

Cheslyn Hay Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124189
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340514
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J Toplis
Headteacher	Sharon Maiden
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 13 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 122 parents and carers and 50 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress particularly boys, middle ability pupils and in English
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals particularly boys and middle ability pupils and how well teachers help all pupils to improve their work
- how consistently well teachers check the progress of different groups of pupils in each year group and how well they inform them about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of school leaders in checking attainment, progress and teaching, and fostering improvements in the outcomes for all pupils.

Information about the school

This school is larger in size than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils whose first language is other than English is much lower than is typically found. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly moderate learning difficulties, is below average as is the number of pupils with a statement of educational needs. There is a Nursery and two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2009.

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

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. Pupils are happy, confident and have positive attitudes towards their learning and each other. Parents and carers are supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children love coming to school. One parent summed up the views of many by saying: 'The school now has a real pride in itself.'

The school has gone through a difficult few years. It had been without a substantive headteacher since 2007. Attainment and progress, especially of boys and higher ability pupils had slipped and too little had been done to check the quality of teaching and learning. Progress on the issues identified at the last inspection had been slow. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, standards have quickly started to rise, teaching has improved and rapid progress has been made on key issues from the last inspection. She provides exceptionally strong and clear sighted leadership and with excellent support from her deputy, has begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion. She has put in place entirely appropriate measures to remedy pupils' slow progress through Key Stage 2 and has rightly identified that teachers need to be more accountable for the progress made by pupils in their classes. To this end, she has ensured that pupils' progress is now carefully tracked and interventions made when pupils show signs of slipping.

Pupils join the school in Nursery with skills and abilities that are at or just below that expected for their age. Children develop good personal skills in the Nursery and Reception classes but progress overall is slowed by lack of equipment and facilities in the outdoor area. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average and this represents satisfactory progress overall. In recent years, progress has been much slower in Years 3 to 6 and boys have made much slower progress than girls. Actions taken by the new headteacher are redressing this and all pupils in Key Stage 2 are currently achieving satisfactorily. Standards are higher in mathematics than in English, where the rate of improvement has been slower.

Lessons are typified by enthusiasm, enjoyment, engagement and good behaviour. Consequently, pupils are well motivated, come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. A minority of lessons however are taught at a pedestrian pace. Learning is often held back because teachers do not always ensure that pupils are given sufficient time to work independently and to talk about their findings nor do they always ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they have learnt in the lesson. Sometimes, tasks set in lessons do not provide maximum challenge for all pupils, particularly the high-flyers.

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Pupils' personal skills are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a high regard for their classmates and for the adults who work with them. Staff have created a school in which all pupils get on well together. Pupils' behaviour is good and is promoted by a shared set of values based on care and consideration throughout the school. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school and relationships are exceptionally strong. Despite their great enjoyment of school, pupils' attendance is average. This is because, against the strong advice of the school, a few parents take their children on holiday during term time.

The curriculum ensures that learning is meaningful and usually matches pupils' needs. Occasionally the work planned is not fully matched to pupils' capabilities. In addition not enough is done to make links between subjects clear. This sometimes holds back the development of pupils' independent learning skills. For example, it restricts opportunities for them to use initiative and curiosity in pursuing lines of research and enquiry that cross subject boundaries.

There is a strong and growing sense of teamwork and pride in what has been achieved in a short period of time. School self-evaluation is highly accurate. Most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey of improvement and this, together with the successful action leaders have taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection, means the capacity to sustain improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress that pupils make throughout the school in all subjects, but especially English from satisfactory to at least good by:
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and comprehension skills
 - making sure that at the end of each lesson, pupils have a clear idea of what they have learnt, whether they have fulfilled their personal objectives and what they need to do to improve them further.
- Build on current good practice to further improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in the overwhelming majority of lessons in all year groups by:
 - making sure that there is a sharper match of work to pupils' different abilities
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class
 - ensuring that all lessons move at a fast enough pace.
- Develop the outside learning areas for the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they are used more effectively for developing all areas of children's learning and, in particular, provide more high quality equipment to extend pupils physical development.
- Improve the curriculum by strengthening the links between subjects, in particular to enhance pupils' skills of independent learning through research and enquiry.

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- A realistic time scale for meeting these objectives is by April 2011.
 - 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

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of satisfactory and improving progress because teachers explain complicated ideas well and have rightly focused on developing pupils' curiosity and problem-solving skills. Progress is relatively slower in English because pupils are not always well enough supported to be able to explain their ideas when they have read a text, which in turn inhibits their ability to write well. The school works very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment. Detailed plans to support these groups, coupled with thoughtful deployment of learning assistants and timely interventions, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and an appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them. They have a good understanding for their age of how to be safe in the community and enthusiastically and knowledgeably explain the value of adopting healthy lifestyles and the need for exercise. Pupils eagerly take advantage of the opportunities to participate in the community and are well informed about other peoples' needs. They relish responsibility and this is shown through the mature attitude of the school council, the use of playground buddies and the pupils' eager participation in imaginative and thought-provoking assemblies. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. However, their broadly average standards in the key skills in English and mathematics, means that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stages of their lives.

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

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development through effective personal, social, and health education, and there is a good focus on using visits to widen pupils' life experiences. In particular, the arts and music are well promoted. However, the school recognises the need to plan carefully to ensure stronger links between subjects and to make planning for different abilities consistently sharp. Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils receive good support. Parents and carers agree that children are looked after well. Child protection procedures are rigorous and the care for pupils who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances is thorough and effective. Good links with outside specialists help pupils with their learning, social skills and emotional development. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong and helps them to make similar progress to their peers.

Teachers are confident and knowledgeable and create a well-ordered and calm environment. Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them make sense of their learning. Where teaching is less than effective, learning and progress are held back because:

- lesson planning does not take full account for the range of abilities in the class or build on pupils' prior knowledge, with the result that a minority of pupils are either not challenged enough or struggle to comprehend
- teachers sometimes talk too much which limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning, resulting in slower progress and less time for pupils to articulate and build upon what they have learnt by the end of the lesson.

The school has set up very thorough systems to check on pupils' progress and these are beginning to be used well to ensure that none is in danger of falling behind and to enable teachers to consistently set the next steps for each pupil's learning. They are also used well to identify strengths and areas for development in the curriculum.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3

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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 highly effective headteacher works hard to improve pupils' educational opportunities and communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff. With strong support from her governing body and middle leaders, she has set a precise path for improvement based on accurate self-evaluation and embedding initiatives which have begun to make a positive difference to pupils' achievements. Leaders are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where people need more advice and guidance. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. There is no hint of complacency and there is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the many recent gains. In this way, the school promotes equality for all pupils and makes sure there is no discrimination on any grounds.

Subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities well. They are developing their roles effectively and are actively involved in checking pupils' attainment and progress in their respective areas. The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff with all safeguarding arrangements found to be effective at the time of the inspection. Governors have not shirked from taking difficult decisions in the recent past when the school's performance has dipped. Whilst there are good features in the existing work on promoting community cohesion, in the school itself for example, the leaders are aware that some elements have yet to be developed more fully. Leaders recognise the need, for instance, to forge links with other schools in more ethnically and socially diverse areas in England and enhance other aspects of this work across the curriculum.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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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

Children settle in to the Nursery quickly, are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved. Staff provide effectively for children's welfare. In classes, children have access to a varied and stimulating range of activities which support their personal development as well as their communication, language and literacy skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff make good use of these facilities but are hampered from extending learning in the outside area. This is because there are insufficient high quality outdoor resources for the children to improve their climbing, clambering and physical skills. Despite these shortcomings, leaders ensure that the welfare and learning requirements of children are met. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Phonics (the learning of letters and sounds) are taught daily. Adults generally support children well and their explanations are clear, although opportunities are sometimes missed to develop children's mathematical skills in the outdoor area. All adults make observations of children and carefully assess their learning. However, this information is not always used rigorously enough to ensure that next steps in learning are sharply focused on children's differing needs.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of those parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments reflected the good quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to the improvements that have taken place since the headteacher was appointed. The inspectors agree with these views and also with the small minority of parents and carers who raised concerns that the school did not keep them informed well enough regarding the progress their children were making. A very small minority of parents and carers raised concerns regarding instances of inappropriate behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour in class and around

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the school to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cheslyn Hay 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 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 353 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	57	48	39	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	56	52	43	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	41	62	51	10	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	45	57	47	8	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	58	48	59	48	5	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	39	66	54	9	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	30	75	61	9	7	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)	43	35	68	56	7	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	37	70	57	7	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	27	70	57	12	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	33	70	57	8	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	43	62	51	1	1	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	45	63	52	4	3	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

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.



26 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cheslyn Hay Primary School, Walsall, WS6 7JQ

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Cheslyn Hay is a satisfactory school which is improving quickly. It has many good features and you are right to be proud of it, although there are some things that it can still do better.

Your personal development is good. You behave well around the school and in your lessons and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult. You make satisfactory progress as you move through the school and your achievement is getting better since your new headteacher arrived. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, your attainment is similar to that in most other schools. Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work. Your headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to get even better.

To help them to do this, we have asked your school to do the following:

- ensure that more of you make faster progress, especially in English so that you reach higher levels by the end of Year 6, by checking on how well you have learnt at the end of each lesson. Make sure that you are able to learn more things on your own
- ensure that work is not too easy or too hard but at just the right level of challenge
- provide good quality outdoor equipment for the Nursery and Reception classes so that children can practice their climbing and clambering skills
- make clear the links between the subjects that you study and give you more opportunities to learn more things on your own.

I am sure that you will help staff by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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