

Calmore Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116049
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338713
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hills
Headteacher	Anne Neale
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of governors' meetings and school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupils' records and samples of work. The views of parents in the 56 Ofsted questionnaires returned were also considered.

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

- the impact of teaching on pupils' progress in writing, especially the progress of the more able pupils
- the quality of pupils' personal development, especially regarding pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of modern British society, and the school's contribution to community cohesion
- the quality of leadership and management, especially that of the governing body, and its impact on school improvement
- the effectiveness of the school's systems for improving pupils' attendance, especially that of the more persistent absentees
- the robustness of the school's systems for safeguarding pupils.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average infant school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Nearly all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school holds several awards including the Enhanced Healthy Schools award, the Activemark and Artsmark awards. The school shares a site with the local junior school to which nearly all pupils transfer at the end of Year 2.

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

This is a good school with a reputation in the local community for its caring ethos. It provides a good education for pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Parents value the way the school attaches great importance to safeguarding and protecting pupils, and appreciate the lengths the school goes to in order to ensure that the quality of pastoral care, guidance and support for pupils is of a consistently high order. Several parents commented about the 'excellent' care the school provides for their children and one parent stated that the reason she transferred her son from another school was Calmore's excellent reputation for ensuring the safety and well-being of its pupils.

The school is led well by a dedicated headteacher who is very respected by parents. She provides a clear vision and direction for the school and works well with staff and governors to ensure the school continually evaluates its performance effectively and implements improvements where needed. This is a clear indication of the school's good capacity to sustain improvement in the future. Parents are proud of what they believe to be a successful school. 'As parents we are extremely satisfied with the school and we are pleased with our child's progress,' is typical of their many positive comments.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding well below those expected for their age. Good teaching ensures they make good progress in their Reception Year. This is then built on in both Year 1 and Year 2 because of good teaching and good academic support for pupils, in particular for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, by Year 2, standards are above average and this is reflected in pupils' current work. Even so, standards in writing lag behind those attained in other subjects, especially where more able pupils are concerned.

Pupils say they really enjoy school. They look forward to lessons and to being given responsibilities, especially serving on the school council. Even though nearly all pupils have very good attendance records, the school has had to put in place a series of measures, including liaising with the social services, to improve the attendance of a very small core of persistent absentees. These actions have not yet had the desired outcomes and this has had a negative effect on the school's attendance figures, which are presently broadly in line with the national average.

While the school's links with a school in Uganda are helping to widen pupils' horizons, pupils' knowledge and awareness of the range of cultures and beliefs of people living in this country are less well developed.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in writing, especially the standards attained by the more able, by developing pupils' ability to use vocabulary more effectively when completing longer pieces of writing.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society by developing links with schools or other settings in Britain which display a greater ethnic diversity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

There is a caring and sharing ethos within the school which is evident amongst pupils and teaching staff, who are prepared to do that little bit extra to ensure pupils are very well cared for. This is an important factor in ensuring that pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Very good social and moral development are reflected in pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, their awareness of the needs of others and their understanding of the importance of adopting safe practices and healthy lifestyles.

Pupils are polite, well behaved and eager to do well. They say they feel very safe and that there is no bullying. They are confident that any instances of unsocial behaviour will be dealt with quickly and fairly by adults. Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are good, although this is not fully reflected in the school's average attendance rates. Pupils take pleasure in describing what they like most about school and confidently describe how they enjoy taking part in local community events. They are far less confident when involved in discussions about the multicultural nature of modern British society and this reflects a gap in their knowledge and understanding.

Pupils enjoy school and say teachers make learning interesting. Even children in the Reception classes work and play well together. Pupils in Year 1 have smiles on their faces when they join in enthusiastically with the singing during music lessons. Year 2 pupils are happy to explain how they enjoy using information and communication technology (ICT) to help with their learning in other subjects. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to try their best, and this was evident during a literacy lesson when pupils worked hard and were proud to show off the work they had completed.

By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and have been so for several years. Although pupils achieve well and make good progress from a low baseline, their attainment in writing lags behind attainment in other subjects, and this is especially the case with the more able pupils, who uncharacteristically have difficulty using vocabulary to the best effect when completing longer pieces of writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well because of the good level and quality of the support they receive.

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	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?

Teaching, which is typically good, is the key to ensuring pupils make good progress in all year groups. When teaching is at its best, lessons are very well structured and teachers use a variety of approaches to make learning really interesting. Tasks are very well matched to pupils' abilities and offer a good level of challenge. Teaching assistants and teachers work effectively together to ensure pupils needing help with their learning are provided with the level of support they need to make similar progress to all other pupils. On the rare occasions when teaching is less successful, lessons lack pace and this leads to pupils losing interest and drifting off task. When this happens, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of and this has a restricting effect on their achievement. Although the school has implemented very effective procedures to assess and track pupils' progress, the school is still in the process of developing opportunities for pupils to assess and evaluate the success of their own learning.

Curriculum planning links subjects together well while concentrating on building up skills in mathematics and English. A range of interesting visitors to the school and regular visits to places of interest, such as the local theatre, help increase pupils' understanding of the immediate world in which they live while the aforementioned school's links with Uganda are used effectively to broaden pupils' awareness of the wider world. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and ensures pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. The school provides a diverse programme of

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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enrichment activities, including a range of popular after-school clubs including golf, cricket and gardening. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their understanding of the diversity of cultures within modern British society and this limits this aspect of personal development.

The school rightly prides itself on the outstanding level of pastoral care, guidance and support it provides for pupils and this is the basis for their good personal development. Parents value the very supportive way the school looks after their children and are confident they will always be safe and very well looked after. The school works very effectively with outside agencies in order to offer a high level of care and support to families and pupils who are facing challenging circumstances, and this reflects the school's outstanding safeguarding arrangements for pupils.

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?

The school is a happy and friendly place and parents comment about the approachability of the headteacher and staff. Parents say the school regularly asks them for their views. One parent described the school as 'very welcoming' while another commented: 'The friendliness staff have shown me has made the whole experience of my son starting school very relaxing.'

The school's capacity to improve is good. The headteacher and senior leadership team display a strong commitment to school improvement. They work effectively with all staff in order to ensure that the school is not complacent and that all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. This is reflected in the curriculum and embedded in the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body provides the school with a good level of support and a satisfactory level of challenge. Although there have been several recent changes to the membership of the governing body, governors fulfill their statutory duties effectively and ensure the school offers a safe environment for staff and pupils. Individual governors play an active part in school life and are well aware of the school's strengths and those aspects in need of improvement.

The school makes a satisfactory contribution to promoting community cohesion and this is evident in the way pupils accept each other's differences. The audit that was completed to find out how well the school is promoting community cohesion revealed several strengths in the school's involvement with the local community. It also made the school aware that pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of

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aspects of modern British society are not as well developed as other aspects of community cohesion. Plans are in hand to address this.

Safeguarding procedures are outstanding and meet all requirements exceptionally well. Risk assessment systems are very comprehensive and used very effectively when required. Safeguarding policies are regularly reviewed and child protection procedures are constantly updated to include the use of modern technologies such as email and texting in order to communicate with parents, including those whose circumstances have made them hard to reach. Staff and governors receive regular training about safeguarding and child protection issues, and are very well aware of the importance of their roles in protecting pupils. The diligence with which the school supports children and families in liaising with outside agencies is excellent, especially when the school is acting on behalf of vulnerable pupils.

Effective partnerships, particularly with other schools, make a good contribution to enhancing pupils' learning. For example, well-established links with the on-site junior school provide pupils with access to a breakfast club and good outdoor sports facilities, and help to make the process of moving up to the next school easier for Year 2 pupils when the time comes for them to leave.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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

The words of one parent aptly sum up the good quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage: 'My boy comes home from school singing songs and talking about all the lovely things he has done. The staff are all friendly and you can see they want the

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best for each and every child.'

Classrooms are colourful and vibrant places designed to provide stimulating environments for children. Good leadership and management ensure that both teachers and learning support assistants keep a close check on how well individual pupils are progressing in order to ensure lessons are planned effectively. As a result, children get off to a good start during their first year at school and make good progress because teaching caters well for their needs.

Parents value the good quality of education the school provides for their children. They comment positively about the warmth and friendliness of staff and how there is always a strong emphasis on promoting children's safety and welfare. Even at this early stage in the school year, children are happy to join in lesson activities and to share and take turns. Regular visits to interesting places help build up their understanding of the world in which they live. The fact that the Early Years Foundation Stage does not include a covered outdoor area limits opportunities for children to develop the skills associated with outdoor learning and play during inclement or hot weather.

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

An overwhelming majority of the parents who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors held positive views about the school. Most parents who responded agreed with all the statements on the questionnaire. Their responses included several very positive comments. A typical example was: 'My son is really happy to go to school and even asks to go at the weekends.' Several parents commented favourably about the caring ethos of the school and an overwhelming majority thought that the quality of teaching was good. Only two parents expressed any concerns. One parent felt the school did not deal with unacceptable behaviour while another felt the school did not inform parents about their children's progress. The overwhelming majority believed the school dealt with both these matters well. Inspectors considered both these comments and judged that the school dealt with unacceptable behaviour well and informed parents on a regular basis about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Calmore 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 170 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	77	13	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	75	14	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	55	21	38	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	54	20	36	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	79	11	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	71	14	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	66	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	31	55	17	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	70	13	23	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	46	23	41	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	55	19	30	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	82	8	14	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	84	9	16	0	0	0	0

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

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.



8 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Calmore Infant School, Southampton SO40 2ZZ

Thank you for welcoming me and the other two inspectors to your school. Everyone was very friendly and we enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you all working hard in lessons. We found yours to be a good school and your parents obviously agree.

Here are some of the highlights of your school.

- Your school takes really good care of you and makes sure that you are all very safe and secure.
- Children get off to a good start in their first year at school because of good teaching.
- Your teachers try to make lessons interesting and this helps you to make good progress and reach above average standards.
- You behave well and you are very friendly, caring and polite.
- You enjoy school and you all say that you like your teachers.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school well.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- help you to improve your writing, especially those of you in top groups.
- help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from cultural backgrounds that are different to yours.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school. Remember, you can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours faithfully

Michael Barron

Lead inspector

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