

Chase Terrace Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 124207 |
| Local Authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 314845 |
| Inspection dates | 23–24 January 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Ted Wheatley |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 470 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Diane Evans |
| Headteacher | Mary Hinds |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 October 2003 |
| School address | Rugeley Road Chase Terrace Burntwood WS7 1AH |
| Telephone number | 01543 510500 |
| Fax number | 01543 510502 |

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, and the proportion entitled to free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is slightly above average. Children entering the Nursery have poorer literacy and mathematical skills than expected for their age but this is better than in recent years. Pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds with very small numbers from ethnic minority families. No pupils are in the early stages of learning English.

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 fast improving school. Achievement, which has been unsatisfactory for several years, is now satisfactory and improving rapidly, and standards are broadly average. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress, a further improvement on recent performance. The headteacher has worked with determination to successfully resolve serious staffing difficulties and to put the school on a secure footing to move forward. Staff work closely together and the school has the support of the great majority of its parents. One parent, summing up the comments of many others, said, 'Pupils, parents and teachers work well together to bring out the best in our children.'

The school has rightly and successfully focused on raising standards and achievement in mathematics. In English there have also been improvements, but writing skills are still not as good as they should be, especially for some of the more able pupils. In science, despite standards being close to average, investigative skills are not good enough and some more able pupils are held back by their underdeveloped writing skills. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because the support from teachers and teaching assistants is well planned and matched to their individual needs.

The school knows what it needs to do to improve. The headteacher's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate and she gives very strong direction for improvement. The new, less experienced staff are beginning to gain the skills to monitor, evaluate and introduce improvements. Teachers generally match work well to pupils' learning needs, and provide interesting activities to engage pupils' enthusiasm. However, they do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length or to use computers to extend their learning, and this holds back pupils' progress. Many interesting visits and visitors enrich pupils' curricular experiences. However, planned opportunities to write or to use information and communication technology (ICT) to enrich pupils' learning are limited. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of out-of-school activities, especially sports.

Pupils enjoy school and the great majority attend regularly. They behave well and have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. They readily take on responsibilities. For example, some become school council members, others act as school mediators helping other pupils solve their problems. Good relationships and good personal care for pupils play a large part in their personal development. All safeguarding requirements are met and the school is a safe place. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils are increasingly aware of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Nursery and make rapidly increasing progress in Reception. The recent decline in standards has been halted, and children's personal and social skills are particularly well developed. Children work and play happily together and readily participate in all activities. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and there is a sound and improving programme of both child initiated and adult led activities. Staff are aware of weaknesses and are working on improving them. For example, they now ensure that adequate time is spent on mathematical development in the Nursery and that all six areas of learning are fully integrated into daily planning. The outdoor areas are used well, despite difficulties of

access that the school is working to improve. A new, rigorous approach to tracking and assessing children's learning is being used to match tasks to children's needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards by providing more opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum, especially for the most able pupils.
- Raise standards and achievement in science, especially in investigative skills.
- Support pupils' progress by providing opportunities for them to use ICT in all subjects.

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

The poor achievement of recent years has been reversed because of effective, settled teaching that is focused on matching work to pupils' learning needs. The impact of this is most evident in Key Stage 1, but is now starting to be seen in Key Stage 2. In mathematics especially, pupils are making fast progress with all pupils achieving well. Achievement in English is improving and standards are close to average. However, the writing skills of some pupils, most noticeably the most able, are still not good enough. This sometimes limits progress in other subjects, as well as in English. In science standards are close to average and better than in recent years, although there is some underachievement in scientific enquiry. This is because pupils do not genuinely engage in investigation.

Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well. Good support, work tailored to their needs and a sensitive approach to helping pupils are effective in improving their progress.

In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress overall, particularly in developing their personal, social and emotional skills, and reach average standards by the time they enter Year 1.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy school and say that 'lessons are fun'. They feel safe and are extremely confident that adults will sort out any problems. As a result pupils are in a good frame of mind to learn. Attendance is satisfactory and improving due to new strategies to deal with absence. Pupils behave well and exclusions are rare.

Pupils are acutely aware of the benefits of healthy lifestyles, and appreciate the healthy lunches and the many sports activities. They particularly enjoy the 'Wakey/Shakey' sessions. Pupils contribute effectively to school life, take on responsibilities and are active in the community. For example, the choir sang at the local retirement home, other pupils played drums and were filmed by the BBC, and pupils raised money for charities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Their social skills are especially good. However, their spiritual and cultural development is more limited, and particularly their awareness of life in multicultural Britain.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers get on well with pupils and manage behaviour well. They match work to pupils' needs effectively and choose interesting activities. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to give good support, especially for pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers' expectations are high and work is generally challenging for all abilities. The recently increased challenge of work is having a particularly positive effect on standards in mathematics. However, this is not yet so evident in science or writing, especially for the most able pupils. The quality of marking is sound and improving. Teachers mark work regularly, and while most marking shows pupils what to do next, this is not yet always the case.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is well organised and improving links between subjects make pupils increasingly aware of the relevance of all subjects. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning and too little science enquiry activity where pupils can plan and carry out their own investigations. In addition, not enough writing activities are provided to encourage pupils to write in sufficient detail about their understanding and knowledge.

A wide range of visits and other activities aid pupils' learning. For example, pupils visited Chasewater and undertook team-building activities, and theme weeks give pupils opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills about the environment, pottery and music. Pupils are enthusiastic about the wide range of sports activities and how physical education has improved. The school offers a very wide range of out-of-school activities that pupils enjoy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The warm, caring atmosphere of the school and the fine relationships between adults and pupils contribute significantly to pupils' good personal development. Almost all parents are positive about the care shown to their children. A small number feel the school does not always warn them of activities soon enough but this is being dealt with. Staff are committed to pupils' well-being and safety and there are clear, robust arrangements to ensure health and safety. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving with good use of assessment information to give pupils academic targets. This is starting to help pupils make faster progress, though not all pupils are fully aware of their targets or how to reach them. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good and there are good links with outside agencies so that extra support can be obtained if needed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has been the driving force behind the improvements seen in the school since she arrived. She has the considerable support of colleagues and the great majority of parents in her efforts to raise standards. She has accurately identified the school's weaknesses, especially

where there is underachievement, including unsatisfactory progress in improving pupils' writing since the last inspection. The school recognises that while it has initiated significant improvements in mathematics and some in English, there is still residual underachievement that needs to be resolved. Plans to deal with this are good. New and less experienced staff are gradually gaining the skills to play their part in improvements. The school has met some, but not all, of its challenging academic targets, and is on the way to achieving all of them. Given this position, the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

Governors are supportive and meet their statutory requirements. New governors are working hard to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their roles, but the governing body already provides a high level of challenge and support for the headteacher.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

Overall effectiveness

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|---|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | No |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| 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 | 2 |

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 | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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? | 3 |

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

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|--|-----|
| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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

26 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Chase Terrace Primary School, Burntwood, WS7 1AH

Thank you for the way you made us feel so welcome in your school. We spoke to many of you and you obviously like your school very much. What you told us about your school was really helpful.

These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You are at a satisfactory school which is quickly becoming better.
- Your progress is satisfactory and improving fast, especially in mathematics.
- Those of you in the Nursery and Reception make good progress.
- Teaching is satisfactory and improving; work is planned to help you learn and you enjoy lessons.
- Most of you behave well and attend school regularly.
- You behave safely, treat each other very well and like to take on responsibilities.
- You know it is important to stay healthy, and most of you eat healthily and take part in physical exercise.

To improve things further, we have asked the school to:

- help you do better in your work by making sure you write better in all subjects, especially those of you who are the most able
- make sure you do better in science, especially in science investigations
- help you do better in all subjects by making sure you use computers more often.

You can help by making sure that when you write you try to give as much detail about how well you understand your work as possible.

With best wishes

Ted Wheatley Lead inspector

26 January 2008

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Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector