number of individual comments reflected the good quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors totally agree with these views. A very small minority of parents speak of concerns regarding instances of inappropriate behaviour. Inspectors disagree with these comments and found behaviour in class and around the school to be exemplary.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Carrant Brook Junior 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 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 189 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	49	18	46	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	44	21	54	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	33	22	56	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	36	19	49	4	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	44	18	46	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	38	21	54	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	36	23	59	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)	15	38	16	41	3	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	26	23	59	2	5	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	33	17	44	7	18	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	26	20	51	1	3	3	8
The school is led and managed effectively	13	33	21	54	3	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	44	16	41	4	10	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.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carrant Brook Junior School, Tewkesbury GL20 8RP

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Carrant Brook is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the really good things we found out about it.

- You behave impeccably around the school and in your classes and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult.
- You make good progress as you move through the school and your achievement is getting better all the time. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, your attainment is higher than in most other schools. This is because your teachers teach you well and you also work very hard.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work.
- Your headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to get even better.

To help them to do this, we have asked your school to do the following.

- Make sure that you are able to learn more things on your own.
- Ensure that work is not too easy or too hard but at just the right level of challenge.
- Improve attendance by discouraging some of your families from taking you out of school for holidays in term time.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead Inspector

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