

Sandiacre Cloudside Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112702
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357170
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Davis

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Waring
Headteacher	Lydia Lastowiecki
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2008
School address	Stanton Road Nottingham NG10 5DE
Telephone number	0115 9392263
Fax number	0115 9396079
Email address	info@sandiacrecloudside.derbyshire.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons and observed eight teachers. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and representatives from the local authority. They looked at tracking and performance data, governors' minutes, pupils' work and numerous policies, guidelines, plans and reviews. The questionnaire responses from 58 parents and carers, together with those from pupils were also analysed.

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

- what does assessment information reveal about the learning and progress of pupils in current classes and, in particular, are the most able pupils doing well enough
- how successful have leaders been in identifying and addressing underachievement
- how embedded is the use of assessment in lessons, and do pupils know how to improve their work and reach their targets?

Information about the school

Sandiacre Cloudside Junior School is an average-sized school serving an area on the Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire border. A very small minority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also small. There are no pupils currently at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. A new deputy headteacher has been in post since September 2010.

The school has achieved the Healthy School and the International School bronze awards.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 1e(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is, therefore, given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to accelerating pupil's progress, raising their attainment in English and mathematics and improving the effectiveness of the governing body.

Sandiacre Cloudside Junior School is not providing an adequate quality of education to meet the learning needs of its pupils. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment have been low and rates of progress have been inadequate. Pupils' progress has been well below expected levels, particularly for the most-able. The school is at an early stage in beginning to turn this situation around so that teaching and pupils' progress are now satisfactory. Pupils' achievement remains inadequate, however, because the quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to raise standards. Pupils are keen to learn in lessons and, when provided with interesting and appropriate tasks that provide opportunities to contribute fully, they make good progress. Some good and outstanding teaching was observed during the inspection and, as a result of senior leaders' drive for improvement, this good practice is being shared and is now resulting in an improving quality of teaching. Teaching is not yet consistent across the school and, as a result, the pace of learning is sometimes too slow, with pupils not having enough opportunity to contribute their ideas and develop independence. Questioning does not challenge or probe pupils' understanding and some teachers are failing to use assessment information effectively to provide appropriate individual challenge. As a result, pupils say that sometimes work is too easy. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have made inadequate progress in the past but carefully targeted support means that their progress is now satisfactory.

As a result of the good care, support and guidance they receive, pupils' personal development is good. Adults lead by example and warm relationships are evident throughout the school, resulting in positive attitudes to learning and pupils showing care and consideration for each other. Pupils feel safe and well looked after, are confident to talk to visitors, and are polite to adults and each other. Their behaviour is consistently good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well cared for and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable are well supported through, for example, a nurture group. The school has been successful in promoting improved attendance, which is now broadly average and pupils are developing their interpersonal skills well. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are, nevertheless, insufficiently developed to secure pupils' future economic well-being.

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The satisfactory curriculum is enriched by visits and special days such as 'Egyptian day' and 'Victorian day', when the pupils enjoy dressing up and gaining active experience to make their learning memorable. However, the school has recognised the need to develop the curriculum to provide more opportunities for pupils to write for a specific purpose, to produce extended pieces of writing and to develop problem solving in mathematics.

The school has formed strong links with its feeder infant school to provide transition arrangements that enable pupils to settle quickly. Senior leaders have successfully promoted this partnership to address the previous underachievement in Year 3 and, as a result of shared teaching and moderation of assessment across the two schools, pupils in this year group are now maintaining their rate of progress.

The headteacher is passionate about the school, has overcome recent staffing difficulties and has been rigorous in ensuring that she is now well supported by a strong new senior team. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and, together, have identified the school's priorities for improvement. Clear strategies are now in place to drive this improvement, including the establishment of a common marking policy, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning with the support of the local authority and focusing training on identified weakness. Teachers are now held closely to account for the progress of their pupils and are working as a more cohesive team to drive improvement. The governing body has insufficient understanding of the work of the school to be able to challenge and support leaders effectively. Governors have not been sufficiently involved in monitoring or evaluating the school's performance or been involved in strategic planning. As a result, the effectiveness of the governing body is inadequate. This has been identified, rightly, by senior leaders and is a key focus in the school's improvement plan.

Senior leaders are rigorous in their analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils to ensure equal opportunities and are now identifying and addressing underachievement more successfully and this is resulting in improving progress for all groups. As a result of recent improvements, notably in the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and attendance, and the drive of the new leadership team, the school is judged to have a satisfactory capacity to sustain this improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate rates of progress by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that at least 65% of teaching is good or better by July 2011
 - using assessment information to plan lessons that meet the individual needs of pupils, particularly the most-able
 - using questioning more effectively to probe pupils' understanding, particularly the most-able
 - increasing the pace of learning in lessons, ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to contribute and to develop independence.
- Raise attainment in mathematics and English, particularly that of the most-able, by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to apply their understanding to problem solving

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- providing increased opportunities for pupils to write for a purpose and to produce pieces of extended writing.
- Develop the role of the governing body by:
 - providing opportunities for its members to gain first-hand experience of the work of the school by visiting classrooms and working closely with curriculum co-ordinators
 - developing their monitoring and evaluation role to involve them more closely in strategic planning and to enable them to effectively support and challenge the school's leaders.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils enter Year 3 with attainment that is above the national average with a high proportion of pupils in the highest ability range. By the end of Key Stage 2, over the past three years their attainment has fallen despite a slight rise in 2010, and is significantly below national levels with a particularly low proportion of pupils attaining the highest levels in English. As a result, progress has been inadequate over this period. Progress in lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory and the school's careful monitoring of progress across the school over the past year shows that rates of progress are now beginning to accelerate. For example, leaders have re-arranged the grouping of literacy and numeracy classes and all pupils have regular booster sessions on specific topics to reinforce their basic skills. It is too early, however, for this to have had a measurable impact on pupils' attainment. Pupils with lower-ability those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are generally supported well and are now frequently taught in small groups for numeracy and literacy. In these groups they make good progress and establish secure skills and understanding. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and the very few pupils of minority ethnic heritage make satisfactory progress.

Pupils say that bullying is rare and effectively dealt with. They enjoy opportunities to take responsibility, including through the school council, who raised their concerns about the safety of a wall on the school site and as a result it was removed. They are proud of their success in raising money for charity, including Children in Need. Older pupils support younger ones as buddies when they enter the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy, including the importance of a healthy diet and drinking water, and enjoy swimming regularly in the school's pool and the variety of opportunities for physical exercise, including 'wake and shake.' Pupils develop a good spiritual understanding through opportunities to think and reflect during lessons and in assemblies. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and have high expectations of how pupils should behave. They work well together in pairs and groups and help each other as a matter of course. Pupils have a good understanding and respect for different beliefs and enjoy opportunities to forge relationships with children in other countries.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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
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	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

Good relationships are evident between teachers and pupils. Lessons are generally well structured, learning objectives are made clear and tasks well explained. Teachers manage behaviour well and pupils respond to instructions quickly as a result. Where the pace of learning is too slow, teachers talk too much, keeping pupils on the carpet for too long, missing opportunities to enable them to contribute or to make decisions that will enable them to develop independence. Questioning is often superficial so that teachers cannot evaluate how well pupils understand or provide additional challenge to encourage deeper thinking. In the best lessons, pupils are engrossed in active tasks that are fun and exciting and offer opportunities for creativity. A common marking policy now includes clear success criteria for each task and opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress. Assessment is beginning to be used more effectively to support learning in lessons so that pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

Provision for the development of literacy and numeracy skills has improved in recent terms. Increased emphasis is given to the development of key reading skills and reading books now capture the interest of boys more effectively. There is ample opportunity for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their work across the curriculum. French is well established and well taught across the school and this is enabling pupils to communicate with children from a French school by e-mail.

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Opportunities to learn through topics that link together a range of subjects are being developed to help enliven pupils' learning experiences.

The school's caring ethos is evident. Induction into Year 3 is good. Pupils benefit from the fact that teachers already know their needs. Sound arrangements are in place to help pupils to transfer confidently to secondary schools. Parents express their gratitude that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well cared for and for the increased confidence that their children show as a result of the nurture group. External agencies are used well to support pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties and the care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, is a strength of the school; external support is well recorded and evaluated so that pupils receive the support they need.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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 new leadership team is ensuring that all staff are now committed to driving improvement, by involving them closely in planning, ensuring their understanding of assessment data and using it to plan for the different abilities within each class. They have worked in partnership with the local authority to raise the quality of teaching and to enable groups of pupils to receive additional help. The governing body is supportive of the school and statutory requirements are met. However, procedures for checking the school's performance, both through the analysis of performance data and through focused visits to see the school at work, lack sufficient rigour. As a result, the governing body is not providing sufficient challenge to the senior leaders of the school. Relationships with parents and carers are positive. They are kept informed through weekly newsletters and through text messages. Parents are welcomed into the school to discuss concerns and improving communication is beginning to provide them with a clearer view of their child's attainment and progress. Safeguarding practice is robust. All policies are in place and appropriate although they could be more clearly personalised to the school's context. Health and safety practice, including in the swimming pool, is followed and staff are suitably trained. The school promotes community cohesion well. It is a cohesive community where respect is fostered strongly. Pupils enjoy learning about their local community, for example the history of the local area and the variety of religious beliefs within the community and there is an increasing focus on international communities as a result of links with France and Kenya.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming response of the small minority of parents and carers who completed questionnaires was positive, with 100% saying that the school keeps their children safe. A few parents felt that they were not sufficiently involved in their children's learning, and that the school did not listen to their concerns. Inspectors found that the school is improving methods of communication and striving to involve parents more closely in its work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sandiacre Cloudside Junior 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 196 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	34	32	55	5	9	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	50	28	48	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	43	31	53	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	48	29	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	48	29	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	41	31	53	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	36	36	62	0	0	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)	20	34	32	55	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	36	30	52	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	40	31	53	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	29	35	60	4	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	31	38	66	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	47	28	48	3	5	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.



24 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sandiacre Cloudside Junior School, Nottingham, NG10 5DE

Many thanks for the welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited the school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. We particularly enjoyed hearing your beautiful singing during assembly.

Although the school cares for you well so that you feel safe, we have asked the school to improve its performance so that you learn better and make quicker progress so that your basic skills in literacy and numeracy increase. Your behaviour is good and we were impressed by the care you show for each other and the confident and polite way you speak to adults. You told us that you enjoy lessons that are fun and appreciate opportunities to be creative, but we found that teachers are not giving you enough of these experiences particularly in extended writing. Some teachers talk for too long so that you do not have enough opportunity to contribute your ideas or to make decisions about how you work. We also found that sometimes teachers do not provide work that matches the different abilities in a class so you find the work too easy. You make a good contribution to your school and local community and show a good deal of understanding and respect for the beliefs and cultures of others.

The leaders of the school work hard to make sure you continue to be safe and cared for and that you develop well as young people. We have asked them to make sure that they provide opportunities for you to develop problem solving skills in mathematics and to make sure that you all make good progress in all your lessons. You can all help them by continuing to work hard and attending well. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis

Lead inspector

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