

Claycots Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132089
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	341287
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2009
Reporting inspector	James Henry

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	680
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Guy Nasse
Headteacher	Mr Mario Rodgers
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with a governor, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, teachers' planning, and assessment information and school policies, including the safeguarding procedures. In addition, 75 parental questionnaires, together with those completed by pupils and staff, were analysed.

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

- the attainment and progress of the more able pupils by the end of Year 6
- the progress pupils make in writing, especially in Year 1 and Year 2
- the quality of teaching across the school, especially in writing and the level of challenge for more able pupils.
- how effectively governors and senior leaders monitor the work of the school to identify and address areas of weakness.

Information about the school

Claycots is a large primary school, with just over half of the pupils coming from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is much higher than average, as is the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average. The school won a modern foreign language award from the Spanish Embassy Education Department in 2008.

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

The major strength of this good school is the quality of care provided for pupils. The school makes strenuous efforts to support vulnerable pupils who face challenging circumstances. Through working very effectively with a wide range of outside agencies, such as parent support services and child and family social workers, the school ensures that all pupils are included and valued. The outstanding care, guidance and support results in pupils feeling extremely safe in school. One pupil commented, 'Our school is the best. Every day, I can't wait to go to school.' Another factor that enables pupils to feel safe is the good behaviour evident throughout the school. Pupils are polite, and respect each other and the adults working in the school. While attendance is average, the school has robust systems in place to encourage and, in a few persistent and challenging cases, enforce regular attendance. Some of the other factors that make Claycots a good school are:

- the good progress pupils make overall from low starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and slightly above average standards by the end of Year 6
- the good quality of the teaching, together with consistent planning and very effective marking, enables pupils to make good progress in lessons
- pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles and their regular take-up of the sporting opportunities provided by the school
- pupils' effective involvement in their school community through the work of the school council and taking on responsibilities, such as prefects and office helpers
- the effectiveness of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, supported by senior staff and governors, in continuing to improve the school.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Senior leaders have identified areas for improvement such as writing and have provided additional opportunities for pupils to write at length using focused targets. Their actions are beginning to raise standards in writing, especially at the end of Year 2. The capacity for further improvement is shown by the continuing trend of rising standards at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. However, while pupils make good progress overall, there are missed opportunities to challenge the more able and develop their ability to think and learn for themselves. Also, in planning activities for pupils of different abilities, opportunities are missed to challenge and meet the needs of all groups to enable them to achieve their potential, especially the more able pupils. Because the pupils' all-round development is good and their attainment by the end of Year 6 is slightly above that expected, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 by:
 - consistently providing higher levels of challenge for more able pupils
 - enabling pupils to develop their thinking and understanding through more opportunities to learn for themselves
 - ensuring that the planning of activities meets the needs of all groups of pupils to enable them to achieve their potential.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress in lessons and learn well. Teachers consistently share with pupils what they are expected to learn and in most lessons observed, information and communication technology (ICT) was used effectively to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. Significant factors in their good achievement are the good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning pupils demonstrate in lessons. The good range of activities in lessons results in pupils enjoying their learning. In response to the pupil questionnaire, one pupil wrote, 'I can't wait to see what we are going to do during the day.' Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because teachers' planning, along with extra support, meets their needs effectively. The inclusive nature of the school ensures that pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also make good progress. However, by the end of Year 6, more able pupils do not always achieve their potential in English and mathematics because, over time, the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 in the national tests has been below that found nationally.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are generally well below the levels typically found. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average, although attainment in mathematics and reading is generally better than in writing. However, the impact of the school's work on improving standards, particularly for the more able, led to improvements in writing in 2009, bringing the results into line with those in reading and mathematics. Standards in Year 6 have been broadly average in English and mathematics over the past few years, although there is a rising trend. In 2009, the results were above the national average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests was below the national average.

Pupils feel very safe in school. The school has good procedures for dealing with any bullying quickly and effectively. Pupils take great care to keep each other safe in the playground and around school. They are helpful and supportive of one another and their good behaviour creates a positive learning environment. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities in their school and wider community. They are involved in numerous national charity initiatives chosen by the school council. Also, links have been made with a charity in El Salvador to promote pupils' moral and cultural development.

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Pupils have a good understanding of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They eagerly take part in after-school sporting activities, with gymnastics being particularly popular. The school helps pupils to appreciate the feelings and needs of others. For example, an assembly on Remembrance Day promoted pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make lessons interesting and as a result, pupils are keen to learn and work hard. Classrooms are well organised, with good displays of pupils' work creating pleasant environments for learning. Resources are used well, particularly ICT, to engage pupils in their learning. The marking of work is a strength as it assesses pupils' understanding in lessons effectively and informs them how to move on in their learning. This is enhanced by the use of the very clear targets that are set for pupils' future learning. While the planning of lessons is consistent for the different ability groups in Key Stage 2, the more able pupils, in particular, are not always challenged sufficiently. Teachers involve pupils in their learning through question-and-answer sessions, but

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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opportunities are missed in some lessons to allow pupils to develop their thinking and understanding through learning for themselves.

The curriculum is well planned and effectively supports pupils' learning. Provision for Spanish, art and design, and design and technology, including activities such as cooking, ensures a balanced curriculum that is effective in engaging pupils in their learning. Events such as the 'Police Week', where pupils learn about their role in society, support their good personal development. Good links with a local sports college enrich the curriculum. During the inspection, for example, specialist sports coaches taught physical education sessions to pupils in Key Stage 2. A good range of after-school sporting and creative activities for pupils of all ages enhance the curriculum. These are eagerly taken up and add to the pupils' enjoyment of their education.

The level of care, guidance and support is outstanding. As a result, all pupils, but especially the most vulnerable and those in challenging circumstances, are happy, feel safe and make good academic progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's good leadership has improved the school since the last inspection. Throughout the school, there is a clear focus on bringing about additional improvements and the capacity to improve further is good. The headteacher has been well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff, and together they have continued to raise standards, particularly in writing by the end of Year 2. Challenging targets are set for pupils' progress and these are reviewed regularly by senior leaders in order to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve well. The effectiveness of the governors has improved since the last inspection. As well as supporting the school, they regularly challenge and hold the school to account for its performance. The school takes its statutory responsibilities to safeguard pupils very seriously and the school's arrangements are thorough and effective.

The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils in challenging circumstances are included and have access to the full range of educational opportunities it provides. The promotion of community cohesion is effective in giving pupils an appreciation of life in other countries through links in El Salvador. This is also reflected in their respect for and understanding of pupils who have different beliefs and cultures within the school.

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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	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	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	2
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and achieve well in relation to their low starting points. Children settle in quickly because induction procedures are thorough. The current Reception children entered school with levels that were below those expected. The school's data and inspection evidence indicate that all children achieve well. Effective support ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language are sensitively supported and achieve well. By Year 1, most children reach broadly average levels in most areas of learning but do not do quite as well in aspects of communication, language and literacy, and problem solving, reasoning and number. Teaching is good. Activities are generally exciting and well planned but when the same task is given to children of different abilities, a few children find the activity too difficult. As a result, they miss opportunities to progress at their own pace. The secure outside areas are used effectively to support learning. For example, children in the Nursery were learning effectively as they used their imagination and pretended to be part of the fire service. This activity was supported well by an adult, who developed children's language skills and confidence successfully. In the Reception classes, children concentrate and work well together. Clear records are effective in showing the good progress children make and identifying where any additional support may be needed. Children are given many opportunities to gain confidence in making marks and later developing their skills in forming letters and numbers. Personal and social skills are well promoted through a wide variety of

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activities, and the children's behaviour is good. There are good arrangements to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. All adults work effectively together as a team and have a good idea of how young children learn. Sessions run smoothly because the adults are well prepared and organised at the start of each day.

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

Although the number of questionnaires returned was quite low, parents are positive about the school. They agree that their children enjoy school and that they are very safe. The concerns raised by a minority of parents focused on the way that the school keeps them informed about their child's progress and the help that they receive to support their child's learning. The inspectors consider that the school has regular consultations with parents and that the school is willing to liaise and accommodate parents' wishes if they need any further information.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Claycots 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 680 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	64	27	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	49	34	45	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	43	34	45	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	48	33	44	3	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	35	47	38	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	32	33	44	10	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	39	41	55	3	4	1	1
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)	22	29	40	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	33	39	52	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	33	37	49	5	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	40	37	49	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	44	38	51	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	49	36	48	1	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.



11 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Claycots Primary School, Slough SL2 1QX

I am writing to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed watching you do your best for your teachers in lessons. The headteacher and all the other staff work hard to help you learn and enjoy school. The school gives you a good education and cares for you very well. By the time you leave, most of you reach standards that are slightly above those found in other primary schools.

Here are some of the good things that we found out about your school.

- You enjoy school and being with your friends.
- You are keen to learn and to do your best. As a result, you make good progress and achieve well.
- You treat each other with respect and are always willing to help around school.
- You enjoy taking part in the activities that the school has to offer.
- You are always willing to help other people in the community through supporting a number of charities.

To help make sure you do even better, we have asked the headteacher and other adults who look after you to do three things to improve standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- Give you more challenge in lessons.
- Give you more opportunities to learn for yourselves.
- Plan activities that help everyone to achieve as well as they can.

You can help by continuing to work hard and supporting one another. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

James Henry

Lead inspector

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