

Cantrell Primary and Nursery School

Cantrell Road, Bulwell, Nottingham, NG6 9HJ

Inspection dates 18–19 October 2012

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils work hard and make good progress. They do particularly well in English because of the consistently good teaching of reading and writing skills.
- Pupils behave well and any poor behaviour is very rare. This makes for a happy school where pupils feel safe.
- Parents and carers appreciate the way their children enjoy school so much. One wrote about her son, 'In the morning his little face beams as he walks down the street swinging his bag.'
- Pupils take responsibility well and leave as mature individuals prepared well for the future.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress throughout the school. Lessons move at a fast pace and pupils say how teachers make learning fun.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teachers provide exciting activities that capture their imagination.
- The two headteachers, who jointly manage the school, work very well together to set ambitious targets for staff and pupils to achieve. The leaders at all levels ensure that weaknesses are rectified quickly, and this is why standards are rising year-by-year.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 is not as fast as in English. Pupils are not quick enough in doing calculations in their heads because they have too little practise in mental mathematics work and few opportunities to use their number skills in other subjects.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make slower progress in writing than in other areas of learning. This is particularly the case for boys and lower attaining pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 35 lessons, of which one was a joint observation with a senior leader. The inspectors also made a number of brief visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records, and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

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|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Terry Elston, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Isobel Randall | Additional Inspector |
| Keith Adams | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to the school for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Compared with most schools, very few of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum standards expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Two headteachers jointly manage this and another local school as part of a collaborative partnership. The schools have separate governing bodies.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, raise attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 2 to the levels reached in English by:
 - giving pupils regular practise at quick mental mathematics
 - providing more opportunities for them to use their number skills in all subjects.
- Raise attainment by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in writing by:
 - ensuring that children have regular opportunities to write in all areas of learning and play
 - teaching lower-attaining children writing skills in small groups
 - providing boys with writing tasks that grab their interest.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from starting points that are well-below those typical of their ages. Pupils, as well as nearly all those parents and carers who completed the on-line questionnaires, feel they do well at school.
- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes. They settle quickly into school routines and make particularly fast progress in their reading and number skills because they have many opportunities to practise these in all areas of their learning.
- This is less the case in children's writing, which is why progress is slower, particularly for the lower attaining children who do not get the regular practice or the more intensive support they need. Boys in particular find writing difficult and do not always show enthusiasm for the tasks provided.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with the national average.
- Reading is a particular strength in Year 1 and Year 2 as pupils become increasingly adept at building sounds into words. In writing, pupils enjoy many opportunities to write about interesting events in their life and one group wrote exciting accounts of a day at the seaside. In mathematics, pupils add and subtract confidently and thrive on tasks such as making graphs of their favourite planets as part of their topic on space.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils read fluently and use their skills well to research their topics on the internet. Their writing in all subjects is accurate and full of expression. Their work on Anne Boleyn, focusing on her relationships with the French and English people as well as her fate as the wife of Henry VIII, was outstanding.
- In mathematics, even some older pupils find quick calculations difficult and have to add and subtract using their fingers. This affects progress in all aspects of the subject, particularly when asked to solve complex number problems. Pupils have few opportunities to hone their number skills in other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress and their parents and carers speak highly of the support teachers and teaching assistants provide. Those with reading difficulties do particularly well because they gain the skills and confidence to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. The school uses the designated funds well to support these pupils including providing extra reading sessions, individual teaching and opportunities for parents and carers to come into school to see how best to help their children at home.
- The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from good support and make good progress, particularly in their speaking and listening skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- In typical lessons, teachers make the learning expected clear at the start and remind pupils of these goals throughout. This helps both pupils and teachers assess their learning and see what they need to do next.
- The teaching of how to build sounds into words, is consistently good. This starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children learn important basic skills such as working out the first letter of a word and learning the meanings of the many labels around the classroom. The teaching of early writing skills is good in these classes, but children have too few opportunities to practise their writing in the other activities, either inside or outdoors.
- In mathematics, teachers make lessons interesting by providing many opportunities to learn about shapes and interpreting graphs. The weakness lies in a shortage of quick-fire mental mathematics sessions to give pupils the confidence to tackle complex number problems.
- Teachers use technology very well to motivate pupils. For example, when writing, pupils find the use of timers on the interactive whiteboards highly stimulating and say how, as one put it, 'it helps us to keep going.'
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high, which is why they concentrate hard and make such good progress in lessons.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress rigorously and provide helpful comments in their marking that helps them to do better next time. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to check their own work, which gives them a clear understanding of their achievements.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan well to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In class and in small groups, adults provide work that is challenging yet achievable. This ensures that pupils gain the confidence to work independently. Teachers are very good at ensuring these pupils answer questions in whole class sessions, and one showed great delight when providing the answer when others struggled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well because that is what is expected. Adults make the rules clear and pupils appreciate the way they are applied consistently. Records show that acts of poor behaviour are decreasing year-by-year.
 - Pupils arrive punctually and the vast majority attend regularly. The school works effectively with parents and carers to emphasise the importance of regular attendance, and absence rates have dropped greatly over the last three years.
 - Pupils show a very good awareness of all forms of bullying and know that adults handle any instances of aggressive behaviour well. They consider carefully the impact of their actions, and show kindness and respect regardless of other pupils' age, race or disability.
 - Pupils develop a good awareness of hazardous situations and speak knowledgeably about the potential dangers of using the internet.
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- They take responsibility well, and enjoy representing the views of others as members of the school council and eco-committee. Pupils are proud of their extensive grounds, and enjoy helping to grow plants and vegetable in the raised beds or searching for creatures in the pond.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn the rules for good behaviour quickly and choose activities sensibly. They persevere well with their tasks and work well with each other. One group used each other's skills very well when preparing a tea party using sand.

The leadership and management are good

- The joint headteachers have instigated change at a sensible pace so that staff have been able to rectify important weaknesses effectively. This process has meant that the school has made good improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of teaching, attendance and pupils' achievements. The leaders' rigorous checking of how well the school is doing and the challenging targets they set for the future show that it has the capacity to improve further.
 - The leaders check rigorously on the achievements of different groups of pupils, such as those supported through the pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This enables them to provide effective and prompt support to any pupils who are falling behind.
 - The very good systems to check the quality of teaching provide staff with detailed guidance on how to improve the learning in their class. Teachers are set challenging targets for improving their lessons and the progress that their classes make. Their pay is closely linked to the impact they have on pupils' learning.
 - The leaders make good use of the partner school to provide joint, cost-effective training and opportunities to learn from each other's best practice. This has been particularly helpful in raising attainment in writing.
 - Safeguarding systems are robust and meet all requirements. These are reviewed regularly by the leaders and the governing body.
 - The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Their comments to inspectors and responses to the on-line questionnaires were very positive, particularly in terms of the information about their children's progress, the quality of teaching and learning and the way the school is led.
 - Pupils find the activities provided for them interesting and appreciate the many ways the school adds to the topics they study by organising activities such as visiting the nearby space centre. Pupils have many good opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills in all subjects, but this is less the case in mathematics.
 - Pupils enjoy many opportunities to reflect on issues such as the impact of tourism on some vulnerable environments and the hardships faced by evacuees during the last world war. They learn right from wrong by the sensitive way that adults treat them and the consistent application of the behaviour policy.
 - The school has made good use of the expertise from the local authority in the past to raise the quality of teaching and learning. This support is less evident now that the school has made such
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marked improvements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses gained through well-planned visits, regular meetings with the leaders and observations of lessons. Its members challenge the leaders vigorously, take a full part in school improvement and do much to forge strong links with parents. The governing body has a thorough awareness of teachers' performance and its implications regarding their pay. It manages the finances well and uses funds, such as the pupil premium, effectively.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 122413 |
| Local authority | Nottingham |
| Inspection number | 406090 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community School |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 480 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sue Anthony |
| Headteacher | Mr & Mrs Fielding |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 January 2011 |
| Telephone number | 0115 9155770 |
| Fax number | 0115 9155771 |
| Email address | headteacher@cantrell.nottingham.sch.uk |

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