

Cliffe Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107525
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	336900
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	David Carter HMI

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	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Marlor
Headteacher	Mrs Lindsay Lomas
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2007
School address	Stoney Lane Lightcliffe Halifax HX3 8TW
Telephone number	01422 202086
Fax number	01422 205286
Email address	admin@cliffehill.calderdale.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed eight teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its analysis of pupils' progress, governors' meeting records, development planning and monitoring, and a range of policies and procedures. They analysed 42 questionnaires returned from parents and carers alongside questionnaires returned from pupils and staff.

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

- the relationship between the quality of teaching and the impact on progress
- the effectiveness of middle leaders in supporting the work of the headteacher
- how well adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage use assessment information in order to plan to meet the children's interests and needs.

Information about the school

Cliffe Hill is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. Most pupils in the school come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Since 2008, the school has had an integrated pupil referral unit for those who have autistic spectrum conditions. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at other than the usual times is more than that which is found nationally. The school is moving to a new building in February 2011, which is being constructed adjacent to the current school. The school holds a number of awards including the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark.

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

Cliffe Hill Community Primary School is a satisfactory school which has particular strengths. It provides a welcoming and nurturing environment, where pupils receive good levels of care, guidance and support. The school is at the heart of its community and it has established good relationships with parents and carers, who value the work of the school. Pupils feel safe due to the good arrangements for safeguarding, and they behave well. They have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, demonstrated through eating healthily and taking part in the wide range of sporting activities. Some of these are provided by the school's partners, and are indicative of the good work which the school does through making links with other organisations.

Although children enter school with skills and knowledge that vary from year to year, these are typically below age-related expectations. Recent improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, however, is resulting in children making good progress from their starting points. Data show that historically pupils make satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1 and 2. Analysis of the school's data, together with lesson observations, and scrutiny of pupils work, confirms that currently pupils make satisfactory progress. This is because the quality of teaching and the use of assessment are satisfactory. Although the school collates information on pupils' attainment and progress, this is not being used effectively enough to match pupils' work to their individual needs. Pupils make better progress in reading than in writing, because they have more opportunities in which to practise their basic skills as well as apply them in work in other subjects. Although the school has recently developed a theme-based curriculum, at this stage there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a range of subjects. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. Due to closely targeted support, however, the pupils in the integrated resource unit make good progress.

The headteacher's drive, direction and challenge are moving the school forward. Since taking up her post, the headteacher has had much to shoulder in terms of leadership and management responsibility, including undertaking most of the monitoring and evaluation activities. Although these are now being shared more widely among school leaders, the contribution of middle and subject leaders in monitoring the school's work is still at a developing stage. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and there is a clear understanding of strengths and areas for improvement, but middle leaders do not always take sufficient consideration of assessment information when evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.

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Although the school has detailed plans for improvement, these are not always linked specifically to measurable outcomes for pupils. This makes it difficult for governors to evaluate the extent to which their work has been successful. Consequently, the school demonstrates satisfactory capacity for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of pupils across the school in writing by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a range of subjects
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their basic spelling, punctuation and grammar skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan lessons which match pupils' varying ages and capabilities.
- Develop the role of middle leaders in school self-evaluation and development planning by:
 - focusing classroom monitoring and evaluation more directly on outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that plans for action are linked to measurable outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that the governing body are fully involved in monitoring the impact of actions taken by the school.
- 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' overall enjoyment of school is shown in their improving attendance. Due to the good attention given to their individual and personal needs, the majority make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Across Key Stage 1 and 2, although pupils are attentive and keen to do well, they are not always challenged to achieve their best. Consequently, pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. This results in broadly average attainment by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in line with their peers.

Pupils feel safe and secure and are conscious of the safety of others. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and appreciate the benefits of a balanced diet and exercise. Pupils enjoy access to a wide range of sporting opportunities both within and beyond the school day, ranging from martial arts to cheerleading, and this is contributing to their healthy lifestyles. Pupils' behaviour is good, particularly during lessons where they listen carefully and display good working habits. Occasionally, they can become restless, for example, when they are asked to sit for too long, and

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they lose concentration. Pupils also enjoy making a positive difference to the life of their school and the wider community and have been recently involved in working with the local residents association in designing and naming the local park.

Pupils are involved in business and enterprise activities; for example, Year 6 pupils are currently undertaking a design technology challenge which requires them to demonstrate their personal and financial skills as part of a project called, 'dragons den'. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to apply their basic skills and are equipped satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Although there are opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and respond creatively in a range of subjects, at this stage they are developing their understanding and appreciation of other cultures. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is no better than satisfactory.

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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?

Teachers adopt a range of teaching styles and use information and communication technology (ICT) well in order to engage pupils in their learning. As a result of teachers

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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sharing their lesson intentions, pupils know what they are learning and what is expected of them. Pupils know their targets and what they are trying to achieve. Teachers' use of assessment information, however, is inconsistent. In the better lessons this is used well to meet the different needs of pupils but in the majority of lessons observed this was not as accurate, and expectations of what pupils can achieve are inconsistent. In some lessons, time is not always used efficiently in order to maximise learning. Despite inconsistencies in the quality of marking, in most cases this provides pupils with the information they need to improve their work.

The school has focused recently upon developing a theme-based curriculum, aimed at engaging pupils in their learning through taking account of their interests and needs. It is focused on developing key skills and this is beginning to secure some good outcomes for pupils. For example, pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. The new curriculum places importance upon the use of visits and visitors, including residential visits, in order to motivate pupils in their learning. At this stage, however, it is still developing in terms of linking subjects together and has not yet had an impact on academic outcomes.

Strengths of the school are the good care, guidance and support it provides, particularly for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. It works well with other agencies to provide good support for potentially vulnerable pupils, helping them to overcome barriers to learning. For example, this is seen in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the unit. There are good procedures in place in order to help children settle into the school, and this is continued as pupils move between classes. There are good links with local secondary schools, and pupils are involved in a range of activities and visits, to ensure that they enjoy a smooth transition into Key Stage 3.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the school has faced significant challenges over recent times. In addition to managing the school during a period of building work, as well as significant staff absence, the headteacher has worked tirelessly to ensure that the school is working towards a shared vision. Good leadership and management have established an ambitious vision for improvement to steer the school through the ongoing period of change and growth and to raise standards. The headteacher has established a team of

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middle leaders and, although their roles are clear and well structured, they are at an early stage of development in terms of monitoring the outcomes of learning directly in classrooms. The regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher has led to improvements, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although some inconsistencies remain across the school.

The headteacher tracks pupils' progress systematically. She is using this information to set appropriate targets in order to accelerate progress and raise attainment. Where differences in performance between groups of pupils have been identified, the school has put in place strategies to address this inconsistency. This is an example of the school's satisfactory approach to ensuring equality of opportunity.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors bring strong local community links that benefit pupils and their families, but they do not challenge the school sufficiently rigorously. The school communicates clearly with parents and carers through the use of newsletters and the new virtual learning environment is providing parents with access to information regarding their child's learning. Safeguarding arrangements are good and meet all requirements, successfully ensuring that the school is a safe, secure environment.

The school has a good understanding of its own community; however, its work to improve community cohesion within the wider national and international communities is at an early stage of development. The school budget is managed effectively and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

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In Nursery and Reception, children settle quickly into their learning because they are well taught and staff show a high level of care. Children mix well and learn to share, and show enjoyment in playing together. Resources are good and provide excitement and stimulation for children in their learning. For example, children were engaged in a range of activities relating to mini-beasts. There is a good balance of learning activities led by adults and those initiated by the children.

Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that vary from year to year but are less strong in elements of language and literacy. Good leadership ensures that staff work as an efficient and energetic team, providing a good range of learning activities across all areas of learning for children. Some restriction exists in the use of the outdoor learning space, however, due to the current building work, which limits the amount of available space. Nonetheless, staff manage this temporary difficulty well and have been creative in ensuring that outdoor learning is as effective as that which takes place indoors. Children achieve well so that by the time they enter Year 1, they are close to average levels in speaking and listening, knowledge of letters and sounds and reading; however, their skills in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are average. Writing skills are less well developed. Good links are developed between school and home, beginning with home visits. All staff monitor children's progress well and use this information to keep parents fully involved in their child's development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority are happy with their child's experience at the school. A few parents and carers expressed concerns regarding: how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour; how the school keeps parents informed of their child's progress; and the extent to which the school helps to support their child's learning. Inspectors found that behaviour in the school was good and that the school had clear and effective systems for managing any inappropriate behaviour. As well as organising regular evenings for parents and carers, inspectors found that the school ensures that all parents can speak to teachers on a daily basis, and that an open door policy exists, so that they can discuss their child's progress throughout the year. Although teachers provide feedback during evenings for parents and carers on how they can help their child at home, the school is developing the virtual learning environment, which it is using as a vehicle in which to share information. The school is also in the process of organising curriculum

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evenings for parents in order to demonstrate how parents and carers can support their child's learning at home.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cliffe Hill Community 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	48	18	43	3	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	55	17	40	2	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	33	18	43	9	21	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	45	15	36	3	7	2	5
The teaching is good at this school	22	52	15	36	3	7	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	36	21	50	6	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	40	22	52	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)	21	50	16	38	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	48	17	40	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	50	14	33	6	14	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	45	16	38	6	14	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	20	48	17	40	5	12	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	60	12	29	3	7	1	2

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.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cliffe Hill Community Primary School, Halifax, HX3 8TW

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. The support you gave inspectors has helped me to write the report.

In the report, I have said that your school is satisfactory overall, but it has some good features. We found that the teachers and adults take good care of you and they make sure you feel safe. Also, they work hard to ensure you and your family feel part of the school and community. We saw how much you enjoyed coming to school and spending time with your friends. You enjoy learning and playing with each other. During your lessons, you listen well and try your best. The school has planned interesting learning activities for you to do. Teachers are helping you to make steady progress, although this is better in reading than in writing. Your teachers do not always make the learning challenging enough, and you can spend too long listening to them. We saw how much you understood about being healthy and the ways you help the school through the school council. The leaders of the school are keen for you to do well. To help them we have asked leaders and teachers to work on the following areas to make sure that:

- you have more opportunities to practice your skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as write about a wide range of things so that you do really well in your writing
- your learning is never too easy or too difficult
- other leaders help your headteacher to look at how well the school is doing, especially by keeping a close watch on how you are progressing.

You can help by making sure that you always try your best and that you continue to enjoy coming to school every day.

Yours sincerely

David Carter

Lead inspector

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