

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CUCKNEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cuckney, Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122757

Headteacher: Mr L J Beldham

Reporting inspector: Mr T Painter  
21512

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 196290

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Cuckney Mansfield Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG20 9NB
Telephone number:	01623 842223
Fax number:	01623 845391
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss M Stokes
Date of previous inspection:	5 <sup>th</sup> November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Cuckney CE Primary School is a smaller than average voluntary controlled school for boys and girls aged from 4 to 11 years. There are currently 118 pupils on roll with slightly more boys than girls. There are 21 children under five attending a part-time nursery class. The school is situated in the village and takes pupils from Cuckney and surrounding areas. Some pupils come from further away. Pupils have a range of backgrounds but all are from white families and no pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free meals, at 11 per cent, is around the national average for this type of school. The overall attainment of children entering the school is similar to that found nationally. Throughout the school there are 26 pupils on the register of special educational needs, around the national average. None of these pupils has a statement of special educational need.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school is effective and provides satisfactory value for money. Children under five receive a sound foundation. Good teaching throughout the school raises the levels of pupils' attainment well. By the time pupils leave the school their overall level of attainment is above that found nationally. It is above that found in similar schools. Good leadership has focused the school's work on raising attainment and very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The school is very well placed to make further improvements in the quality of education and pupils' attainment.

#### **What the school does well**

- Good teaching leads to overall standards that are above national averages.
- Good management systems and clear roles help the school to make very good improvements.
- The curriculum includes a rich variety of experiences with effective use of the local environment.
- There is good provision for extra-curricular activities and sport.
- Parents feel well informed and have strong links with the school.

#### **What could be improved**

- The school's provision for writing is relatively weaker than that for reading.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then very good progress has been made and there have been significant improvements in all of the identified areas for development. The overall quality of teaching has improved, particularly in Key Stage 2. A clear structure has been established for the management of the school and subjects. This has led to good systems of monitoring by teachers, headteacher and governors. Weaknesses in teachers' knowledge, understanding and teaching of art have been remedied and pupils achieve high standards of work in the subject. New curriculum and planning systems have been established and these are used effectively and consistently through the school. New improved assessment systems are having a positive effect on planning. The school has effectively introduced the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy and these are having a further positive effect on provision and standards. Some progress has been made in pupils' presentation of their work but writing remains a relative weakness in the school.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	C	C
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	A	A	A	A

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average   E

Pupils' overall attainment by the time they leave school is above that of schools nationally and above that found in similar schools. The work done during the inspection confirms these standards and the results of the National Curriculum tests. The general trend in the school's results in National Curriculum tests and assessments is for the high standards to be maintained. Variations exist in the year-on-year results but these relate primarily to differences in the groups of pupils. Effective and improving systems have been established to identify and track pupils' potential attainment and target future work. Challenging but achievable targets are being set both for the school and individual pupils. These targets are reviewed frequently to ensure their appropriateness.

Children under five enter the nursery class with attainment that is in line with that found nationally. They make a good start to their education and make good gains in their personal and social development. Pupils in both key stages make good progress through consistently good teaching. Standards in reading are high but pupils' writing is less strong and this reduces pupils' achievements in English.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good attitudes; pupils are keen to work hard and respond well to teaching and non-teaching staff.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils can be trusted to work and play together well, showing good respect for people and property.
Personal development and relationships	Good; strong relationships are established at all levels in the school. Pupils take responsibility well when given appropriate opportunities.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their work. They take part with enthusiasm in the wide range of extra-curricular activities and sports. Most pupils show good levels of interest in their tasks and have the ability to concentrate hard. However, in many lessons they show some inattention and make very low levels of fuss that detract slightly from their progress.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

All observed lessons were satisfactory or better and six per cent were very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in both key stages. Overall, good attention is paid to developing literacy and numeracy skills throughout the school. However, reading is taught more effectively than writing. Teachers give pupils some useful opportunities to apply their developing skills across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and they make good gains in their learning.

The quality of teaching of children under five is good. Provision is planned effectively to give children opportunities to learn across all the areas of learning. Teaching in both key stages is good with particular strengths in the effectiveness and consistency of planning. Teachers are therefore clear about what they are teaching and this helps pupils to learn well. They use the very good relationships and effective classroom organisation to teach lessons with good pace that generally challenge pupils well. Teachers make effective use of resources, including well-trained support staff. They are relatively less successful at setting high standards and building effectively on pupils' earlier skills in writing and this slows learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good with effective provision across the full range of subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; individual education plans reflect pupils' needs and are used effectively to promote pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for personal development. Pupils are given good opportunities to work and play together. There is good provision for the arts that promotes pupils' social and cultural development well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good systems are established to give pupils a safe and secure environment.

There are strengths in the school's provision for extra-curricular activities and sport that have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The curriculum is planned well with good levels of consistency through the school. This supports teachers well in their teaching and has a good effect on the quality of pupils' standards of achievement. Health and safety measures are effectively monitored and high standards are maintained.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership steers the work of the school well. There is effective teamwork from the staff through well-defined roles and a clear approach to improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are increasingly involved in the work of the school, including the monitoring of lessons. Governors ensure that all their responsibilities are carried out well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good systems of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have been established. These are beginning to be used effectively to steer the work of the school.
The strategic use of resources	All resources available to the school are used effectively.

The headteacher gives a clear view of the development of the school. New staff roles and structures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have been established. They make effective use of the skills of staff and governors in determining how the school can improve. As a result very good improvements have taken place since the last inspection. Administration and financial planning are strong and the principles of best value are consistently applied.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Before the inspection 26 parents attended a meeting for parents. There were 78 completed questionnaires (66 per cent) and inspectors held a number of informal discussions with parents during the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers have high expectations and generally teach well.</li> <li>• There is a caring, family atmosphere.</li> <li>• Pupils show high standards of work and behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of space in the school.</li> <li>• Improved extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive points made by parents but cannot fully endorse the negative points raised. The school building is unusual and is used to its limits but the school makes effective use of the space available. A new classroom has been added recently and there are further plans to enlarge the school. However, the space available for children under five in the part time nursery is restricted and places some limits the activities available. A good range of extra-curricular activities takes place at lunchtimes. This is a strength of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Good teaching leads to overall standards that are above national averages**

1. Teaching throughout the school is good and enables pupils to make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' overall attainment is above that found nationally. It compares very favourably with that found in similar schools. Although there are variations in the National Curriculum test and task results from year to year, these relate primarily to the relative strengths of the groups of pupils involved. Attainment in mathematics and science is consistently very good and this is reflected in the school's National Curriculum assessment results. The school's results in English, whilst generally above national averages, are less secure than the results in mathematics and science. Pupils' standards in reading are high but overall standards in English are restricted by relative weaknesses in standards in writing. These are particularly apparent in the relatively lower results achieved by higher-attaining pupils.
2. Teaching of children under five in the nursery class is well organised and planned effectively to meet the needs of all areas of learning. Children are given a safe and caring environment in which to work with good relationships that underpin the work of the class. However, the space available to the class is limited and this restricts the range of activities that can be set up, particularly in children's physical development. Teachers use a good range of resources to create imaginative tasks that effectively promote children's learning in all the areas of learning. All adults working in the nursery class make good use of language and questioning to extend children's understanding. Children make particularly good gains in their personal and social development. They gain a secure foundation for their work in school and good arrangements ease the transition to full-time education. Children under five in the reception class quickly settle and make effective progress, quickly beginning work related to the early stages of the National Curriculum.
3. Teachers in both key stages have very good relationships with pupils and use these effectively to create good learning environments. Pupils respond well and generally are enthusiastic about their work. This encourages them to apply themselves effectively and helps them to do well. Teachers plan lessons securely, making effective use of the agreed systems for curriculum planning. This ensures a high degree of conformity through the school that helps pupils to understand what is required of them. Teachers have well-established routines that are clear to pupils and ensure that little time is wasted in organisation. This has the effect of ensuring that most lessons proceed at a good pace. Many teachers keep the pace of the lessons going by setting very clear time targets, for example when setting mental arithmetic questions.
4. The good planning of lessons helps teachers to match suitable tasks to the needs of pupils of different ability levels. In this way pupils take part in activities that are generally appropriately challenging and promote their learning well. In Year 5 and 6 mathematics lessons, for example, pupils have opportunities to apply their developing understanding of data-handling to a series of suitable tasks. The teacher questions pupils well to consolidate and extend their learning. Throughout the school teachers make good use of well-trained support staff, particularly in supporting lower-attaining pupils. These support staff are clear of their roles and what teachers want pupils to learn. They use questioning in an effectively focused way that keeps pupils involved, helping them to understand and make good progress.
5. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2. Weaknesses in teachers' knowledge and understanding of art have been successfully remedied and pupils now achieve good standards in the subject. Weaknesses

were also identified when teachers taught groups of pupils, often in more than one subject or year group. Good improvements have been made and these weaknesses are no longer apparent. Teachers make effective use of grouping of pupils in order to target work at different levels and they monitor the work in each group well. They have good behaviour strategies that are rarely needed to ensure that pupils concentrate on their work. Teachers do, however, sometimes tolerate low levels of inattention that have a small negative effect on the rate of pupils' work.

### **Good management systems and clear roles help the school to make very good improvements**

6. The school has responded very well to weaknesses in the management structure identified in the last report. Good systems have been established that set out clearly the roles of governors, subject co-ordinators and senior staff in the management of the school. In particular good arrangements have been made to use these complementary roles to monitor the work of the school. These include well-organised observation and monitoring of lessons by governors, senior staff and subject co-ordinators. These arrangements help staff to gain greater understanding of effective teaching strategies and the standards that pupils should achieve.
7. Effective arrangements for teachers to discuss their work with co-ordinators are also established. These systems allow all members of staff to share skills and understanding. They are creating a good sense of teamwork amongst staff and are leading to a consistent and positive approach to improving standards. The effectiveness of this approach can be seen, for example, in the very good improvements that have been made in the school's provision for art. At the time of the last inspection standards were low and teachers showed limited skills in teaching the subject. This position has been very successfully improved and pupils take part in a wide range of well-planned activities. Teachers ensure that pupils gain appropriate skills and apply them well.

### **The curriculum includes a rich variety of experiences with effective use of the local environment**

8. Since the last inspection the school has made significant improvements in the curriculum. Schemes of work and assessment systems have been introduced that build an effective foundation for the work of the school. Teachers' planning has improved and is clear and consistent through the school. It gives good support for teachers in their teaching. Planning for children under five in the nursery class outlines an imaginative range of activities that are linked effectively to all the areas of learning. This gives children a good foundation for their learning and prepares them well for work in the school. Pupils in both key stages have a broad range of learning opportunities across all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Effective links are made between subjects that enhance pupils' understanding. Good opportunities are taken to develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum and these are reflected in standards achieved. Pupils develop good reading skills and use these effectively when finding information in many subjects. Their use of writing is satisfactory but less well developed.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in their work because they receive effective support in lessons. Activities are planned and organised well to match their needs and levels of attainment. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem develops well through work that reflects the targets in their individual education plans. Good use is made of well-trained support assistants to engage pupils and promote learning through effective questioning. This gives them small steps of success and promotes their learning well.

10. A wide range of visits and visitors to the school successfully augments the curriculum. These include sculptors and other artists and give pupils very good opportunities to widen their understanding of arts and environmental issues. The well-developed environmental area around the school gives many opportunities for pupils to study a wide range of issues across the curriculum. Good links are established with the local community to extend and develop the work. These activities and opportunities successfully kindle the interest of pupils and their involvement in the development of the school.

### **There is good provision for extra-curricular activities and sport**

11. A good range of extra-curricular activities is organised for pupils to supplement the main curriculum. Most activities take place during the lunchtime period in order to ensure that pupils are able to catch buses home at the end of the day. Activities include a number of musical and sporting activities that are available to pupils, primarily in Key Stage 2. Pupils take part in activities with enthusiasm and maturity, appreciating the variety of experiences. The activities have a positive effect on the standards achieved by pupils and the school has an enviable sporting record.

### **Parents feel well informed and have strong links with the school**

12. Parents are appreciative of the information given by the school and feel well informed of their children's progress through annual reports and regular meetings with teachers. Parents are very positive about the work of the school and they recognise the part they are able to play in promoting their children's progress. They know that they are able to contact the school with issues or questions at any time. Teachers create good opportunities for parents to work in classrooms. There are strong links established with parents of pupils with special educational needs and these are used effectively to support the progress of these pupils.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The school's provision for writing is relatively weaker than that for reading**

13. Although some improvements have been made in the school's development of pupils' writing and presentation, there are still some weaknesses that restrict pupils' attainment. These are apparent in the relative weakness of pupils' attainment in National Curriculum assessments at ages 7 and 11, particularly at higher levels. The teaching of joined handwriting is not consistent and teachers do not ensure that pupils use this in their work. As a result pupils do not develop and use a consistent handwriting style in all their work. Teachers create writing tasks that reflect some differences in pupils' abilities but these are not sufficiently precisely matched. In particular some tasks do not offer sufficient challenge to higher-attaining pupils. For example, higher-attaining Years 5 and 6 pupils write more complex play scenes but are set no clear additional targets beyond other pupils. Some marking is helpful to pupils but teachers' marking and analysis of pupils' writing is not always sufficiently detailed. As a result it is not consistently useful to pupils in determining what they need to do to improve their work.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

14. The school has made many improvements since the last inspection. Good plans exist to continue to improve the work of the school and further improve pupils' standards. To aid this process the headteacher, governors and staff should now:
  - (1) improve the provision for developing the quality of pupils' writing by:
    - a) increasing teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve;
    - b) giving greater challenge to tasks, particularly for higher-attaining pupils;
    - c) improving teachers' marking and analysis of pupils' writing, giving pupils more help in ways of improving their work;
    - d) ensuring more consistent teaching of joined handwriting.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	6

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5.9	64.7	29.4	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10.5	118
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	9	10	9
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	92 (100)	96 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	23	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (84)	92 (100)	96 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	8	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	6	7	7
	Total	13	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (65)	82 (65)	82 (75)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (80)	76 (75)	76 (80)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	118
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.3
Average class size	23.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998 - 99
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	£
Total income	234,216
Total expenditure	230,082
Expenditure per pupil	1,918
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,434
Balance carried forward to next year	17,586



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 66%

Number of questionnaires sent out	118
Number of questionnaires returned	78

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	32	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	35	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	44	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	50	8	1	5
The teaching is good.	66	32	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	46	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	34	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	31	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	53	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	51	46	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	45	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	40	8	4	5