

Cledford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135567
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	341671
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Littler
Headteacher	Mr Gareth Elswood
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons, observed 11 teachers and spent approximately 65% of the inspection time looking at learning. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment information about pupils' progress, governors' minutes, safeguarding arrangements, and policy and planning documents. They also analysed 147 questionnaires received from parents and carers, and responses from 103 pupils.

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

- the current attainment and progress of all pupils and especially of girls, pupils entitled to free school meals, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and Traveller pupils
- the effectiveness of teaching in accelerating attainment and progress in English
- the effectiveness of school's strategies to improve attendance
- the rigour and accuracy of leaders and managers in evaluating the school's work.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, although the school has a much higher than average percentage of pupils from Gypsy/Roma heritage. Very few pupils speak English as a second language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below that found nationally. The school opened as Cledford Primary School in January 2009 as a result of the amalgamation of an infant and a junior school. Construction of a new building is underway and currently the school is housed in the old infant and junior schools on two sites, 180 yards away from each other. A new headteacher and acting deputy headteacher took up their posts when the school opened in January 2009.

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

Cledford is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. This welcoming school provides a stimulating environment in which pupils learn and play together well. Under the dynamic leadership of the headteacher, the school has successfully completed a complex amalgamation and building work is well underway so that the entire school can be housed on one site. Governors, staff, parents and carers, and pupils all share the same vision to ensure that Cledford rapidly becomes a good school. Outcomes for pupils are currently satisfactory overall. However, attainment is rising and pupils' progress is accelerating throughout the school.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and an increasing proportion of teaching is good. When teaching is satisfactory, teachers spend too long at the start of lessons explaining and demonstrating what pupils are to learn and do. In good lessons the pace is brisk and pupils learn much more independently. Marking is conscientiously done but does not always help pupils to improve their work. Children are happy and settled in the Early Years Foundation Stage and outcomes are good for most children. Provision in this stage is satisfactory with some strengths. However, children do not have enough opportunities to choose their own activities.

The strengths of the school are seen in the outstanding care, guidance and support provided and the excellent way in which all pupils feel safe and well nurtured. Consequently, pupils enjoy school. The school works hard to promote attendance, which is rising for all groups of pupils. Procedures to safeguard pupils are good and this is endorsed by parents' and carers' knowledge that their children are safe and happy. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and a positive awareness of other cultures in modern Britain. They make a good contribution to their local and wider communities. The school council is vigorous and active in planning the new school building and is working to help the school achieve an environmental award. Senior leaders are largely accurate in their self-evaluation and have set themselves challenging targets to make a difference and take the school forward. The faith of governors, parents and carers is well placed in the senior leaders who have already proven their capacity to sustain progress and improvement by the smooth completion of the amalgamation, successful of strategies to improve pupils' writing and the good curriculum which promotes learning and enjoyment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:

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- accelerating the pace of learning so that pupils access well-planned tasks earlier in the lessons
- giving pupils more guidance in marking to help them reach the next steps.
- Improve the quality of learning opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - proving detailed planning so that there are better opportunities for child-initiated activities both inside and outside the classroom.
- 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**

Most pupils have good attitudes to learning, concentrate in lessons and are enthusiastic about school. They listen to teachers and to each other with respect and get on noticeably well with each other. In good lessons pupils work well independently, in pairs or in larger groups. They enjoy their work and achieve well. Most pupils take pride in the work in their books and projects, and are keen to discuss their learning. Pupils' progress in writing is good because of the effective strategies used by the school to address this weakness. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is just a little above average in mathematics and science and is just below average in English. Attainment is rising at the end of Year 2 and the first set of published data showed that pupils were achieving above the national average in both reading and writing. The school rigorously tracks the progress of all groups of pupils and can show that girls and boys, and Traveller pupils who attend regularly make secure progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Teachers identify individual pupils in every class whose progress is slower and are implementing measures to accelerate their progress. The full effects of this have yet to be seen in improved outcomes across the school and so achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils feel totally safe in school, not just because behaviour is good and bullying rare, but also because of the excellent quality of care provided by the staff. They have a secure understanding of the importance of living healthily and enjoy plenty of sport and exercise. Although pupils' skills in numeracy and literacy are average, they are improving. These, allied to their good computer skills, strong social skills, ability to work collaboratively and average attendance, ensure that they are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently at least satisfactory and some teaching is better than that. Typically, teachers have positive, encouraging relationships with pupils and plan work which is suitably challenging. In effective lessons the pace is good, cross-curricular links are used well to add interest and purpose, and pupils show a strong commitment to achieve well. Currently, there are not enough lessons like this. Where teaching is satisfactory the pace is slower because teachers spend too long at the start of the lessons explaining and demonstrating what pupils are to learn and do. Pupils lose some enthusiasm and do not complete as much as they might in each lesson. Teaching assistants are deployed well and because of good planning and extra support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Marking is thorough and praises what pupils have done, but not enough marking gives clear advice on how to reach the next level or improve.

The good curriculum is planned well to ensure that pupils cover all that is required and tackle progressively more demanding work. Artists and poets from as far away as Kenya and Australia, and from the Travelling community, add excitement and creativity to the curriculum. Teachers have begun systematic planning for opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy across many subjects but it is too soon to judge the impact on raising standards. Topic work sustains the interest and enthusiasm of pupils. Visits and talks from different local professional people about their jobs help pupils to learn more about the world of work. The range of sporting, musical and creative activities offered at lunchtimes and after school is wide. These contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment and take-up is strong.

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The school exudes a warm family ethos. It is an inclusive and very supportive school in which pupils learn harmoniously alongside others from different backgrounds and with different abilities. Social and economic barriers to learning are systematically broken down and tackled. Families and children whose circumstances make them hard to reach are sought out, embraced and encouraged to succeed. The school's work has a positive effect on families and children. Very effective links with parents and carers, and external agencies are good. The learning mentors do excellent work in supporting families with children whose attendance rates are low. The school works extremely hard to improve attendance figures. These can fluctuate considerably when larger numbers of pupils are travelling.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3
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 whole staff team is strongly committed to ensuring that the school is delivering quality provision that enables pupils to meet challenging targets. Staff are working hard to tackle the less strong areas of learning and move the rate of progress from satisfactory to consistently good for all pupils. The targeting of specific groups of pupils identified as making slower progress is steadily helping these pupils to achieve better standards. More Traveller pupils are engaging with school and those who attend regularly make sound progress. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have introduced a rigorous system to provide an overview of pupils' progress towards targets so that prompt action can be taken when pupils are perceived to be underachieving. The quality of teaching and learning is improving.

The governing body makes a strong contribution to the school. Governors know the school well and they balance support with challenge to help the school to do even better. The school has achieved the national standard for financial management in schools. Procedures for safeguarding fully meet requirements. Risk assessments are undertaken well for activities on and off the premises and are constantly updated during the upheaval of the building work.

Provision to develop pupils' cultural awareness and promote community cohesion is good. The school has an action plan and has identified next steps and how they will be monitored. Links with other countries and other communities within the United Kingdom are being developed. The school promotes understanding of Eastern European and Gypsy/Roma culture to celebrate the diversity of the school's population. In addition to

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partnerships with agencies to support pupils' well-being, the school forges partnerships with local business and professional people to raise pupils' awareness of careers and job opportunities locally and beyond.

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	3
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	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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of provision is at least satisfactory in all aspects and is good in some areas. Outcomes for most children are good because they make expected progress in the Nursery and progress accelerates in Reception. Many enter Year 1 with skills and abilities just above average expectations for this age. Children settle happily into school routines and develop good relationships with each other and the adults who care for them. Children behave well and have good attitudes to learning; their good application and concentration enable them to make the most of the opportunities provided for their learning.

The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to good. A good focus on learning letters and sounds, as well as social development, is supported by good assessment systems. However, in order to ensure that children are consistently stimulated and challenged, planning needs to be fine-tuned. There is good direction from adults, but not enough scope for children to make informed choices and so improve their learning more emphatically through independent experiences. Outside provision caters well for children's physical development but not quite so well for their creative development. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders have a good grasp and overview of assessment and tracking, and are aware of strengths. However, they need to do

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more to improve the quality and planning of child-initiated learning so that investigation and exploration are encouraged more. Welfare requirements are met well. Parents and carers are enthusiastic in their praise of the Nursery and feel welcomed and included in their children's education.

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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Nearly all of the responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaires were very positive in their praise for many aspects of the school's work. They particularly praised the approachable and supportive staff and headteacher. A small minority raised individual concerns, but the inspectors found little evidence to support them. Several parents and carers said that they would like more notice from school about forthcoming events. Inspectors thought this was a justifiable request. Parents and carers at the Nursery lunch said how pleased they were with the Nursery and how easily and quickly their children settled.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cledford 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 147 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	49	70	48	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	76	52	68	46	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	30	89	61	14	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	35	83	56	12	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	36	88	60	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	33	88	60	10	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	36	91	62	2	1	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)	43	29	90	61	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	33	90	61	7	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	25	91	62	17	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	19	104	71	7	5	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	42	29	95	65	6	4	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	39	81	55	7	5	1	1

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.



10 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cledford Primary School, Middlewich, CW10 0DD

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the recent inspection of your school. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed hearing your opinions.

Your school gives you a satisfactory and improving education. Inspired by your headteacher, everyone is working hard to improve your standards and help you to achieve even more. Teaching and learning are always satisfactory and in some lessons you make good progress. Your writing has improved and now the school is trying to help you to reach even better standards. The curriculum is really interesting and you obviously enjoy working with the artists and poets who visit you. This is perhaps one reason why your attendance has improved in the last year.

The school takes excellent care of you and you told us that you feel very safe and secure. Your behaviour is good and you have a good understanding of the different backgrounds and lifestyles of people who live in Britain. You make a good contribution to your local and wider communities.

We have asked the school to do some things to help you to achieve even better. In some lessons we would like the teachers to let you start working on your own much sooner. We have also asked the teachers to give you a bit more advice on how to improve your work when they mark your books. We have asked that the youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes be given more opportunities to choose what activities they are going to do and whether to work outside or inside. You can play your part by listening to your teachers' good advice and attending regularly.

We wish you all every success in the future. It will be really exciting for you when the new building is complete and you all move into the same site.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Judith Straw

Lead inspector

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