

Overdale Infant School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 120021 |
| Local Authority | Leicester |
| Inspection number | 358669 |
| Inspection dates | 27–28 October 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Stephen Walker |

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 | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 270 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jayesh Daya |
| Headteacher | Philippa Maksymiw |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 September 2007 |
| School address | Eastcourt Road Leicester LE2 3YA |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed nine teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school improvement plan, the tracking system to monitor the pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation, the work pupils were doing in their books and the questionnaires completed by staff and 68 parents.

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

- Are there differences between rates of progress made by different groups of pupils?
- How effective is the teaching in engaging the pupils so that they make good progress?
- Does the balance of activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage promote the children's independence as learners?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of the senior staff developed sufficiently to drive improvements in the school?

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average infant school. It is situated in the south eastern part of Leicester and serves pupils predominantly from Knighton and Stoneygate. Over half the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with a significant number from Indian and Pakistani heritage. A third of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Over a quarter of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average.

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised through the three Reception classes. The privately run Willows Pre-School Playgroup is located on the site but did not form part of this inspection. The school has received National Healthy School Status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The headteacher provides clear leadership so that all the

- staff are challenged to provide the very best opportunities for the pupils. The large majority of staff are very supportive and are embedding the good practice in the school. The caring and pupil-centred atmosphere of the school provides a high quality environment for learning. One parent wrote: 'The school has an enthusiastic, committed and caring teaching staff who genuinely care for the children. The multicultural diversity within the school is greatly respected and celebrated so that the pupils are happy, well behaved and confident.' Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their average starting points and the vast majority attain standards that are above average by the time
- they leave the school. The structured approach to teaching key skills and the targeted support for pupils who need extra help with their learning are contributing to the good progress of the pupils. The improving results reflect the school's ambition to raise standards so that they are well above the national average particularly in writing and mathematics. The school has been particularly successful in increasing the number of pupils, particularly girls, who gain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. A key challenge for the school is to ensure that more boys gain the higher levels in these subjects. Results in writing are slightly below those in reading and mathematics. Pupils' skills in problem solving in mathematics are not yet fully developed.

The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support greatly promotes pupils' good personal development. They enjoy their time at school and develop into friendly, polite and responsible individuals. The behaviour of pupils is good and this contributes to a positive ethos for learning in the school. They feel very safe in the school and have a good understanding of issues relating to safety.

There is a positive atmosphere in lessons and pupils enjoy the experience of school and learning new things. A key challenge for the school is to further raise the quality of teaching in order to support the accelerated rates of progress for the pupils. In a small but significant number of lessons there are insufficient opportunities for independent work so that pupils take more responsibility for their learning. Learning outcomes are not sufficiently clear and teachers do not always check understanding or involve pupils in the next steps in their learning. The curriculum is good and the school uses partnerships and visitors to enhance the educational experience for the pupils.

Staff are very attentive to the expected targets for the pupils and the need to ensure at least good progress during their time at the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and realistic. The headteacher and senior leadership team are well aware of the strengths and

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areas for development. Strategic planning is good and there are clear actions for improvement. Parents are given regular information about school events and the progress of their children. The effective leadership of the school, the improving record of pupils' progress and the clear strategies for improvement indicate that this school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve learning by :
 - providing more creative opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills
 - developing pupils' skills and expertise in problem solving in mathematics
 - encouraging more boys to gain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure that all teachers:
 - develop in pupils the skills they need to become independent learners
 - ensure that there are clear learning outcomes which are closely linked to the activities in the lessons
 - check pupils' understanding during the lesson and involve them in the assessment of work and the next steps in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' current work shows that most of the pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Pupils are attentive and display an enthusiasm to do well. They enjoy learning and make good progress in their lessons. For example, Year 2 pupils were fully engaged in their practical work in mathematics and made good progress when they were using containers and water to measure capacity. The rigorous tracking system identifies underachieving pupils, who then receive appropriate support through a range of intervention strategies. The school is presently providing additional small group support in Years 1 and 2 which is accelerating the progress of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in line with others. Pupils from White British backgrounds also make good progress in their work. The school is very successful in supporting pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Indian and Pakistani pupils make the same good progress as other pupils, particularly when they gain confidence in their language skills.

Pupils are proud to be part of the school and develop positive personal characteristics. Attendance is above average and reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. Most pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles, and demonstrate this through eating healthily, and readily taking part in outdoor and sporting activities. Pupils raise money for a range of charities and make a good contribution to the local community by supporting local projects such as the Area Safety Plan with the local council. The school council is active in supporting improvements in the school, such as providing playground equipment. Pupils are fully involved in the school recycling which develops their respect for the environment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and

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they show respect and sensitivity towards each other. The multicultural nature of the school enables pupils to develop a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils' basic skills and ability to work with others are developing well. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 2 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

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

How effective is the provision?

The positive relationship between teachers and pupils encourages pupils to enjoy their learning and make good progress. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and want to do well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants both in whole class and smaller teaching groups. In the best lessons, teachers plan a range of interesting activities and have high expectations of the pupils. As a result, pupils display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. In a few cases teachers do not encourage pupils to become independent learners so that they can take greater responsibility for their own learning and as a result in a small number of lessons, the learning outcomes are not clear and are not sufficiently linked to the activities. In a minority of cases teachers do not always check pupils' understanding and involve them in the assessment of their work and their next steps in learning.

The school places a high emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy, which supports pupils' good progress. The new topic approach in each year and the curriculum focus days are increasingly showing the pupils the links between the different subjects and

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bringing learning to life. The school makes good use of practical activities which greatly motivate the pupils and help them to develop greater understanding of their work. All pupils develop their information and communication technology skills well. There are numerous visitors to the school including representatives from the local community as well as creative arts workshops which provide additional experiences for the pupils. A number of visits, including those to Knighton Park, Leicester Botanical Gardens and Wicksteed Park in Kettering, provide good enrichment for the curriculum.

The pastoral care for the pupils is outstanding because there are extremely effective systems of individual support for all pupils, including those who are vulnerable or have difficulties with learning. Parents and pupils confirm that they are confident that any issues or concerns are addressed promptly and effectively. There are rigorous procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and following up absences. The school is very successful in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as pupils who speak English as an additional language. Excellent working relationships between the school and external agencies benefit pupils, ensuring their social and learning needs are met through effective programmes. The nurture group provides outstanding support for pupils who need extra help with developing their confidence and social skills. First rate arrangements support a smooth transition to the local junior school.

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 and senior leadership team provide a strong impetus for driving improvements in the school. Team members and subject leaders are developing their roles so that they are increasingly effective in fulfilling their planning, support and monitoring responsibilities. Teamwork provides a focused approach to promoting good standards of behaviour, enjoyment in learning, high levels of care and attainment for all pupils. Despite the success of these approaches, leaders occasionally miss opportunities to seek the views of the wider group of staff about how improvement might be achieved in the school.

Members of the governing body are well informed of the school's progress and areas for development. They are very supportive of the school and are effective in their evaluating and monitoring roles. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. The governors regularly check that all practices and procedures fully meet health and safety requirements. There is a strong commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all which ensures that the school is fully inclusive in integrating pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds.

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The school has good partnerships with the pre-school settings, the local junior school, community groups and the University of Leicester. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion and this has a positive impact within the school. The school has been proactive in arranging assemblies and open sessions for parents to celebrate the different faiths and religious festivals within the local community.

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 make a good start to their education because of the well-planned provision, high quality of care and the consistently good teaching. They make good progress and most enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge which are at least in line with the expected levels, and many are above. Staff in the Reception classes provides a secure and nurturing environment where children learn quickly and happily. Structured activities are having a significant impact on their personal development as well as encouraging number and language skills. The children develop their social skills, behave well and learn to share and cooperate with each other. They show tremendous curiosity and enthusiasm as they enjoy the different activities. They are developing good speaking and listening skills and they understand how to play safely. Many of the activities are adult-directed and child-initiated activities are not yet fully developed to encourage more independent learning.

Teachers keep detailed records of children's skills and use this information to match the activities well to the full range of learning needs. Children also keep a record of their experiences which they share proudly with parents and carers. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is created by good organisation and leadership. The teachers and teaching assistants work extremely well together so that there are clear expectations of the children. The spacious accommodation is used well to support the learning of the children although planning does not include sufficient activities which use the outdoor learning

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environment. Good procedures ensure seamless transitions from the pre-school settings and to Year 1. There is regular liaison with parents and carers, who speak very highly of the care and support the school provides for their children.

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

All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are very positive about the work of the school and its impact on their children's learning. Parents emphasise the caring approach of the staff towards their children. A number make detailed comments on the dedication and commitment of the headteacher and staff. A small minority of parents suggested that the school does not take account of parents' suggestions or concerns. The inspectors found that established procedures ensure that parents can raise concerns and put forward suggestions for improvement. Overall, the extremely supportive views of the parents and carers reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Overdale Infant 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 270 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 51 | 75 | 17 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 48 | 71 | 20 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 40 | 59 | 28 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 45 | 66 | 19 | 28 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 49 | 72 | 17 | 25 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 43 | 63 | 23 | 34 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 33 | 49 | 31 | 46 | 1 | 1 | 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) | 30 | 44 | 23 | 34 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 37 | 54 | 27 | 40 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 29 | 43 | 26 | 38 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 28 | 41 | 33 | 49 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 38 | 56 | 27 | 40 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 49 | 72 | 17 | 25 | 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 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 | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



29 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Overdale Infant School, Leicester, LE2 3YA

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school and for talking with us during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to meet you during the playtime and lunchtime. Your school is a good one and your parents are very pleased with the good start you make in your education. There are many positive things about your school.

You enjoy school and make good progress in your lessons.

You are friendly, polite and well behaved.

You show kindness and respect to others.

You have a good understanding of issues related to safety and healthy lifestyles.

The teachers and the support staff care greatly for you.

Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and exciting.

You have extensive school grounds and well organised play areas.

You have a good headteacher.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do the following things to make the school even better:

- by providing more opportunities for developing your skills in problem solving in mathematics and writing across all subjects
- encouraging more boys to gain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics
- ensure that all teachers continually check your understanding during lessons and encourage you to take more responsibility for your learning.

We would like to wish you success in your future education. Keep working hard so

- that you make the very best progress in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector

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