

Chasetown Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132731
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	341332
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Alan Lemon

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Norman
Headteacher	Linda James
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. 15 lessons were observed, taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, a group of pupils, a governor, staff and the school improvement partner. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding pupils, the progress pupils are making in their learning, the school's evaluation of its work and 10 parental and carer questionnaires as well as questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

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

- how effective leaders have been in setting challenging targets which produce a high rate of progress in learning
- whether the strengths in teaching seen by leaders are embedded and result in high quality learning
- what the evidence is for sustained school improvement, prompting leaders' evaluation that pupils' achievement is outstanding.

Information about the school

In September 2009, the school's age range was changed from 5 to 11 to 7 to 13 years. The pupils on roll are nearly all boys and White British in heritage. All of the pupils have, or are being assessed for, a statement of special educational needs which identify behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A third of pupils are identified by the school as having learning difficulties associated with literacy and numeracy. Nearly half of the pupils are receiving help from a range of support agencies. The school has Healthy School status, the Information and Communication Technology Quality Mark, the International Schools Award and recognition as a Dyslexia Friendly School.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school's improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Notable improvement has been made in developing further provision in information and communication technology (ICT) and additional support for pupils who have difficulties in literacy. Good partnerships, with other schools and community groups in particular, increase the interest and enjoyment in the curriculum for the pupils. Moreover, nearly a half of the pupils are enabled to return to mainstream schools and the school has been successful in ensuring it is a cohesive community.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their attainment is broadly average. However, the pupils are capable of more and the expectations of them are just satisfactory. Most of the time, the pupils are calm and co-operative and only very occasionally were a few individuals seen to be disruptive. The pupils come to lessons on time and prepared to settle quickly to work. They feel safe in school and this has a positive impact on behaviour. The staff's consistent support for pupils improves the pupils' well-being and enjoyment. The good engagement with parents and carers is helpful in this respect. However, the staff's expectations of the pupils are not always high enough, especially given the pupils' positive disposition to learning. The potential for pupils to manage responsibilities, be independent and contribute is not well exploited.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory rather than of the high quality thought by the school's leaders. While leaders monitor teaching regularly, this has not led to any significant development in teaching and assessment. The teaching seen during the inspection in music, French and design and technology lessons was outstanding because of superb subject knowledge, very lively activities, high expectations and pace. However, teaching in most other lessons was satisfactory because planning was rudimentary, the pace was pedestrian and pupils were only moderately engaged by their activities. Here, the use of assessment was not strong, especially at the end of lessons in summing up with the pupils what they had learnt. Pupils are set targets in their individual education plans and they also have class targets. However, they are not familiar enough with either of these and do not understand how their targets can help them to make progress. Leaders set school targets for pupil outcomes, based on national benchmarks, and track these targets by analysing data collected from teachers. While the data indicates pupils make good progress, this level of progress is not confirmed by the satisfactory progress observed in lessons or the satisfactory progress indicated in pupils' workbooks.

The school's leaders' hold high ambitions for the school and its pupils. However, the ambition and the improvements driven by it have not translated into the outstanding success the leaders believe they have achieved. This is because school self-evaluation,

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while an integral part of leadership and management, is not focused sharply enough to highlight constructively strengths and weaknesses. This insufficiently sharp focus restricts any greater scope to build upon key strengths and tackle the weaknesses in teaching. As a result, the school is held back from increasing its capacity to improve further by the limited rigour of its self-evaluation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers make sure pupils know their targets
 - pupils clearly understand the link between their targets and their work
 - pupils know what progress they are making towards targets and what they should do to improve their work
 - pupils have opportunities to learn independently and to take on greater responsibility for themselves and each other.
- Improve teaching by:
 - using assessment effectively to raise teachers' expectations of pupils and increasing the pace of learning
 - developing teachers' skills in helping pupils to evaluate their learning and progress.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making self-evaluation more accurate through increasing the rigour of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and assessment
 - building on the strengths of and tackling the weaknesses in teaching and assessment.
- 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**

Pupils arrive prepared to learn, coming into lessons on time and settling quickly to work. In a third of the lessons seen, in which teaching was either good or outstanding, pupils' willing co-operation and interest was used effectively to promote learning. Year 6 pupils, working closely together and with sustained effort in a music lesson, performed increasingly elaborate rhythms with percussion instruments and read music symbols. In French, pupils spoke confidently and enthusiastically. They used their good knowledge of French to ask for ice creams in a well-formed sentence and varied the number and flavour. Such high level of excitement and enjoyment in learning is the exception. In most lessons, not nearly as much was expected of pupils and learning was ordinary and occasionally dull, affecting learning in English and mathematics in particular. Nevertheless, while engagement was not strong, pupils remained co-operative and, in

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the majority of lessons, made satisfactory progress. The standard of work in pupils' English and mathematics books confirmed their satisfactory progress over time.

Pupils feel safe and are helped in this respect by the school's concern to promote their safety. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. They do not experience problems with bullying, but do comment on the very occasional, challenging behaviour by a few individual pupils. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and willingly contribute in school doing small jobs and they also raise money for good causes.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3

How effective is the provision?

The small amount of outstanding teaching combines high expectations and well-honed approaches to learning. As a result, progress is rapid in these lessons. Otherwise, the expectations of pupils and the challenge in their work are mostly moderate and very occasionally too low. In all lessons, pupils make a satisfactory effort with work and sustain concentration. Nevertheless, where too much lesson time is taken up by the teacher talking, there are too few opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and learn independently. Occasionally, teaching assistants help the pupils too much by

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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writing for them or strongly prompting answers. The use of assessment is satisfactory in planning pupils' work and setting them appropriate targets. However, it is not always used effectively to help pupils evaluate their learning or use their targets to improve their work. Marking, in particular, often offers too little constructive advice for pupils.

The broad range of work and activities offered to pupils creates interest and enjoyment. The provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT contributes satisfactorily to preparing pupils for secondary school. Recent initiatives are sharpening the focus of support for pupils experiencing difficulties learning literacy, as well as additional support aimed at challenging higher-attaining pupils. An aspect of the good partnerships with local schools, schools abroad and community groups is the extended opportunities pupils have for sports, cycling and a wide variety of cultural experiences.

Pupils are cared for by the staff, which is reflected in safeguarding arrangements, family support, the strong links with several external agencies supporting pupils, and in the steps taken to improve attendance. Those parents and carers who met inspectors, or who returned questionnaires, expressed very positive views of the care the school takes of their children. The preparations for pupils to move to new schools are well managed. Behaviour is managed satisfactorily. However, pupils are not always given sufficient support and guidance for them to develop higher expectations with regard to their behaviour or their independent learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's leaders have focused their ambition and have driven improvement in several areas aimed at broadening and strengthening the school's work. Improvement in the provision for ICT has resulted in the school gaining a Quality Mark. The additional small group work offered to pupils identified as having specific learning difficulties has earned external recognition. These and other developments are beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, the monitoring and evaluation of lessons, while satisfactory overall, has not always been sharp enough to highlight the parts of teaching and assessment that could be strengthened. Nevertheless, all pupils have equal opportunities to satisfactorily develop their skills and interests. The governing body has kept pace with the work of the school through the information provided by the school. Governors are supportive of the school. However, they are not always in a position to challenge the school sufficiently because they do not have regular engagement with

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staff, pupils and other stakeholders.

The school stays in close touch with parents and carers by ensuring they are kept well-informed about the school's work; their views are considered and they are welcomed into school. Such positive engagement has been instrumental in the school's success in reducing absence over several years. The good leadership given to safeguarding pupils ensures procedures are embedded, the staff are well trained in protecting pupils, and strong links with agencies sustain the effective coordination of safeguarding measures. Leaders have taken good stock of how the school promotes community cohesion, which has helped it to focus in this respect both locally and further afield. Links with schools in Europe, India and Australia have gained the school the International School award.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	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	3
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	3

Views of parents and carers

A very small minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires and the few who did expressed positive views of the school. No concerns were raised. All the parents and carers who responded are happy with their child's experience at school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chasetown Community School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspector received 10 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 55 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	4	40	5	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	7	70	3	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	4	40	6	60	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	5	50	5	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	6	60	4	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	50	5	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	50	5	50	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)	5	50	4	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	70	2	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	80	1	10	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	60	3	30	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	8	80	2	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	80	2	20	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chasetown Community School, Burntwood, WS7 3QL

Thank you for your warm welcome during our visit to your school. Thanks also to the group of pupils who met with an inspector to talk about their views of school. As a result of our inspection, we judged your school to be satisfactory.

This is what we found out about your school:

- you are making satisfactory progress but if all your lessons were as lively and demanding as in music and French your progress would be much better
- while you have targets to help you make progress, you are not familiar with them and they do not help you as much as they should
- teaching is satisfactory but your lessons would be better if you were helped to understand your progress and given advice on how to improve your work
- your behaviour is satisfactory as you are settled and co-operative in lessons but this would be better if you had more opportunities to support each other and the school
- your school keeps in close contact with your parents and carers and this has helped to maintain your regular attendance
- good links with other schools provide you with some enjoyable sports and different activities.

Your school could be more effective if:

- you were helped to use your targets more effectively and were given more opportunity to learn independently and be more responsible for yourselves and each other
- teaching was improved so that many more lessons were challenging and enjoyable
- school leaders and staff gave more attention to what needs to be improved in lessons and ways of making these improvements.

The school should raise its expectations of what each of you can achieve, and you can help by responding to this positively and making sure that you know and do your best to attain your targets. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alan Lemon

Lead inspector(on behalf of the inspection team)

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