

Clifton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117722
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	312682
Inspection date	2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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 on roll	
School	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marie Stern
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Staines
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2005
School address	Burslem Street Hull HU2 9BP
Telephone number	01482 325913
Fax number	01482 229792

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement, standards, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2; pupil's attitudes and behaviour; the quality of the curriculum; support mechanisms for pupils; health, safety and safeguarding procedures; and how leadership and management have improved the school. Evidence was gathered from: observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data, records and documents, parents' replies to the questionnaires and discussions with staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report

Description of the school

This average sized school serves an area close to the city centre where there is a high incidence of social and economic disadvantage. A far higher proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals than is usual. Most pupils are of White British heritage; around 15% have African or Asian backgrounds and a further 10% are of Gypsy/Roma heritage. Around 16% of pupils are learning English as an additional language and many of these are asylum seekers or refugees. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school population is less stable than usual with around 25% of pupils entering or leaving school during the previous year. The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Clifton Primary is an outstanding school. It provides outstanding value for money and has a good reputation within the local area. Parents have very positive views of the school. Comments received include praise for the 'friendly staff who understand the children's needs' and the 'very good progress' their children make. Excellent links with other schools and agencies result in many benefits for pupils' learning. For example, links with a local college enhance provision for physical education and sport.

Standards are broadly average by Year 6 and, over their time in school, pupils' achievement is outstanding. All groups of pupils, with a wide range of differing needs, are extremely well supported. Measures of progress in Key Stage 2 have put the school consistently in the top 10% across the country for the last three years and the top 1% for this year. The school exceeds its challenging targets. Teachers and managers use a variety of strategies to eliminate any potential barriers to learning and this is the key to the school's success. The 2007 group of Year 6 pupils started school with a much lower level of development than is typical. They left with a secure platform for their future education, equal to that seen in most schools nationally.

Major changes have been made in order to improve progress in Key Stage 1. Aspects of the excellent practice seen in Key Stage 2 have been adopted, including rigorous assessment and high teacher expectations. Evidence from lessons, books and reliable records shows good progress in Years 1 and 2. It is often excellent in reading and writing, where an added focus on learning sounds and letters is raising attainment. Standards for the present Year 2 are average, showing a good improvement on previous years when they were below average.

Teaching is outstanding. Relationships are excellent and pupils say they like and trust their teachers. There is a high level of expertise in school, including leading teachers for English and mathematics, and teaching assistants who specialise in behaviour management, who ensure excellent provision by sharing their knowledge and practices with all staff. Well trained teaching assistants make a significant contribution to learning, both in whole class and small group work. Lessons include a repertoire of techniques and activities to meet the different learning styles of pupils in each class and to keep them interested. For example, teachers include plenty of opportunities for active learning, such as short discussions or 'challenges'. The information from regular assessments is well used to plan tasks for the different ability groups. In Key Stage 1, challenges for the more able are good but not as exacting as in Key Stage 2. Throughout school, pupils are constantly encouraged to evaluate their own progress and set targets for themselves. This promotes independent learning extremely well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. They are supported extremely well by the programme of personal and safety education and there are high expectations of them as 'Clifton good citizens'. Various award systems reward good work, attitudes and thoughtful deeds. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils of different backgrounds work and play together harmoniously and new arrivals soon integrate into this friendly community. Pupils are very well equipped for life beyond primary school. Attendance is only satisfactory in spite of the school's extensive efforts to improve the situation. It is affected by a few persistent poor attenders and by families taking holidays in term time. This is a current focus for further improvement. The Positive Health in Schools and Activemark awards recognise the outstanding work done in learning about healthy living and the excellent take-up of sporting and physical activities. A popular breakfast club provides a good start to

the day, as well as encouraging good punctuality. The school council plays an excellent role in decision making. For example, they were recently involved in the selection process for key staff and have helped in the design of some refurbishment work.

Excellent attention is given to pastoral care and safeguarding procedures. Pupils say they feel very secure. Those who have emotional or behavioural difficulties are provided with excellent help and understanding so they are able to cope with the conventions of school life. Staff ensure that small problems are identified and tackled before they escalate into issues that could affect learning. The support worker for emotional well-being plays a pivotal role in caring for pupils. She forges links with families and promotes the pupils' self esteem and social skills. She is easily accessible and highly valued by all pupils. One pupil commented, 'If we feel a bit down, we send her a note and she comes to cheer us up'. Academic guidance is excellent; it is used to very good effect. Pupils have useful oral feedback from teachers in lessons. Written advice explains what they do well and what needs improving. Pupils say, 'our targets help us so much'.

The outstanding curriculum includes some innovative practices to meet pupils' needs. The 'talk project' enhances speaking and listening skills and promotes confidence very well. A partnership with other schools promotes problem solving skills and allows contact with pupils from other areas. The special intervention or booster sessions, tailored to specific learning or emotional needs, are major factors behind the school's success. Links between subjects provide good opportunities for pupils to strengthen literacy and computer skills, and consolidate new knowledge and understanding. Pupils especially enjoy their 'super learning days', as pupils described them, where work is organised around a theme, such as the recent 'India day'. A good range of extra-curricular clubs and visits provides varied opportunities for pupils to try out new activities and interests.

Management is excellent and very firmly focused on high achievement. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, provides outstanding leadership for the team of hard-working staff. All are committed to providing the best for pupils. There is no complacency in this outstanding school. Achievement has continued to rise in Key Stage 2 and standards have improved in Key Stage 1. The school has made strong headway since the last inspection. Because managers continually identify areas for potential improvement and act on them, there is excellent capacity for the school to maintain its strengths and overcome issues that arise. Governors are taking an increasingly active and critical part in managing and leading the school and are keen to attract more parent members. Although not at full strength, they bring a good deal of expertise to the task and have the pupils' interests firmly at heart. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The level of development of children on entry to the Reception class is below that typical for the age group overall. It is much improved recently, because many now have the benefits of pre-school experiences in the adjoining Children's Centre and Nursery. Joint projects with the Nursery, and a very good programme of introducing children into full time schooling, ensure that they settle quickly and make an excellent start to their education. They are taught in small, adult-led groups to develop specific skills and areas of knowledge. Alongside this provision is an interesting selection of 'free choice' activities where children practise and consolidate what they have been taught. In the present group, most have now reached the nationally agreed expectations for the age group and around a quarter have exceeded them. Children who enter

with low levels of development catch up extremely well and those who are in the early stages of learning English often make great strides in their speaking and listening skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that challenges for the more able in Key Stage 1 are as exacting as in Key Stage 2.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

3 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clifton Primary School, Kingston-upon-Hull, HU2 9BP

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your friendly school. I really enjoyed my day and I appreciated all the help you gave me and the interesting conversations we had. In return, I would like to tell you what I found out.

Clifton Primary is an outstanding school. Some of the things that impressed me most were your excellent behaviour and your willingness to work hard. You share a good sense of humour with your teachers and that helps to make learning fun. I like the way you make a check on your feelings every morning so that you can sort out any problems before work starts. One person said to me, 'I think you will check in happy' and he was correct! Your council members ensure that your views are known and they are good at putting your case forward. I know that you are looking forward to the new playground developments that they have requested.

You said that the best points about your school are lots of opportunities for exercise and sport, the treats that you earn through the awards system, and many of you like your English and maths lessons. I agree with the people who said, 'It's like a massive family' and 'The teachers look after us all'. Please thank your parents for sending lots of replies to the questionnaire. They know how much you enjoy school and are very pleased with what it offers.

You are keen to learn and take very good notice of the advice that your school gives you. Well done! This is helping you to make excellent progress. In Key Stage 2, the faster learners are really, really stretched. In Key Stage 1, they have some hard work but I think it could be harder still – so I have asked your teachers to make it so. I hope you continue to work hard with your learning and enjoy continued success.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had and for letting me share your day. Both you and the staff can be very proud of your school. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector