

Netherbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103824
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	373151
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Morrison

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Loftus
Headteacher	Karen Daley
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. A total of 25 lessons taught by 17 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at curriculum planning, data on pupils' achievement including their current progress, documents relating to the care and protection of pupils, plans for improvement, pupils' work and records of the school's monitoring of its performance. They also analysed 90 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, together with 62 from pupils and 16 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 do all pupils attain and how much progress are they making, particularly for girls in mathematics?
- How well does teaching ensure that all pupils make good progress, particularly for more-able pupils in Key Stage 1?
- How well does marking help pupils know what they need to do to improve their work?

Information about the school

Netherbrook is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, though this varies between year groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class, which provides part-time education, and two full-time Reception classes.

There have been significant changes to the leadership team since the last inspection and it now comprises the headteacher, who was appointed just over two years ago, the deputy headteacher who is new this term, the inclusion leader and three phase leaders.

The school has gained a number of awards including the Arts Mark Gold, ICT Mark, Young Enterprise Award, International School Award and it has National Healthy Schools status.

The school runs a daily breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.

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

Netherbrook Primary is a good school. Children are given a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and one parent's comment is typical of many: 'My child has had a wonderful start and he loves going to school.' Senior leaders and governors lead the school well, ensuring that all staff share their understanding of the needs of pupils and the progress they make. The school provides an outstanding level of care and support for all pupils, particularly those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, so they achieve well. Links with parents and carers are promoted effectively, and the school works with a large number of support agencies to assist families and ensure that their needs are very well met. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to be safe and how to recognise unsafe situations, particularly road safety and when using the internet. They are confident that they will be listened to if they approach an adult with a concern. They say they feel very secure and well cared for in school, a view supported by parents and carers.

Teaching is good and as a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those eligible for free school meals, make good progress and achieve well. Pupils benefit from specialist dance teaching and reach very high standards in dance. This, together with the school's strong focus on the performing arts, promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning very well. Girls' mathematical skills are improving and evidence in pupils' books shows that the gap between girls' attainment and that of boys is closing. Progress in Key Stage 1 is accelerating because actions taken to raise pupils' attainment are beginning to have an impact. For example, in a fast-paced Year 1 lesson, pupils enjoyed thinking of questions to ask the 'grumpy dog-owner' and demonstrated good understanding of punctuation when writing these in their books. However, some lessons in both key stages, though satisfactory, do not always provide more-able pupils with enough challenge and interest for them to progress rapidly. Pupils strive to achieve their 'learning intentions' in lessons and in some classes evaluate their own learning. Some marking does not consistently tell them what they need to do to improve their work. Senior staff regularly monitor teaching, which has led to well-targeted professional development, although examples of good and outstanding practice are not always shared sufficiently to ensure that the remaining satisfactory teaching is improved to good.

Good leadership underpins the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. The headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body know the

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needs of pupils and their families well and have a clear vision for the future improvement of the school, to which all staff are committed. The monitoring of pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection so that accurate school self-evaluation is based on detailed analysis of data about pupils' performance. This is shared with all staff so that any underachievement is identified promptly and interventions put in place to address it. As a result, the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve progress by ensuring that more-able pupils are fully challenged in every lesson so that they reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Increase the proportion of high quality teaching by
 - sharing current good and outstanding practice regarding the expectations and engagement of pupils and the pace at which they progress
 - ensuring that teachers' marking provides pupils with consistently good guidance on what they need to do to improve their work and that pupils are given opportunities to respond to teachers' advice.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

All groups of pupils across the school enjoy learning. They make fastest progress where learning is based on practical and real life activities which engage them so they apply their skills and knowledge well. For example, pupils in Year 6 responded enthusiastically when using their mathematical skills to calculate how to purchase party food within a limited budget. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in taking small, manageable steps in learning because they are given personalised support by knowledgeable teaching assistants. However, inspectors' observations show that some more-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

A large majority of children start in the Nursery class with skills that are low for their age. Well-planned activities and effective adult intervention across the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that all children make good progress. However, their skills are still below those typically expected when they enter Year 1, particularly in reading and writing. In the past, pupils have made satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and achieved below average standards by the end of Year 2. However, work in pupils' books shows that progress is now accelerating as a result of good teaching. Additional support for pupils in Year 3, such as one-to-one teaching, ensures that those who underachieve at the end of Year 2 make good progress to catch up so they reach standards typical for their age. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen this year so that they are now average and current Year 6 pupils' work shows that this has been maintained.

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The school is caring and welcoming and pupils’ personal development is promoted well. Behaviour is good; pupils learn to work well together and lunchtime play is very well organised so pupils take turns and show good care for one another. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils happily take on responsibilities, such as acting as playground- and eco-monitors or as members of the school council and raise money for local and national charities. Attendance is good and this, together with pupils’ increasing awareness of the world of work and their excellent information and communication technology skills, results in them being well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

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	3
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	1
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

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers use good subject knowledge to plan exciting activities which challenge pupils and capture their interest. For example, in a Year 5 information and communication technology lesson, pupils were enthusiastic and sustained concentration very well when using hyperlinks to add animations and sound effects to their electronic advent calendars. Where lessons are satisfactory, teachers’ expectations, particularly of more-able pupils, are sometimes not high enough so these pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

The good curriculum is enriched by a range of stimulating opportunities particularly in drama, dance and music. Visits and visitors provide memorable experiences and make a positive contribution to pupils’ learning and personal development. For

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

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example, pupils’ enthusiasm following a school visit to the seaside was used skilfully by teachers to extend writing skills.

The school is a very caring community where pupils’ welfare is given high priority and families are well known to staff, particularly as a result of the effective work of the learning link coordinator. All groups are included successfully in each aspect of school life and receive outstanding levels of care. Pupils who attend the breakfast club enjoy stimulating activities and their needs are well met. Precisely targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils is enabling them to become increasingly confident learners.

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?

Leaders and managers share the drive and ambition of the headteacher and have a good understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for development. All staff share a determination to move the school forward, working well together as a team and this demonstrates the school’s good capacity for sustained improvement. Monitoring of teaching is rigorous, and assessment information is used well to track pupils’ progress. Termly pupils’ progress meetings are based on the school’s rigorous analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils and ensure that any differences in achievement are promptly addressed. The school identifies quickly the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they are given appropriate support. The school has a good understanding of the needs of its own and neighbouring communities and pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together, any discrimination is tackled and community cohesion is promoted well.

The governing body holds the school to account well and fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Members of the governing body are well informed about the life of the school and its performance and work well with senior leaders in developing and monitoring strategic planning.

A wide range of partnerships with local schools and community groups provide good learning opportunities for pupils. Parents and carers enjoy curriculum workshops and receive good information about their children’s learning which help them to be fully involved in supporting their children’s education.

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Safeguarding procedures are regularly monitored and evaluated by senior leaders and members of the governing body. Well-established risk assessment systems and teaching about safety ensure that pupils are safe in school.

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

The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms provide children with an exciting range of activities that encourage them to wonder, ask questions, explore and develop independence. Staff are skilful teachers and make learning fun, challenging children to think and work together; for example, children take turns and count accurately when playing in their ‘shiny shop’. Adults make good use of a wide range of resources, indoors and out, to enhance children’s enjoyment, learning and structured play.

As a result of good teaching, which particularly promotes children’s personal development, children make good progress from low starting points. Standards in reading and writing are lower than in other areas of learning though children’s current work shows that their rate of progress is improving as a result of carefully structured teaching. For example, children use their good knowledge of the links between sounds and letters to write letters to Santa.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Children's progress is monitored effectively and recorded carefully in their ‘learning journeys’. There is close teamwork between all adults and a strong commitment to helping parents and carers support children’s learning. Children are well cared for and procedures are in place to ensure that they are safeguarded effectively.

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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

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and all who responded to the questionnaire say their child enjoys school. Almost all state that their child is kept safe, is well taught and parents and carers are happy with their children’s experience at Netherbrook. Parents and carers agree that they are given good information about their children’s progress and are helped to support their children’s learning. Responses to all questions indicate that a higher proportion than that found nationally hold positive views about the school. Individual comments reflected parents’ and carers’ appreciation of the very good quality of care provided for all pupils. A very small number of parents and carers were concerned about supervision at the end of the school day. Inspectors checked this and found staff wait with pupils until they are collected so that pupils are kept safe.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Netherbrook Primary 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 469 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	61	35	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	72	21	23	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	52	58	36	40	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	52	38	42	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	57	63	32	36	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	52	58	35	39	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	47	39	43	6	7	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)	45	50	36	40	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	50	56	33	37	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	43	42	47	7	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	42	42	47	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	48	43	48	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	61	68	27	30	2	2	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 08 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.



8 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Netherbrook Primary School, Dudley, DY2 9RZ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and showing us what you are learning. We really enjoyed talking to you, sharing your lessons and reading your questionnaires. We agree with you that yours is a good school. Here are some of the reasons why.

- Your teachers care for you and look after you extremely well so you feel very safe.
- You behave well around school and get on really well together.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to their school life.
- You enjoy exciting activities and your teachers work hard to make learning fun for you, so you are actively involved and make good progress.
- Those of you who find work difficult are given lots of support so you can keep up with your classmates.

In order that your progress gets even faster we have asked your headteacher, staff and the governing body to do the following:

- ensure that those of you who are capable of reaching high standards always have challenging work to do
- make all lessons as good as the best ones are now
- ensure that teachers' marking of your work helps you all to know what you need to do to improve and give you opportunities to follow up your teachers' advice so that your work gets even better.

All the adults in your school want you to do well. You can all help them by always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison
Lead inspector

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