

Clifford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116668
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	338857
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Sheelagh Barnes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Ruse
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	0 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including, pupils' work, records for the tracking of pupils' progress, individual education plans, school development planning and information provided to the governors. Inspectors also scrutinised health and safety policies, curriculum policies and a range of other policies and plans. They also took account of the twenty-nine parental questionnaires which were returned.

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

- how effectively assessment is linked to the planning of lessons and the information given to pupils on how to improve their work
- whether all groups of pupils including those who are potentially higher attaining make the progress they could in all subjects
- the effectiveness of the provision for children in the Reception class.

Information about the school

Clifford Primary is a much smaller than average sized school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and in some classes is well above average at around a half. The headteacher has been in post just over a year. The school has gained a number of awards including Activemark, Enquiry School and Eco-school. It is also a member of the Herefordshire commons project.

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

2

Main findings

Clifford Primary is a rapidly improving school that provides a satisfactory education for all its pupils. The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to provide an attractive, welcoming and encouraging learning environment. This is a very harmonious community and pupils contribute much to it. They take responsibility readily, behave well and are respectful of their peers, adults and visitors, reflecting the school's ethos and values. Pupils feel safe, secure and they enjoy school life, as reflected in their good rates of attendance at clubs and extra curricular activities, including the monthly village Saturday market. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are potentially higher attaining make good progress in their learning. In some areas, such as reading for older pupils, progress is extremely good. Children in Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class make satisfactory gains in the six areas of learning for their age, however, supervision requirements mean that children have to be escorted from one small room to another, or outdoors. This hinders the children's ability to make choices themselves.

Leadership is effective and has resulted in significant improvements in recent times. The school has a good capacity to continue this improvement. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The previous headteacher identified the need to improve the accuracy of assessments in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The current headteacher has continued this work and in conjunction with the local authority has rectified this. Current assessments are accurate.

Systems for assessment and tracking pupils' progress towards their targets have recently been revised. They now provide good information which is used to guide teaching and also enables early identification of those pupils falling behind or those not attaining as well as they should. Lessons are planned at the right level for pupils. All pupils are told what they need to achieve to improve and work is marked regularly. However, there is inconsistency in the levels of information given to pupils as to what should be improved. As a consequence, some pupils know how well they are doing. This is most consistently the case in science, where information is shared explicitly, but in English and mathematics, too many pupils are unsure of how well they are doing. The headteacher is now focussing on ways of bringing a whole school approach to helping pupils to better understand their next step and to embed such approaches into the school's work.

There are good arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare and safety. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a balanced diet and fitness to their health and they take full advantage of the many additional activities, sports and clubs provided.

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Morale is high and staff work well together, but the drive for improvement is most evident from senior leadership. Trends in standards are carefully analysed to focus the school's work. School targets are challenging and reflect the school's ambitions to accelerate the pace of improvement still further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Involve pupils more actively in understanding what they need to do to improve their work and evaluating whether they have been successful in achieving their objectives and goals, by summer 2010.
- Develop provision for Early years Foundation Stage so that children are able to:
 - more often choose activities for themselves from a broad range
 - take responsibility for the choices they make
 - move indoors and out to work without having to go as a whole class.
- 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

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with standards that are below those expected for their age. While teachers throughout the school provide varied and interesting activities these have not been sufficiently challenging in the past to enable pupils to make better than satisfactory progress by the time they leave school. As a result, standards attained at the end of Year 6 have been low over the previous three years. The 2009 unvalidated national test results by the end of Year 2 show that standards were below those expected nationally with some variations between subjects. Results at the end of Key Stage 2, however, showed a significant improvement on recent years. Standards attained were broadly at the expected Level 4. For these pupils, this represents rapid progress in the previous two years to attain this. Their progress in reading was very good.

Current Year 6 pupils from all groups, including potential higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good overall progress. They have already attained standards that are in line with those expected for their ages and about a third are in line to reach the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. Observations of work in books and in lessons confirm that pupils' progress is now good.

Relationships are positive between adults and pupils and a particular feature of this rapport is the mutual respect between pupils and staff. Staff genuinely care about their pupils. Consequently, pupils feel very safe in school and free from bullying and harassment of any sort. Pupils said that they know who to go to if they need any help. As one pupil commented, 'There are no unkind people here,' and another, 'This is the best school, people are nice.' Pupils have a good understanding about healthy eating

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and how to keep fit. School meals and snacks encourage pupils to eat healthily and they put this knowledge into practice. The wide range of physical activities during and after school is popular with pupils. Pupils are proud of the range of facilities they have and use. They readily take on responsibilities, such as the stall in the monthly market and are eager to be involved in decision-making. Pupils in the school council play an active role in the life of the school and enjoy assisting pupils make new friends. Pupils say, 'If we want something done the school council will organise it for us.' Attendance and punctuality are average and the school works effectively with parents, carers and other appropriate agencies to improve the attendance of all. Pupils show a great deal of interest in the world around them, their place within it and their relationships with others. They work well together to make the school a place where they are happy. Pupils are curious about the world around them and keen to learn new things. They take part enthusiastically in all the school has to offer and respect each others' needs and interests.

In view of pupils' soundly developed numeracy and literacy skills and developing responsibility for their learning, they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in 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	4
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	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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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has been significantly improved in recent times and is now good. Teachers plan work which interests pupils and so they concentrate well. They respond positively to their teachers' high expectations of behaviour and application and make good gains in their learning in most lessons. Assessment is accurate and is used effectively to plan work that is at an appropriate level to challenge all. Marking is constructive and regular. However there are inconsistencies with the way teachers involve pupils in understanding what they need to do next to make their work even better, and in enabling pupils to evaluate for themselves whether they have done all they could in lessons or completed their targets.

The curriculum is imaginative and is having a positive effect on pupils' personal development and behaviour. It has a particularly well-thought out programme for social and emotional development. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience a range of visits and visitors to the school. Residential visits and partnerships with others, in particular, add variety and interest to pupils' learning and the development of their social skills. Well-devised topics and special events, such as tournaments and activities with other local schools, enhance pupils' learning. The school is particularly good at incorporating the use of the outdoor area for sport, gardening and developing ecological awareness.

Pastoral support for pupils is good so they feel safe within school and pupils in need of additional support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well catered for. All relevant safeguarding procedures are in place and are rigorously reviewed. The school provides a welcoming learning environment in which all pupils are valued. As a result, pupils are confident and happy at school.

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?

The headteacher's ambition and drive have been central to many of the significant improvements. She has high expectations of staff, who respond well and ensure pupils are well cared-for and make good progress. A commitment and belief that all pupils can succeed are at the centre of the drive to raise standards and successfully promote equality of opportunity.

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The school works well with partners, particularly the local authority and other local schools, whose support has been crucial in improving the quality of provision. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciative of the many improvements. The school makes a very good contribution to the local community, effectively utilising opportunities such as the monthly village market. However, it has not yet systematically analysed and evaluated the impact of its more recent links with the wider community and other communities across the globe, such as in Sweden and Timbuctu.

Governors are very supportive. Governors regularly visit the school, meet with parents and evaluate key areas of provision, including ensuring equality of opportunity. Governors also ensure the school's good safeguarding procedures, policies and practices are sufficiently rigorous. However, they rely heavily on the school to provide and interpret data about how well pupils are progressing and how the achievements compare to those attained nationally and so this limits the challenge they can provide. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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	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

Early Years Foundation Stage

There have been significant improvements to the provision for children in the Reception class since the previous inspection. Sensitive induction procedures and good links with parents help the children to start learning as soon as they arrive in Reception. Progress is satisfactory and in some sessions it is good. A major factor in this is the caring and supportive environment which staff create, giving children just the right amount of help but also encouraging them to take part. A major inhibiting factor in the provision is in the accommodation and resources. Much has been done to improve these and the

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outdoor area is attractive and welcoming. The indoor space is cramped, however, and this makes it difficult for the teacher to organise things in such a way as to give children the opportunity to select equipment for themselves or to put it away.

Progress is satisfactory and a significant proportion of children meet the expected level in the six areas of learning when they enter Year 1. Progress in children's personal and social skills is particularly good due to well-established routines, good relationships with all staff and consistently high expectations. Good levels of day-to-day care ensure children are well looked after and a high priority is given to their safety and security. As a result, children behave well and are keen to make the most of the opportunities for learning and play. They share well and sustain their concentration with the activities provided.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and often good. Adults interact with children skilfully and the programme of study is well organised to enable children to learn suitably across all areas of learning. There is good awareness of the need to achieve a balance between activities that adults direct and those that the children can choose for themselves. However, opportunities for children to develop responsibility for their learning are limited.

The leader of Early Years Foundation Stage has an accurate knowledge of the strengths of the provision and what needs to be done to improve it still further. The drive for improvement has already raised standards from inadequate to satisfactory and there are good plans to ensure this improvement continues.

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	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents responded to the questionnaire were generally very positive with many commenting on how supportive they found the school. One parent commented, 'We are particularly impressed with how children of all ages play and work together.' This reflected the views of many. Many parents commented on how happy and settled their children are in the school. This reflects the good relationships between the school and parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clifford 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 inspection team received twenty-nine completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 62 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	72	7	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	45	13	45	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	62	9	31	0	0	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	18	62	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	52	11	38	0	0	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	55	12	41	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)	16	55	7	24	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	52	12	41	0	0	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	34	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	38	14	48	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	66	7	24	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	48	22	48	0	0	1	3

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.



4 October 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Clifford Primary School, Clifford, Herefordshire, HR3 5HA

Thank you for making us so welcome and for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school recently. I particularly want to thank those pupils who gave up time to talk to me. Clifford Primary is a satisfactory school and it has a number of good features. Your attitudes and behaviour are good and you work hard in lessons. I think you get on really well with each other and many of you learn new skills by being on the school council or being buddies for other children. You have a super range of clubs and do a lot of exciting and interesting things. However, many of you could make even more progress in your learning and your teachers can help you with this. I have asked your teachers to give you more precise information so that you know exactly what each of you needs to concentrate on improving next. I have also asked for teachers to help you to know when you have completed a target, so that you can move on to the next one to learn even faster. Your teachers have been working hard to make your school better and better. A lot of work has been done to make the outside area for Reception really attractive and a nice place to play. The two very small rooms make it difficult though, for things to be put out so that the children can choose equipment or learn to put it away. It is also difficult for children to choose to be outside if others want to be inside, as their teacher can't see around corners. I know your headteacher and governors have plans to make all this easier and I have asked them to do all they can so that the Reception class has a big enough space and the children can go inside and out to work and play. I wish you all the very best and hope that you will help your teachers to make sure that your school continues to get even better.

Yours faithfully

Sheelagh Barnes

Lead inspector

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