

Campton Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109441
Local Authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	337288
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Philip Mann HMI

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Bill Radley
Headteacher	Mrs Jacqueline Woodthorpe
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector for safeguarding. Her Majesty's Inspector visited thirteen lessons, observed nearly all of the teachers working with the pupils and devoted 5 hours and 20 minutes to looking at their learning. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' progress, the outcomes of the school's monitoring of its work, the school's plans for improvement, safeguarding documentation and documentation related to the provision for pupils' with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They analysed 70 parental questionnaires.

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

- The impact of teaching and learning on pupils' outcomes overall
- The use of assessment information to ensure activities fully match the needs of pupils
- The use of monitoring and self-evaluation to improve outcomes for all pupils
- The quality and effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. About a fifth of the pupils come from the village of Campton. The remainder come from military families based at the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre (DISC) at Chicksands, or from a private housing development on former military land. Pupils from the military families move house frequently. Consequently mobility in the school is very high and these pupils have often experienced several changes of school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Currently there are no pupils speaking English as a second language.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is a highly effective school with excellent capacity for further improvement. Since the previous inspection, extremely good leadership and management have driven forward many improvements. The visionary headteacher has implemented many systems and procedures to improve the overall quality of provision. The monitoring of teaching and learning is particularly rigorous. It ensures that teaching in all classes is always good and often outstanding and as a result, outcomes for pupils are high by the end of Year 4 in reading, writing, mathematics and several other subjects. Comments such as, 'I cannot fault this school at all' and 'I am more than pleased with the head and teachers' reflect the views of many parents.

The level of care, guidance and support demonstrated by staff to all pupils is outstanding. The number of pupils starting or leaving the school other than at the normal times of admission or departure is well above that seen nationally. The school is expert at managing this issue to ensure all pupils are valued as individuals and quickly make good or better progress. Teachers are very skilful at specifically targeting resources and extra support to the needs of these pupils because excellent monitoring and tracking of pupil progress means that staff possess a very clear picture of the needs of each individual. Pupils quickly grow in confidence, feel valued and demonstrate very positive attitudes towards learning. Comments like, 'The school has increased the confidence in my three children. They have all loved being there!' fully highlight the impact of this level of support.

Attendance is excellent because pupils love coming to this school. Relationships between pupils and staff and pupils themselves are extremely positive because of very high quality provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Those who start school with specific emotional needs quickly grow in self-esteem, adopt the school's very supportive code of behaviour and make rapid progress.

Teaching and learning are never less than good and often outstanding. All teachers use teaching aids and resources with imagination to engage and inspire their pupils. The pace of learning in lessons is brisk. Teachers provide very detailed feedback to pupils through very thorough marking that clearly indicates to pupils what they need to do next to improve. A good curriculum is enriched by the good promotion of community cohesion and a wide range of extra activities. Excellent planning ensures that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught particularly well. Inspection evidence confirms that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in other subjects and information and communication technology (ICT) is used appropriately to enhance learning experiences. However, teachers do not always make the best of ICT in subjects

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across the curriculum at every opportunity to develop an even more creative and imaginative approach to learning. Furthermore, opportunities are sometimes missed to further enhance pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and personal safety.

The partnership with parents is excellent. Parents find the staff easy to talk to about any issues and concerns. This is because comprehensive lines of communication exist between school and home. These facilitate the sharing of information about the progress a child is making and what is happening in school. The regularly updated 'Learning Platform' is a prime example of this. It is available to all parents whether they be at home or serving abroad, keeping them in touch with what their child is learning at school. For instance, the 'Snow Day' video compiled by teachers is an excellent example of how such a facility can be used. One parent wrote, 'The Learning Platform is an excellent way of involving children and parents outside school opening times.'

Governance is outstanding. The governing body is highly organised and works closely with the headteacher and staff to oversee school improvement for the benefit of the whole community. Self-evaluation is very accurate because school leaders and governors systematically monitor all aspects of the school's work to create a shared understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. This is then used very effectively to formulate detailed plans that lead to further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- – Further develop the curriculum to ensure that pupils have even greater opportunity to:
 - extend links between subjects to provide greater relevance to their learning
 - use ICT in a wider range of subjects and contexts
 - further enhance their understanding of healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Achievement is outstanding because all pupils make considerable progress from their average starting points when they either enter school in Reception or when they join at other times in the school year in other year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make outstanding progress from their relative starting points because of the excellent support provided for them. A trend of high attainment in English, mathematics and science has been sustained over the last three years at the end of Year 4 as a result of outstanding teaching and high quality learning in many lessons. This fully prepares pupils for their next stages in education and later life. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are outstanding as a result and confirmed by the large number of very positive comments in their responses to the questionnaire during the inspection. The recognition of pupils' achievements is a significant strength of this school. Consequently, behaviour and attendance are excellent. Pupils greatly value having a voice in developing their school through the active school council. They contribute fully to both their school and local communities through taking on

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responsibilities in the playground, contributing to the parish council's 'Village Plan' and raising money for national charities. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm and they demonstrate a good level of awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They are developing an excellent understanding of other faiths and cultures through excellent use of visitors in assemblies to cover topics such as the Muslim festival of Eid Ul Fitr.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Comprehensive planning and excellent use of assessment information ensures that tasks are fully matched to the needs of pupils in lessons. All teachers are very competent at using the interactive whiteboards to illustrate key teaching points and engage pupils in activities that reinforce new concepts whilst making learning fun. Support staff play a vital role in working with pupils with specific needs to boost levels of achievement. The breadth of the curriculum is good and fully enriched by a wide range of extra curricular activities. Excellent use is made of homework through the 'Learning Logs' to maintain pupils' interest in learning, consolidate their achievements and prepare them for

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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transition to their next school. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy through well chosen activities that fully promote personal, social and health education. Furthermore, despite some good development of ICT skills amongst pupils, opportunities are sometimes missed to really utilise the potential of technology to stimulate their creativity and imagination. Safeguarding is extremely robust and staff make every effort to provide the highest level of care to all pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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 excellent leadership and management of teaching and learning by the headteacher, supported by a very competent senior member of staff, have led to significant improvements in pupils' outcomes. This is a very inclusive school where the contributions of all are valued. Every pupil is treated as an individual and staff go to great lengths to ensure their achievements are fully recognised. The school has analysed the various needs of this diverse and continually changing school community well to promote community cohesion effectively within a national and international context. Teamwork amongst the staff is very strong and coordinators monitor their subjects methodically to identify areas for further improvement. The relationships between the staff and governors are especially positive whilst clear lines of accountability ensure no stone is left unturned to make further improvements in provision. Limited resources are used to great effect and the school provides excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision is excellent. Planning for all aspects of learning is consistent with government guidance for teaching children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All children make good or better progress from average starting points in all areas of learning because of high quality teaching and an extremely well-planned curriculum. Children have good opportunities to learn through creative play. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing the children's communication and early literacy skills. Staff encourage children in many aspects of their learning to participate fully in role-play to develop vocabulary and use of imagination. For example, children engaged in little conversations as they played in the class igloo, pretending to catch numbered fish through a hole in the 'ice' whilst snow lay outside. Number work is effectively incorporated into other areas of learning and practical activities to give relevance to children about mathematics in the world around them.

Relationships are extremely positive between adults and children and children themselves. Staff work very well as a team to jointly plan and organise an extensive range of imaginative learning experiences for all children. The level of care, guidance and support for children is outstanding and children, including those who join the classes other than at the normal points of entry, rapidly grow in confidence. One parent typically commented that, 'My daughter loves attending school and enjoys everything about it.' The ongoing assessment of the children's progress is a significant strength. All staff actively observe children's progress and diligently record significant milestones in their learning. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on careful monitoring. Excellent leadership and management have ensured that the Early Years Foundation Stage provision has continued to improve since the previous inspection.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents are very pleased with what the school provides for their child. A very small number expressed some concern about the behaviour of a small number of pupils. Inspectors found pupil behaviour to be excellent throughout the inspection. The small number of pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties respond very positively to high standards of care and support provided by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Campton Lower 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 120 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	67	22	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	61	26	37	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	44	36	51	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	46	37	53	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	57	30	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	41	40	57	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	43	37	53	3	4	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)	34	49	34	49	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	40	38	54	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	36	34	49	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	30	40	58	4	6	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	37	53	28	40	2	3	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	53	32	46	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.



15 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Campton Lower School, Campton, Shefford, SG17 5PF

I would like to thank you all for making me feel so welcome. I really enjoyed visiting your school and I was so impressed with your excellent behaviour and attitudes towards learning. You clearly enjoy being at school and enjoy talking about your experiences.

I couldn't help but notice how hard you work in lessons. This is because the teachers and other staff work very well together to make lessons very interesting for you. Many of the lessons I saw were outstanding! This is because the teachers really inspire you to learn. I was very impressed with how the teachers mark your work and tell you what to do next to improve. The success of this is shown in how well you are all doing in your writing and mathematics. You are also doing well in other subjects but I have asked teachers in the future to make more links between these to make them even more interesting. You are also becoming good at using computers and digital cameras. However, sometimes the teachers do not make best use of this equipment to allow you to be creative and use your imagination. This is something else that they are going to work at in the future. You are all developing a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and healthy but becoming a more healthy school will help you to become even better at this.

The school is led extremely well and all the staff work hard as a team to make sure that you are looked after and helped to succeed. Many improvements are as a result of your headteacher watching teachers working with you.

Thanks again for making me so welcome and I wish you all the very best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector

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