

Chilton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124622
Local Authority	SUFFOLK
Inspection number	293055
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	John Godwood

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Baxter
Headteacher	Mrs E Bowkett
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2002
School address	Violet Hill Road Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 1NN
Telephone number	01449 612928
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Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is the size of an average primary school, but takes pupils from age 3 to 9. It has a large, purpose-built Nursery. When children first join the school, their knowledge and skills are often well below what is expected for children of their age. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion who have a statement of special educational need. More pupils are eligible for free school meals than is usual for a school of this size. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. A few speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school – a judgement that matches the school's own evaluation. It has good features. In particular, the school's leaders have established a good ethos, in which pupils are happy and enjoy learning. There are good links with parents, who are very appreciative. One parent commented that her children 'have been valued and nurtured and, as a result, have become confident and self-assured.' Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and are keen to participate and make a positive contribution to their school. They gain a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles.

The school has had a strong focus on improving pupils' literacy skills. This has been successful and, as a result, pupils make good progress in reading and writing. However, pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. This is because in Years 1 to 4, their progress in mathematics is satisfactory, and does not match that in literacy. The standards that pupils reach vary each year because a significant number have learning difficulties, but are below average overall. However, pupils get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage as a result of good provision, especially in the Nursery.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is much good teaching, but it is not consistently good. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and usually manage them well. In the better lessons, they engage pupils actively and give them work that matches their abilities well. However, some lessons are too slow, which leads to some pupils becoming inattentive. It is a school priority to make learning more enjoyable through linking subjects together and encouraging pupils' creativity. This has had a positive impact for younger children but is at an early stage of development further up the school. Literacy lessons are linked well to the learning of other subjects. However, in mathematics, pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve problems or apply the skills they learn. The curriculum is satisfactory overall.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils' progress is checked regularly and they have targets for their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported. Pupils who fall behind have good additional help in literacy, but not in numeracy.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher leads the school well and there is good teamwork amongst the staff. The school knows its main strengths and weaknesses well. Through effective planning it has created the supportive ethos that ensures pupils are ready to learn and, as a result, it has improved their progress in literacy. These successes demonstrate the school's good capacity for further improvement. It is aware that it now needs to focus on improving progress in mathematics and science. Subject leadership varies in quality, but subject leaders are all involved in evaluating their subjects and planning improvements. Senior staff regularly check pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, but do not make enough use of the information gathered to identify in detail the aspects that need to improve. Governors are very active and provide good support and guidance. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics to match that in literacy.
- Increase the proportion of good lessons by ensuring that pupils are engaged actively and fully challenged.

- Make more use of the information gained from monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching to highlight areas for improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage, particularly in the Nursery, although by the time they join Year 1, standards are still below national expectations.

Through Years 1 to 4, pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, and good in some respects. The school has focused particularly on improving progress in literacy, because many pupils have limited communication skills when they join the school. This has been effective and progress in reading and writing are both good. However, progress in mathematics and other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and their progress matches that of other pupils.

The standards that pupils reach vary year by year according to how many pupils have learning difficulties. At the end of Year 2, standards are below average overall. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 4, standards remain below average although they show further improvement in reading and writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and grow in self-confidence. Through careful planning, the school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' behaviour and response in lessons are usually good. A few pupils find self-control difficult but adults manage this well so that disruption is minimised. Attendance is broadly average. The school makes every effort to encourage regular attendance but some families take holidays during term time. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They have many opportunities to take responsibility and develop their self-esteem. They make a good contribution to their community as school councillors, monitors, play leaders and road safety officers. Pupils have some opportunities to manage money, and their sound basic skills give them a satisfactory foundation for their future working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and often good. In all classes teachers establish good relationships with pupils, most of whom are keen to take part and enjoy their learning. Behaviour is usually managed well. In weaker lessons, however, pupils' concentration sometimes lapses because teachers do not engage them actively enough. Most lessons are well planned so that the work meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. In many lessons, the interactive whiteboard or other resources are used well to add interest or involve pupils actively. However, parts of

some lessons are too slow and at times, pupils spend too much time listening, without enough opportunities to discuss their ideas. In the best lessons, pupils are highly enthusiastic because they think for themselves and are thoroughly challenged.

Teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils with learning difficulties. When teachers mark pupils' writing, they provide helpful guidance on how it can be improved. The marking of work in mathematics is often less helpful.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Provision for literacy is good because it is a whole school focus and there are good links between literacy lessons and other subjects. In addition, there is good additional support for pupils who are falling behind. Mathematics provision is satisfactory but does not consistently promote pupils' ability to think for themselves and there is not the same level of additional support. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are taught systematically. The school is increasingly making learning more creative through linking subjects together and giving pupils choices in their activities. This is more firmly established in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good overall, and outstanding in the Nursery. Outdoor areas are used well to stimulate physical and creative play.

There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties, those who speak English as an additional language and gifted and talented pupils. A good range of clubs and visits, including a residential visit for Year 4 pupils, add to pupils' enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides an exceptionally welcoming, well kept environment. There are rigorous procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring health and safety. Pupils feel well cared for and know who to ask for help. They are confident and happy because relationships are good. There are good links with other agencies to provide additional support for pupils who need it. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is good, except that parents are not always involved sufficiently in setting and reviewing individual targets. In all other respects, the school is very supportive to parents.

The guidance for pupils in their learning is good. Their progress is tracked regularly in all subjects. They have helpful targets for literacy and numeracy, although teachers use these more constructively in literacy. There are plans to improve the use of targets in mathematics and extend it to science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory with good features. The headteacher provides good leadership and inspires staff and pupils to do their best. Staff are well motivated and work well as a team. Parents find the school welcoming and staff approachable.

Self-evaluation is accurate and makes use of parents' and pupils' views. Good planning and consistent implementation have been successful in promoting pupils' personal development and improving progress in literacy. However, progress in other subjects has not improved to

match. Subject leadership is developing, but is still variable in its effectiveness. The monitoring of performance is satisfactory. Pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are both monitored regularly, but the outcomes are not analysed sufficiently to identify the specific areas that need to be improved.

Governance is good. Governors are often in school and know it well. They are supportive but not afraid to ask difficult questions. They guide the school well.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Chilton Community Primary School, Stowmarket, IP14 1NN

We enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome and for sharing your thoughts with us.

You told us that the school is happy and safe. We could see that this is true. The teachers and other staff listen to what you say and take good care of you. Most of you behave very well and are kind to each other. We were pleased to see how many of you are helpful as school councillors, monitors or play leaders.

You enjoy many of your lessons because teachers give you interesting things to do that are at the right level of difficulty. In these lessons, you learn a lot. Not all the lessons are as good, however. We have asked the school to try and make sure that more of the lessons are really good.

The youngest children get off to a really good start in the Nursery. You continue to make progress through the school and are well prepared for middle school. You make good progress in reading and writing. Some of you do not do so well in maths. We have asked the school to help you do as well in maths as you do in literacy.

Mrs Bowkett, the staff and the governors work very hard to make sure you are happy and to keep improving the school. For example, they are making some of your lessons more interesting through giving you more choices. They often check how well things are going. We have asked them to do this even more so that they are very clear about what could be improved.

The school has improved and we are confident that it will continue to improve. You can help by working hard to meet your targets, especially in maths. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Godwood

Lead inspector