

Hetts Lane Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122496
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	380481
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Jeremy Spencer HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Crawford
Headteacher	Sarah Cahill
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2009
School address	Hetts Lane Warsop Mansfield NG20 0AS
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Age group	3–7
Inspection date(s)	6–7 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jeremy Spencer

Her Majesty's Inspector

Anthony Kingston

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, taught by seven teachers. This accounted for nine hours of inspection time. Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body and school staff. Inspectors took account of the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, including school policies, attendance data, the school development plan, minutes of the governing body's meetings, assessment data and planning documentation. Inspectors met informally with some parents and carers and scrutinised questionnaires completed by 116 parents and carers and 28 staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized infant and nursery school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. However, several pupils with additional behavioural needs have recently joined the school. A breakfast club, managed by the school's governing body, operates on the school site.

The school has gained Healthy Schools status and has achieved the Investors In People award.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school and it operates in a warm and caring environment. Pupils and their families greatly value the support and guidance received from the school. The school is not outstanding because the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are not outstanding.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Children join the Nursery with skills well below those expected for three-year-olds. Individuals and different groups of pupils make good progress in developing their reading, writing and mathematics skills as they move through the school. They leave Year 2 with standards broadly in line with those expected for their age.
- The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils make good progress over time. Teachers assess pupils' needs well to ensure that learning is at the right level for most pupils. However, on some occasions, lessons are not challenging enough for more-able pupils, particularly in mathematics. There are some examples of ineffective marking in the school. Teachers are skilled in using a range of strategies to successfully engage pupils in learning. However, boys are not encouraged frequently enough by staff to engage in activities to develop their writing skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. The school manages the behaviour of pupils with additional needs well. Disruptive behaviour rarely interrupts the learning of other pupils.
- The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. Senior leaders monitor the work of the school effectively and accurately identify areas of teaching requiring improvement. They produce clear and well-constructed action plans. Consequently, staff understand the school's priorities and have made good progress in addressing weaknesses identified in the school's previous inspection. The headteacher manages the performance of staff rigorously, sensitively and effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment, accelerate progress and improve the quality of

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teaching by:

- ensuring that learning activities provide greater challenge for more-able pupils, particularly in mathematics
- improving the quality of teachers' marking to ensure it has greater impact upon the learning of all groups of pupils
- ensuring that staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage engage boys more effectively in activities to develop their writing skills.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that their children make good progress in their learning. Inspectors agree that pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, particularly their communication, language and literacy skills and also in their personal, social and emotional development. Close links with parents and carers help children settle confidently and quickly into school routines. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because staff teach them well in a safe and stimulating environment. Although a varied range of activities is provided to support the development of children's writing skills, boys do not engage in these activities as often as girls, because staff do not encourage them to do so frequently enough. This slows the progress they make. Strong provision ensures that children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Positive relationships and high staff expectations support the good development of children's personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils make good, consistent progress in Years 1 and 2 in developing their writing and mathematics skills. Pupils make good progress in reading because the school teaches phonics (the sounds that letters make) effectively. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics.

The school tracks the progress of different groups of pupils carefully, and this enables teachers to swiftly identify if pupils fall behind. Appropriate and timely intervention and support are provided for these learners. As a result, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs, make good progress. However, the progress of more-able pupils is less strong because learning activities are not always sufficiently challenging for them, particularly in mathematics lessons.

Work observed in pupils' books indicates that pupils' achievement over time is good. Learning seen during the inspection was good in most lessons and at least satisfactory in all lessons. Pupils were observed enjoying learning and making good progress. For example, during one lesson in a Reception class, children helped a

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teaching assistant, posing as a giant, to put on clothes in the correct order. Children giggled and took great delight in the activity, while thinking carefully and cooperating with each other to solve problems.

Quality of teaching

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said they think their children are well cared for and well taught by staff. The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well over time. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and motivate and build their self-esteem skilfully and effectively. As a result, pupils show tenacity and a determination to succeed. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge across the curriculum. A suitably brisk pace of learning is usually maintained in lessons. However, on some occasions, more-able pupils are not challenged as well as they could be in lessons and their pace of learning drops. Typically, this is because they are kept on the carpet for too long, while teachers reinforce concepts they have already grasped, for the benefit of middle and lower-ability pupils.

Teachers successfully use a broad range of strategies to keep pupils engaged. For example, they frequently build in opportunities for pupils to discuss learning with a partner or with a small group during their input at the beginning of lessons. Teaching assistants provide high-quality support for learners. They were observed supporting the attention and focus of pupils very well during lessons and skilfully questioning pupils to develop and improve their understanding. Teachers mark pupils work regularly; however, there is considerable variability in the quality and usefulness of teachers' comments. Consequently, the impact of marking on pupils' learning is weak.

Teachers consistently share their expectations of children's learning at the beginning of lessons and review progress at the end of the lesson. However, teachers do not make the best use of 'mini-plenaries' (discussions about pupils' learning during the lesson) to re-focus pupils' attention towards intended learning outcomes, and assess their learning against these. Homework is organised well by teachers and supports pupils' good progress across the school.

Teachers deliver the school's curriculum effectively and make purposeful links between different subjects to consolidate pupils' understanding. Teachers also ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. For example, in a good lesson observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 discussed moral dilemmas. The teacher skilfully probed and developed pupils' understanding, allowing pupils to consolidate their thinking during moments of reflection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. All pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they feel safe in school, and all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire confirm this. Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding for their age of what could constitute an unsafe situation.

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Almost all parents and carers say that pupils' behaviour is good at the school. Discussions with pupils confirm that, although there are some incidents of poor behaviour, these are dealt with effectively by staff. For example, a group of pupils told inspectors over lunch, 'Some people mess around but only sometimes. When teachers tell them off, they always stop it.' Pupils were observed during the inspection behaving well in classrooms and in other areas of the school. They were polite and considerate of each other's needs. Pupils also behave well at the school's breakfast club and were observed by inspectors enjoying a healthy breakfast and playing together happily. The school works with partners from other agencies effectively to support those with additional behavioural needs. As a result, and when combined with good behaviour management strategies in the school, their behaviour over time is improving. Incidents of bullying are unusual. When bullying does occur, the school records the incident and responds quickly, appropriately and effectively.

Pupils' low attendance was highlighted as an issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection. The school has implemented a broad range of attendance improvement strategies. These have made a positive impact and, as a result, attendance has risen sharply. Attendance in the current academic year is only slightly below the national average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, very well supported by senior leaders, successfully builds the ambition of staff. Communication between members of staff is strong. They cooperate with each other well, feel valued and have a clear understanding of the school's priorities. These factors combine together to foster the determination of staff to continue to improve. Staff are very receptive to training and development and have responded particularly well to training to encourage the more frequent use of problem-solving activities in mathematics lessons.

Leaders and managers have well-planned strategies in place to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and improve pupils' achievement. For example, they undertake regular scrutinies of pupils' work and frequently observe colleagues' teaching. Information gleaned from monitoring is woven skilfully into the well-written school development plan, which clearly identifies when and how the impact of the school's actions upon pupils' learning will be measured. Members of the governing body are engaged in monitoring the effectiveness of the plan and provide good challenge and support to the school.

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of pupils well. Teachers carefully plan the progressive development of pupils' skills. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop their extended writing skills as part of topic work. However, opportunities for them to develop and apply their mathematics skills are less frequent. Pupils have particularly enjoyed learning about Africa and other parts of the world, and have gained an improved understanding of different cultures as a result. However, pupils' understanding of different cultures within their own country remains underdeveloped. The school has well developed plans in place to address this. The

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curriculum supports the good development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social skills.

A particular strength of this school is the caring and supportive way in which relationships with families are built and maintained. The school provides good advice and guidance to parents and carers and this is very well appreciated. One parent commented, 'The school has been very supportive to us in helping us to understand our child's needs and education.' Other parents and carers made similar comments.

The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively, particularly through its robust systems to identify and successfully close gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils. All safeguarding policies and procedures are securely in place and consistently applied. Good improvements made since the last inspection, for example, in raising pupils' attendance, and in increasing the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in writing, indicate the school's good capacity to continue to improve.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hetts Lane Infant and Nursery School, Mansfield, NG20 0AS

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. Please also pass on our thanks to your parents and carers for filling in a questionnaire about the school. We liked the way you play happily together and work hard in lessons. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing some of you read. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere, in which you all get on well together. We are very pleased to see that your attendance has improved so well since inspectors last visited your school. Well done!

The school provides a good standard of education. You make good progress in your learning because your teachers and other staff understand your needs well and make sure that learning is fun for you. Your headteacher, the governing body and other senior leaders do a good job and want the school to get even better. We have asked them to make teaching better so that you can learn more by:

- making sure that those of you who find work easier, particularly in mathematics, are given more challenging work to do
- improving the ways in which teachers mark your books, so that their comments are more useful to you and help you to understand exactly what you need to do to take the next steps in learning
- making sure that boys in the Nursery and Reception classes practise their writing skills more often.

You can all help too by making sure that you try as hard as you can in all of your lessons and continuing to come to school as often as possible, and on time for the start of lessons.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. We wish you the best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Spencer
Her Majesty's Inspector

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