

Overdale Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120022
Local Authority	Leicester
Inspection number	379935
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Jo Curd

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	344
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hannah Jefferies
Headteacher	Gwyneth Cubison
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2009
School address	Eastcourt Road Knighton Leicester LE2 3YA
Telephone number	0116 2883736
Fax number	0116 2883800
Email address	admin@overdale-jun.leicester.sch.uk

Age group	7–11
Inspection date(s)	8–9 November 2011
Inspection number	379935

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 17 lessons taught by 15 different teachers. Discussions were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at plans for lessons, data showing pupils' attainment and progress, documents relating to safeguarding pupils' health and safety, the school development plan and local authority reviews, along with 161 questionnaires from parents and carers, 324 from pupils and 27 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well are leaders and managers monitoring and acting to improve provision and outcomes, especially in mathematics?
- To what extent do differences in support lead to different outcomes for pupils with more profound levels of need (supported at the level of 'school action plus') compared to those with relatively less profound needs (those supported at the level of 'school action')?
- Since the last inspection, to what extent have opportunities improved for pupils to learn about and experience cultural diversity beyond the school?

Information about the school

The school is bigger than most junior schools. At just over 50%, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic background is above average. Pupils are from diverse heritages. The largest groups are of Asian, particularly Indian and Pakistani, descent. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average although very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average, but the proportion who have more profound needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. More of these pupils are supported within the school than receive additional help from other professionals. Their needs are diverse but are predominantly moderate learning, speech, language and communication difficulties. Due to illness and special leave, both the headteacher and deputy headteacher were absent for much of last year.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school is satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for, enjoy school and are eager to learn. They are well behaved and considerate. Most pupils make satisfactory progress over their time at the school, but it is better in English than in mathematics. Attainment, particularly in reading, is above average. Nearly all of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were happy with their children's experience of the school. One comment sums up the views of most, reflecting good personal development and the way pupils develop into well-rounded responsible individuals: 'My child is creative, articulate, sociable and diplomatic. She is able to empathise with her peer group and has good problem solving skills.'

Some key aspects, such as the quality of teaching, vary between classes and this contributes to variations in progress between classes and some groups. Lessons are settled and purposeful. Teachers are dedicated and well prepared. However, they occasionally address the whole class for too long and do not always allow sufficient time for practical activities or independent enquiry. Explanations are occasionally too difficult for some and too easy for others. Teaching assistants are not always utilised effectively in lessons, as opportunities to give practical support or additional explanations are sometimes limited. Activities are not always sufficiently varied to meet pupils' differing needs in classes or ability sets at just the right level. In mathematics, teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn and practise basic skills. Each of these aspects slows learning. This is particularly so for pupils who have less profound special educational needs and/or disabilities. In lessons the pace is sometimes too fast for them and there are not always enough opportunities for assistants to help in an effective way. Even so, their progress overall is satisfactory. Pupils with more profound needs often make good progress because they are supported well on an individual level or in much smaller groups.

Leaders monitor provision and outcomes and are aware of the school's main strengths and areas for development. They quickly address issues which are brought to their attention. Pupils now have good opportunities to learn about and experience diverse cultures beyond the school. They have links with pupils in India and in a village school in Norfolk, visit various places of worship and hear visitors, including parents and carers, talking about their faith, cultures and celebrations. Leaders are well aware that progress in mathematics is not as good as that in English and have introduced initiatives to address this, for example organising pupils into ability sets and increasing interventions to support those who find the subject difficult. However,

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

they do not monitor sufficiently frequently or rigorously to ensure that learning is consistently good for all pupils. The impact of improvements is uneven; some initiatives are too new to show their full impact, while others have been limited by challenges such as absence of key staff. Leaders' evaluations are slightly over-optimistic but their ambitions for all pupils are satisfactorily embedded. On balance, the school's capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Immediately improve the frequency and rigour of monitoring, to ensure that improvements are implemented consistently over time and throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that, by the end of the school year, the majority of lessons are good and all groups, including pupils supported at the level of school action, are making good progress, by ensuring that:
 - teaching assistants are effectively deployed throughout lessons
 - pupils have sufficient time to practise and use skills and concepts
 - explanations and activities are suitably challenging for all.
- Improve progress in mathematics so that, by the end of the school year, this is good for all groups by ensuring that:
 - lessons are effective
 - any gaps in pupils' basic understanding and skills are identified and addressed.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Achievement varies between classes, sets and groups. It is satisfactory overall. Pupils who learn more quickly or easily make good progress in English because teachers move on quickly and the pace of most lessons is fast. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies because, although intervention groups are usually effective, there are some deficiencies within lessons. The progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language tends to vary, along with other pupils, according to their learning levels and starting points, but is satisfactory overall.

Progress in English, particularly in reading, is better than in mathematics. Some initiatives to improve provision in mathematics are relatively recent, have not been implemented consistently, and have not had time to show their full impact. Pupils do

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

not always have the basic mathematical skills essential for progressing well. Pupils in most classes read at the beginning of each day. This frequent practice helps to embed skills which they learn through well-focused and effective reading with staff. Year 5 pupils made good progress in an effective 'guided reading' lesson. The teacher directed challenging and pertinent questions about the story, style and grammar of books which they read together. The rest of the class quietly concentrated on their own reading, looking up any words they were unsure of in dictionaries which were available on each table. In one effective mathematics lesson, Year 4 pupils, who found learning particularly difficult, carefully practised using rulers to measure the lengths of lines in centimetres and millimetres, whereas pupils in another class struggled to solve problems because they did not have the full range of basic skills essential for calculating and using numbers.

Pupils develop a good understanding of, and commitment to, health through their accurate knowledge of balanced diets, active physical play and participation in sports lessons and clubs. They enjoy school. Attendance is consistently above the national average. Pupils say that they feel safe because they are cared for well and support each other, for example through the Friends Against Bullying (FAB) team, and are generally confident that staff will support them whenever necessary. They make good contributions to the school and local community through participating in discussions about traffic calming with local councillors, raising money for charity, serving on the school council and helping with tasks around the school. They are well prepared for later life and learning because they attain and attend well, and are confident, polite, well behaved and eager to learn and work hard.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	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

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is best when teachers display good subject knowledge and explain instructions and concepts clearly, allowing ample time for pupils to develop their understanding and practise skills in practical activities. They keep a close eye on what each pupil is doing, assess whether they understand and address any errors or misconceptions as they arise. However, in too many lessons, teachers spend too much time addressing the whole class, do not use assessments enough to vary activities, and do not always notice when some pupils make mistakes.

The curriculum is enriched well through an extensive and wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include cross country, film and mathematics for Years 4 and 5. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy going away together for a week at the beginning of the year. Leaders are developing topics which include a range of visits and visitors. These are successfully providing pupils with experience of cultural diversity beyond the school, but are at a relatively early stage and are not as yet implemented evenly across all classes and subjects. There are gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding and skills. These are not always identified or addressed, which slows progress. Staff report that pupils often use computers, including laptops, but there was little evidence of the use of such technology during the inspection.

Pupils are cared for well because staff are diligent and relationships are good. One parent's comments about how this had helped her daughter reflect the views of many: 'She was very shy when she started at the school. I can see her confidence growing every year. She loves going to school, enjoys learning and trying lots of extra-curricular activities as well.' Case studies clearly show how pupils, whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and their families, are supported and helped. The parent of a pupil with more profound special educational needs said, 'The school are very easy to approach about any concerns that I have about my daughter whether it is a social concern or a work-related one – we have seen a huge improvement in our daughter because of this.' Pupils appreciate the very clear rules for behaviour and consequent rewards and sanctions. They are pleased to collect points, certificates and tangible 'prizes'. Outdoor play at break times is organised well to promote safety. For example, pupils play football and other very physically active games in one playground while another is used for quieter and gentler activities.

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

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Largely due to significant staffing challenges, leaders have not always monitored sufficiently frequently or rigorously. Their self-evaluation is slightly over-optimistic, but the effectiveness with which they drive improvement and embed ambition is satisfactory. The governing body is supportive and challenging. Each member is linked with particular aspects of the school and curriculum, meets with coordinators and occasionally visit lessons to gain a better understanding. The governing body receive most information through reports from senior leaders and subject coordinators but due to limitations of monitoring this is not always sufficiently detailed or accurate. This sometimes leads to oversights or restricted improvements. In terms of safeguarding, statutory policies and procedures meet current government requirements. Some documents, such as risk assessments, are not reviewed sufficiently frequently and reflect basic rather than good practice.

Leaders promote equal opportunities and combat discrimination adequately. All groups and individuals are valued and respected by pupils and staff but, due to variations in provision, groups do not always make the same progress. Pupils respect each other and internal cohesion is good. The school contributes to wider community cohesion through links with other schools and charitable giving. Leaders’ evaluation of the impact of this at a local and wider level is at a very early stage. Close partnerships with the local authority’s behaviour management team, psychologists and social workers contribute effectively to care and pupils’ well-being, but partnerships have not been used effectively to raise the academic progress of all. Parents and carers are supportive, appreciative and engage well with the school and their children’s learning. The very active parents’ association raises considerable amounts of money for the school and brings pupils and families together in popular social events such as quiz evenings and the annual summer fair.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for	3

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

money	
-------	--

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about all aspects investigated. Inspectors also spoke to several parents and carers as they brought their children to school. Most were very positive about the school and appreciative of how happy their children are.

In the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents and carers said their children enjoy school and are kept safe, and that overall they are happy with their children’s experiences. A few expressed concerns about the way unacceptable behaviour is dealt with and the way they are kept informed of subsequent actions. However, all the pupils, staff, parents and carers spoken to reported that most pupils regularly behave well in and out of lessons, and the few instances of challenging behaviour rarely disrupt learning. Inspectors did not see any poor behaviour during the inspection and judge behaviour to be good overall. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about their children’s progress and the level of information they receive on this. Inspectors found that progress varies between classes and groups, and have asked the school to improve the quality of lessons so that this improves for all. Newsletters are sent to parents and carers each month; there are three formal opportunities for them to meet with staff and most feel that they could make another appointment whenever needed. To improve communication further, staff are now also available for parents and carers in the playground at the beginning and end of each day.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Overdale 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 161 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 344 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total		Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	101	63	56	35	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	58	67	42	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	43	27	109	68	6	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	32	97	60	7	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	67	42	85	53	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	51	32	101	63	6	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	36	96	60	4	2	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)	53	33	96	60	6	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	46	29	103	64	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	29	96	60	9	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	25	100	62	11	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	27	104	65	6	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	66	41	89	55	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 8 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Overdale Junior School, Leicester, LE2 3YA

The inspection team and I were pleased to meet and talk with many of you when we visited your school recently. We were impressed with how polite, friendly and considerate you are. All the things you told us helped us with our work – thank you.

We judge your school to be satisfactory overall. It has some strengths, but we found that these often vary between subjects and classes. We particularly liked the way you behave well, are considerate to others and enjoy very positive relationships with all the staff. You are cared for well. You are keen to learn and do well in national tests, especially in English, at the end of Year 6. You are keen to learn. Lessons are interesting and well prepared. However, teachers sometimes talk to the whole class for too long. This is too difficult for some of you and not sufficiently challenging for others. Teachers do not always give the teaching assistants enough time to help those of you who need it. Activities are occasionally too difficult for some of you and a bit too easy for others. Sometimes teachers introduce new ideas in mathematics before they make sure that you are all confident in using your basic skills.

We have asked the school to improve lessons so that you all achieve even more. Leaders do not always look at everything in the school carefully enough to make sure that developments happen in all classes and continue over time. We have asked them to improve this.

You can all help by continuing to work hard, telling teachers when explanations and activities really help you in your learning, but also telling them when you do not know or cannot do something in a lesson, particularly in mathematics.

With very best regards to you and your families.

Yours sincerely

Jo Curd
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**