

Clowne Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112532
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337955
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Jackie Barnes

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Law
Headteacher	Martin Edge
Date of previous school inspection	5 September 2006
School address	King Street Clowne Chesterfield
Telephone number	01246 810 416
Fax number	01246 813 251
Email address	head@clowne-jun.derbyshire.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

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 15 staff while visiting 21 lessons, and spent approximately one third of their time observing learning. They held meetings with the chair of governors, headteacher, staff from the school and a support agency, pupils and the local authority partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school improvement plan, the assessment and tracking system, pupils' work and the 127 parental questionnaires.

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

- the use of targets and assessment data to plan pupils' learning and progress in lessons and over time
- the expectations of progress for pupils across the ability range
- the arrangements for encouraging every pupil to have good attendance.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average school with about 20% of pupils travelling from outside the village. Almost all the pupils who start the school in Year 3 come from the adjacent infant school. The campus also includes a children's centre. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English fluently. Entitlement to free school meals is about average, as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, although a higher than usual number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has some outstanding aspects, particularly the links with parents and carers. The high level of confidence they have in the school, particularly in its leadership, is typified by comments such as, 'The staff are fantastic, always willing to listen and help,' 'I know my children are safe in school and are learning,' and 'The school gives the children a firm foundation for a strong future.' The school is welcoming and has a strong sense of community. Pupils are well cared for by staff and support for those who are vulnerable is particularly effective, aided by links with the adjacent children's centre. Pupils feel exceptionally confident that they are safe and that staff will help them should they have any worries. Behaviour is good, helped by the arrangements for the oldest and youngest pupils to work and play in close proximity. Guidance on personal development is successfully integrated into the day-to-day work of the school and works well. Pupils clearly enjoy learning and are keen to participate in the wide range of activities the school offers. They work well together in lessons, and readily share their ideas and support each other's efforts. They make a good contribution to the school community through conscientiously undertaking specific responsibilities such as being prefects or eco warriors, and as members of the school council.

Pupils' attainment when they start school in Year 3 is above average overall, although there are considerable differences between individual pupils. From their individual starting points most pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school's national test results are usually above national figures and were significantly so in 2009. Current standards continue to be above average, mainly because of good teaching and effective support. A small minority of pupils are not yet making as much progress as their peers, and occasionally the school's assessment systems are slow to identify this shortfall. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and effectively use praise and humour to make learning interesting. As a result, pupils have the confidence to contribute ideas and to ask for help when needed. Lessons are well prepared, interesting and orderly with good use of information and communication technology and clear teaching points that are well documented. The school has a regular assessment system and maintains ongoing data on pupils' attainment and progress. The effective use of assessment information is evident in choosing the groups of pupils with similar attainment who are taught together for English and mathematics, but less evident in the planning of pupils' learning and progress within these groups. Targets are in place to guide pupils towards improving their work, and these worked well in some groups. Where pupils were unfamiliar with their targets their opportunities for independently improving their work were limited. The school's curriculum promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning well. It

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meets the needs of the pupils and has a very good range of enrichment activities including sport, which has a take-up from both boys and girls. The consolidation of literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects works well in some classes, although it is not yet systematically planned for across the whole school.

The school is well led by an experienced headteacher who is exceptionally skilled at embedding ambition and developing enthusiastic teams that drive forward improvement initiatives. The school is very successful in developing cohesion within the school community, particularly promoting equality of opportunity, higher aspirations and respect for difference. Contacts with the local community are less well developed but increasing as the links with the children's centre add to work with other local partnerships. The school has a sustained record of improving pupils' attainment over several years, and an ability to manage change, such as successfully developing pupils' investigative skills in science in response to the findings of the previous inspection report. In addition to the leadership, staff at all levels are constantly reviewing the effectiveness of their work, and the leadership teams make adjustments on a regular basis. Planning for improvement is detailed, although the clarity of key priorities is sometimes lost in the wide range of planned improvements. Governors know the school well and ensure a wide range of views are taken into account when judging the school's effectiveness. Capacity for further improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all pupils are making the best progress they can, giving particular attention to:
 - developing a more comprehensive system for tracking and rigorously evaluating each pupil's attainment, progress and targets over time
 - moderating the accuracy and consistency of teachers' assessments of pupils' progress
 - clearly linking assessment information to the planning of pupils' learning and progress in lessons
 - clarifying which members of staff have overall responsibility for planning the learning and progress of which pupils
 - increasing the pupils' active involvement in their own learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils listen attentively, cooperate with adults and each other, and are keen to succeed. They are polite and well behaved. In lessons behaviour is exemplary with enthusiastic pupils who know how to make their contributions without disrupting the learning of others. The trust between pupils and adults is strong. They are clear that bullying is very rare and almost always resolved quickly and effectively. The willingness to support each other whilst being healthily competitive makes a major contribution to the lively and friendly atmosphere in school. The impact of the various leadership responsibilities

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pupils hold is evident in the confidence with which they discuss issues of democracy and make decisions about what action to take when routines are unexpectedly interrupted, such as when plumbers were working in toilet areas. Pupils of all ages are knowledgeable about green issues, and about how to stay safe and healthy, with good choices of physical activity and generally in healthy eating. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although direct experiences of being in a multicultural society are limited for most pupils. They are well prepared for future challenges as they are literate and numerate, have good personal skills, especially being able to work co-operatively, have experiences of democratic processes and are keen to succeed. Many have good attendance records, but a small number have not yet responded fully to the school's extensive efforts to encourage improvement.

Pupils' attainment overall in English and mathematics is above average and the progress made by the majority is good. However, the school's data and observation of lessons during the inspection showed that for some pupils, progress is slower. This was not attributable to any particular ability group or subject, but varied across both. The school organises pupils into groups each day for their learning in English and mathematics. Where the groups were relatively small and the level of challenge in the work was well matched to pupils' needs, such as in a mathematics lesson with the most able pupils, good and sometimes very good progress was made. However, occasionally the range of pupils' attainment and ability in a group was wide but the work and expectations were the same for all, so progress for some was not so brisk.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well overall. The progress of those who have extreme physical needs is often in very small but appropriate steps which are recorded.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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

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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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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Staff work well as a team and maintain a consistent approach to key aspects such as the good management of behaviour, the high quality of relationships and the presentation of pupils' work. Resources are well prepared and capture pupils' interest, especially when practical work is involved. A well informed and supportive team of teaching assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities which makes a significant contribution to their learning. Staff generally have high expectations and use their knowledge of individual pupils well. However, most pupils are taught by two or more teachers each day, and this requires the regular sharing of assessment information between teachers. Although staff discuss individual pupils regularly, the basic information on how well pupils are doing over time is provided by the school's assessment and tracking systems. These systems are not yet sufficiently informative to help staff plan and record the next stages of pupils' learning. As a result, the expectations for the progress of individual pupils across the ability range are not always clear or easily shared with the pupils or other staff. The school leaders are aware that assessment and tracking systems are not sufficiently comprehensive or rigorous at present and suitable improvements are planned. Although not all pupils are familiar with their targets, in teachers' marking of pupils' work there is occasional evidence of good guidance on what needs to be done to improve. Pupils respond well to this and comment on action they have taken.

The curriculum provides a wide range of activities that generate an enthusiasm for learning, and includes sufficient time for literacy and numeracy. Imaginative initiatives, such as culture weeks, provide variety and opportunity for in-depth study. Transition arrangements from the infant school and to secondary education are thorough and enable pupils to have confidence when they change schools. Within school, the transition between different teachers works well in terms of relationships but continuity of progress is less firmly established. Pupils are well cared for and have a strong voice in the school's affairs. The school gives priority to encouraging pupils to have high aspirations for their future, and extends pupils' experiences through visitors and visits, such as those to higher education institutions. Good use is made of partnerships with specialist staff to provide for those pupils with disabilities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The well qualified staff and the senior leadership team have a shared understanding of the school's priorities, high expectations and an energetic approach to school improvement. The long serving headteacher has a driving ambition for the pupils to succeed and this, together with the support of governors and staff, has resulted in the school being a popular choice for parents, standards being improved and pupils enjoying learning. Despite the high levels of movement and the limitations of the internal space the school routines run smoothly. Due attention is given to pupils' safety and safeguarding procedures are good. Equal opportunities are ensured through the curriculum opportunities, the high level of awareness of staff and the school's positive approach to raising aspirations for all pupils. A wide range of views, including those of the pupils, are taken into account when evaluating the school's effectiveness. In most respects the school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The management of teaching and learning provides good opportunities for most pupils to perform as well as they can. However, much relies on the good skills of individual members of staff, and on the teamwork which is a school strength. Although this leads to good teaching in lessons, the systems for tracking and analysing the overall impact on pupils' learning and progress are not sufficiently robust to ensure that the progress is as good as it could be for every pupil. Governors know the school well and take an active role in setting priorities. The governing body includes a wide range of expertise, and finance is carefully monitored to ensure good value for money. Community cohesion is effectively promoted within the school and increasingly in the community as further links are developed with the adjacent children's centres. Links with parents are excellent. Through the use of cultural weeks, the school leaders have already begun the further development of the pupils' understanding of their place in a multicultural society.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2
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	1

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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	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents' questionnaires show strong support for the school, particularly for the safety of their children, the teaching and leadership. Most feel their children's needs are met and are pleased with the progress they make and the standards attained. A few feel that they would like more information about how to help their children. Most parents say their children enjoy school, and the children say the same. Inspectors' findings confirm these views although not all pupils are making as much progress as they could be. There was no particular trend in the few negative comments mentioned and all were offered constructively. A very small number of parents felt behaviour was not always handled well, but this was not evident during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clowne Junior 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 inspectors received 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 290 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	80	62	42	32	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	97	75	26	20	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	77	61	46	35	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	59	45	35	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	88	68	37	28	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	54	50	38	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	53	55	42	3	2	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)	78	60	41	32	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	58	45	35	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	49	53	41	5	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	47	57	44	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	93	72	32	25	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	48	63	48	2	1	0	0

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.



19 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clowne Junior School, Chesterfield, S43 4BS

Thank you for making me and my colleagues so welcome when we inspected your school. You helped us to see how much you enjoy school and how keen you are to learn. You behave well and look after each other. You are rightly proud of your school. Here is a list of some of the things we liked most.

The staff look after you well and you feel very safe in school.

Most of you attain good standards and all of you try hard.

You have good ideas on how to make things better and staff listen to your views.

Your lessons are interesting and you pay attention.

You know how to live healthily and are keen on physical activities such as sport.

There are plenty of exciting things to do, and your teachers are always willing to help you.

The headteacher, senior staff and governors manage the school well.

There are things that can be better even in good schools and we feel that some of you could make better progress. So we have asked your headteacher and governors to make sure that every single one of you is making the best progress you can. We have asked them to look again at how they plan and check your progress, so that you have work that is not too hard but also not too easy for you. We asked especially that they show you how you can improve your own progress, and that everyone understands which teacher is keeping a check on how well you are doing and planning what you need to do next. You can help by continuing to behave well and being keen to learn.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Barnes

Lead inspector

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