



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

**Inspection report**  
**Snape Wood Primary and Nursery School**

**City of Nottingham Education Authority**

Dates of inspection: 1-2 July 2004

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act

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## **Basic information about the school**

Name of school:	Snape Wood Primary and Nursery School
Type of school:	Primary and Nursery
Status:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Acting Headteacher:	Mr R Rischer
Address of school:	Aspen Road Bulwell Nottingham NG6 7DS
Telephone:	0115 915 9146
Name and address of appropriate authority:	The governing body, address as above
Chair of governors:	Mr T Roberts
Local education authority area:	City of Nottingham
Unique reference number:	122703
Name of reporting inspector:	Mr A Gray HMI
Dates of inspection:	1-2 July 2004

## Introduction

1. Snape Wood Primary and Nursery School is situated in Bulwell, Nottingham. It is a nursery and primary school with 37 pupils in the nursery and 180 of compulsory school age. None of the pupils speak English as an additional language and about four per cent are from ethnic minority groups. Twelve per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average. These figures include one pupil who has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Fifty five per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is a very high figure.

2. The school was inspected in September 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and it was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

3. The governors drew up an action plan to address the key issues from the inspection of September 2002. The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) on five occasions to monitor the progress being made.

4. In July 2004 two HMI and an Additional Inspector inspected the school, assessing the standard of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of September 2002.

## Main findings

5. In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The main findings of the inspection are:

- the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally well below national expectations, most notably in communication, language and literacy;
- standards attained in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well below the national figures, and below or well below those of similar schools. Provisional test results for 2004 show that standards at the end of Year 2 have fallen in most respects because the teaching has been unsatisfactory until recently, although standards are now observed to be rising in Year 1;
- at the end of Key Stage 2, standards attained in 2003 were below or well below the national figures but the average points scored by the pupils showed an improvement in mathematics and science. Progress between the ages of 7 and 11 was very good. Provisional test results for 2004 showed a continuation of this improvement, especially in the proportion of the pupils who reached the expected Level 4. Standards are now good in mathematics, and satisfactory in English and science;
- the quality of provision for the pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory. Provision in mathematics is good throughout the school; in English and science it is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2;

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- the high quality of provision and experience in the Foundation Stage prepares the pupils well for their subsequent development and progress in the National Curriculum. The curriculum in the nursery and reception year is skilfully planned and organised: the integration of the areas of learning and experience is well conceived and creates a coherent link with the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum;
  - the pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Their attitudes to learning are satisfactory. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were at least satisfactory in all of the lessons, and they were good in one third. The pupils worked well together and supported each other in their learning. However, though improving significantly, the rate of attendance is still too low;
  - the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. These themes have been given a high priority and the school is now a strong and cohesive social community with clearly articulated values, in which the vast majority of the pupils share. Their personal development is very good. The ethos is excellent and the school provides a good level of care and support;
  - the curriculum is very good, although the teachers make too little use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a resource. The pupils experience a broad curriculum, enhanced, for example, by excellent work in the arts; curriculum development is very good;
  - the quality of teaching is good. It was satisfactory or better in all of the lessons, including three fifths in which it was good. Teaching in the nursery and Foundation Stage was good overall. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 was good overall, and occasionally very good, but until recent changes it had been unsatisfactory in Year 2. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was satisfactory, with some examples of good practice;
  - the school has established satisfactory systems for collecting information about the pupils' progress, though these are not consistently maintained across the whole curriculum. The presentation of this information, both for strategic purposes and to promote self-evaluation, has been recognised as an area requiring further development;
  - the quality of learning and achievement is satisfactory overall, and good in the nursery and Foundation Stage. Learning was at least satisfactory in all lessons, and it was good in one third;
  - the leadership and management of the acting headteacher are excellent. He is clear-sighted and dynamic in his approach to leadership; he has succeeded in transforming the school as an environment for learning and won the commitment of pupils, parents and staff. Satisfactory arrangements have been made to secure a permanent headteacher and to ensure that the school's pace of improvement does not suffer during the transition in leadership;
  - the leadership and management of other key staff are good. They are very good in science. Much good practice exists within the group of senior
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managers and subject co-ordinators, but the continuing absence of the deputy headteacher has placed additional pressures on other staff;

- the quality of the accommodation is satisfactory overall although the arrangements for the extra Year 2 class and the accommodation for ICT are unsatisfactory. The school makes excellent use of its buildings and classrooms for celebrating the pupils' work;
- the school's income per pupil is below average and it has a budget deficit due to having redressed problems caused by a longstanding lack of adequate resources. An appropriate recovery plan has been agreed with the local education authority (LEA) and it now gives good value for money because many pupils now make very good progress both academically and in their social development;
- the work of the governing body is good. Some governors are very active in the school and a sound policy for monitoring has been drawn up;
- the school has developed strong links with parents and families which help to promote educational progress;
- the school, in partnership with the LEA, has set up good systems for monitoring its performance. The quality of self-evaluation is generally good, but the school makes insufficient use of assessment information to set priorities.

## **Key issues**

6. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- continue to raise standards, specially in Key Stage 1;
- ensure that a headteacher is appointed and that suitable steps are taken to secure an effective transition in the school's leadership;
- continue to build on recent improvements in the school's leadership and management, in order to consolidate its improvement and sustain its development.

## **Inspection findings**

### **Standards achieved by the pupils**

7. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally well below national expectations, most notably in communication, language and literacy.

8. The provisional results attained by the pupils in national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2004 were generally below the standards attained in 2003, when they were below

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or well below standards attained in all schools and similar schools. In 2004 the proportion of the pupils who reached at least the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics fell; this was most notable in writing, where standards are now very low. The proportion of the pupils who reached at least Level 2b fell in reading and writing but in mathematics the proportion who reached this standard almost doubled. Only one pupil reached the higher Level 3 and this was in reading. Standards have fallen since 2003 in most respects because the teaching has been unsatisfactory until recently.

9. The provisional results attained by the pupils in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2004 show a rise in the proportion who reached the expected Level 4 in mathematics, from 67 per cent in 2003 to 84 per cent in 2004. There was also a small rise in the provisional figures for both English and science. Although there was a rise in the provisional proportion of the pupils who gained a Level 5 in mathematics, there was a fall in the proportion who reached this higher standard in English and science. A much greater proportion of the pupils reached Level 5 in mathematics than in English. On the basis of the provisional figures, standards are now good in mathematics and the pupils' progress has been very good; standards remain below expectations in English and science, but progress has been at least satisfactory.

10. The standard of the pupils' speaking and listening is now at the expected level by Year 6. However, standards were much more variable in the younger classes because the pupils' attainment is below expectations on entry to the school. The pupils adapt readily when the teacher insists on a high standard of spoken English, but some teachers do not always model good practice. Very good practice was seen in an assembly, where some of the pupils spoke to the whole school.

11. The quality of learning was always at least satisfactory in lessons. It was good in three fifths of the lessons in the Foundation Stage, and in one quarter of the lessons in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The pupils were generally keen to learn and, in the majority of lessons, well-planned activities ensured that they were appropriately challenged and motivated and, as a result, made satisfactory progress. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the pupils used raisins and paper plates to learn about fractions, and demonstrated a sound understanding of the concepts that they were being taught.

12. The pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, but in Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 2, they make unsatisfactory progress where the poor quality of teaching has, until recently, inhibited their progress. The school has recently introduced effective procedures for identifying the pupils who have special educational needs, although the impact of recent staff training has yet to be reflected in the accurate identification of all such pupils, particularly in Year 2. The school is aware of this issue and is tackling it. The 27 pupils that are currently on the school's register of special educational needs are effectively supported by teachers and well-trained non-teaching staff.

### **The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Around the site, the pupils' behaviour was good. They displayed a polite and friendly approach towards adults and each other. They behaved appropriately inside the building, and very little rowdy or insensitive behaviour was observed during playtimes. The site is free from litter or graffiti. The pupils showed a pride in their school and were keen to

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talk about the part that they had played in improving behaviour; for example, through the effective use of the 'peer mediator' scheme.

14. Overall, the pupils' attitudes and behaviour were at least satisfactory and often good in all of the observed lessons. Their behaviour was often good, but their attitudes to learning were more commonly satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage attitudes were good; in Key Stage 1 they were satisfactory, and in Key Stage 2 they ranged from satisfactory to good. Most pupils were keen to learn and responded confidently and sensibly to questions. The pupils worked well together and supported each other in their learning; for example in an ICT lesson in a Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils worked co-operatively in pairs designing labelled pictures of minibeasts. During this lesson, they remained busily and productively engaged in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. In Year 2, however, the pupils' attitudes, while still satisfactory, were less well focused; many found it hard to concentrate on their work for extended periods of time.

15. The school has very effective systems in place to support good behaviour. The ethos of including and valuing individuals is at the centre of a very effective policy which is clear and consistently applied and which celebrates and rewards positive behaviour. All classrooms display rewards systems and class rules. The effective training of all staff, including dinner supervisors, and the very good use of a system of 'peer mediators' has had a very positive impact upon the behaviour of the pupils. At lunch breaks, the pupils are provided with a range of exciting and worthwhile activities, and dinner supervisors actively ensure that this time of the day is both purposeful and enjoyed by the pupils. One dinner supervisor, for example, organised parachute games for some younger pupils, while another organised a game of football.

16. The school has an excellent ethos. The pupils respond well to the enriching provision which is made for their academic, pastoral and personal development. The school seeks to broaden the pupil's experiences in a range of areas, notably the visual and performing arts, and this is the basis of the effective, often rapid educational progress which is being made across the curriculum.

17. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. These themes have been given a high priority and the school is now a strong and cohesive social community with clearly articulated values, in which the vast majority of the pupils share. Assemblies are used very effectively to celebrate achievement and to emphasise that all members of the school are partners in the learning; appropriate opportunities for acts of worship are provided. The personal development of the pupils is very good.

18. The school has effective systems to secure the good attendance of pupils. Currently, the rate of attendance is around 93 per cent, which is below the national figure, but unauthorised absence has been virtually eliminated. The success of the measures in respect of attendance and punctuality have been recognised by the LEA who now use the school as a Beacon School in this regard. The governors have appointed their own welfare officer who follows up absence by making first-day calls in order to check on and secure good attendance. A major element in the school's significantly improving attendance and punctuality record is the range of activities which, in partnership with parents, supports the pupils' personal and educational welfare. The ethos which has been developed as a result of these initiatives

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causes both the pupils and their families to value the contribution made by the school and helps to secure good attendance and, consequently, better academic progress.

### **The quality of education**

19. The school's curriculum is very good, although the teachers make too little use of ICT as a resource. The pupils experience a broad curriculum, enhanced, for example, by excellent work in the arts which has received national recognition; curriculum development is very good. Strong links between the learning in the different subjects were illustrated by a literacy lesson which also encouraged scientific observation.

20. The quality of teaching is good. It was satisfactory or better in all the lessons, including three fifths in which it was good. In the Foundation Stage, teaching was good in four fifths of the lessons; in Key Stage 1, two thirds of lessons were good, including one which was very good. In Key Stage 2, teaching was good in half the lessons. The teaching has improved in all the key stages, but especially in Key Stage 1. Lessons were well planned and structured, with clear learning objectives that were shared with the pupils and referred to during the course of the lessons. The teachers made good use of different assessment techniques to ensure that the pupils understood what they were being taught. However, in some lessons insufficient use was made of previous lesson evaluations to ensure that teaching consistently focused on the learning needs of the pupils. The teachers displayed good subject knowledge and planned appropriate activities which were usually well matched to the pupils' needs. Some teachers used effective and supportive questioning techniques to challenge pupils to explore their own understanding of the concepts being taught, and to identify and resolve misconceptions. Most lessons maintained a brisk pace. The positive relationships between the teachers and the pupils were underpinned by effective strategies for managing behaviour, which were based upon praise and positive reinforcement. These measures ensured a productive working atmosphere.

21. Provision for the pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory, although not all pupils with such needs have yet been identified on the school's register. For those pupils on the register, arrangements meet the requirements of the Code of Practice, and are efficiently monitored by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Staff training on drawing up and implementing individual education plans has resulted in improved target-setting. The teaching assistants make a valuable contribution because they are well trained to support pupils' learning through, for example, the literacy support programmes. Many teaching assistants provide additional support to the pupils in reading, both before the start of school and during lessons. Class lists of targets from individual education plans are provided for each teacher to support planning, as a result, the work is matched to the pupils' needs and is usually effective in supporting learning. Individual education plans are reviewed termly, although not all parents attend these meetings. The quality of the evaluation of pupils' progress in the plans has improved recently. Targets are well focused, with clearly defined strategies for support and appropriate success criteria. The individual education plans are closely monitored by the co-ordinator to ensure that targets are achievable and appropriate to the needs of the individual. However, he has yet to develop appropriate monitoring systems to ensure that links between the targets and the planning fully support learning. This is to be addressed in the autumn term.

22. When the pupils enter the school, their abilities in a range of areas, including language development, are well below average. They then benefit from the quality and

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richness of the provision which is made in the Foundation Stage classes, comprising the part-time nursery and a reception-age group. The work is skilfully organised and successful in linking the key areas of learning and creating a coherent and integrated curriculum which enriches the pupils' experiences. A prominent focus in all learning is the language content. Activities are well prepared and adequately resourced. The pupils make significant progress when they are supervised by adults and when they play independently. Independent play is purposeful, and is effectively observed by adults who are adept at making appropriate interventions and redirecting the focus and purpose of learning in a wide range of activities. The work in the nursery group is developed well in the reception year, where the focus on the integration of the areas of learning and experience is gradually refined to lead to the more distinctive subjects of the National Curriculum. The high-quality provision is a major contributor to the subsequent progress made by pupils as they transfer to the Key Stage 1 classes.

23. The quality of provision in English is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The teachers work hard to encourage good standards of speaking; for example, in Year 1 and Year 6 the teachers made good use of questioning to gain a thoughtful response from the pupils. Teaching assistants add genuine variety to the programme of learning, but on occasions the planning for pupils of differing needs does not result in tasks that are suitably distinctive.

24. Provision in mathematics is good. The intensive programme of staff training, for example in problem solving, and the focus on monitoring has had a positive impact on mathematics teaching and learning throughout the school. Intensive support by the numeracy consultant and rigorous monitoring have helped to ensure that the mathematics curriculum is consistently effective. Resources in mathematics are well organised, and recent improvements have had a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and learning; for example, the introduction of packs for each pupil, appropriate to their age, ensures that they are well prepared and equipped for lessons. This has helped to improve the pace of mathematics lessons.

25. The quality of provision in science is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory, with some strengths, in Key Stage 2. In lessons the investigations of forces in Key Stage 1 or of habitats in Key Stage 2 were shaped by the opportunities for shared discussion before work was undertaken, and by the quality of collaboration when the pupils were completing experimental work. Their knowledge of the variable and constant features of investigative work is secured from an early stage; the majority realised the significance of retesting their initial predictions and recording results in a variety of ways. A strong contributing factor to the pupils' skills of observation and questioning is the quality of the visual environment created in classrooms and circulation areas. This provision heightens their awareness of comparison, differences and similarities, which is increasingly reflected in their work in science, including that of the youngest children.

26. The school's assessment arrangements are sound and developing well. The collection and analysis of data enable the school to set realistic targets for improvement which are well related to pupils' prior attainment. However, procedures are not yet consistent across the whole curriculum. The setting of learning objectives is monitored in planning and linked closely to the school's imaginative and developing marking policy as a means of securing the pupils' progress. The school recognises that data is not yet being used

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sufficiently to promote self-evaluation and to drive the school's improvement because it is not always presented effectively.

27. The acting headteacher has led an imaginative range of initiatives which have benefited the parents and the pupils. The breakfast and after-school clubs, both organised and run voluntarily by parents, and the 'Amber Project', co-ordinated by a parent in association with a local college, are the more obvious examples of the school's development and success. The 'Amber Project' gives parents the opportunity to continue their own education through courses run on site by a college of further education; their response is good. Taken together, the initiatives raise the profile of education generally and provide a focus which raises the self esteem of both adults and children: this is a major contributory factor to the improvement in academic achievement. These measures, together with the guidance and supporting relationships provided by staff during the school day, lead to a good level of care and support for the pupils.

28. The school is already at the heart of its local community. It has established strong links with parents and families, which assists the pupils' educational progress, as well as providing opportunities for improving aspects of the continuing education of adults in partnership with a local college of further education.

### **Leadership and management**

29. The leadership and management of the acting headteacher are excellent. He is clear-sighted and dynamic in his approach to leadership and has succeeded in transforming the school as an environment for learning and won the commitment of pupils, parents and staff. Satisfactory arrangements have been made to secure a permanent and experienced headteacher and to ensure that the school's pace of improvement does not suffer during the transition in leadership.

30. The leadership and management of other key staff are good. One senior member of staff and one acting member of the senior team have appropriate strategic responsibilities, which they are approaching successfully. Much good practice exists within the group of senior managers and subject co-ordinators, but the continuing absence of the deputy headteacher has placed additional pressures on other staff. Some areas have temporary leadership and a number of staff are new to their subject role, nevertheless, they are establishing sound practice. In science, for example, where the quality of leadership is very good, the programmes of study are well organised and the teachers' ability to accurately assess the pupils' developing scientific skills promotes the well-targeted teaching which is evident in most lessons.

31. The acting headteacher, staff and governors have worked successfully in building a close and effective relationship with parents, which is reflected fully in their strong support for the school and their appreciation of the changes which have occurred.

32. The school, in partnership with the LEA, has set up good systems for monitoring its performance. The acting headteacher is actively involved on a daily basis in the monitoring of teaching and learning; other staff are starting to share in this responsibility. The quality of self-evaluation is generally good, but the school makes insufficient use of assessment information to set priorities.

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33. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory overall although the arrangements for the extra Year 2 class and the accommodation for ICT are unsatisfactory. The school makes excellent use of its buildings and classrooms for celebrating the pupils' achievements through the stimulating display of their work. The pupils are also able to learn from what is displayed, such as from information about speaking and listening skills.

34. The school's income per pupil is below the national figure and planned expenditure has risen to almost ten per cent above planned income as part of a strategic plan to address a longstanding lack of adequate resources in the foundation subjects. The school's management of its budget and resources is satisfactory overall because spending decisions have been effective. It now gives good value for money because, despite its low income, many pupils have made very good progress especially in Key Stage 2 and because it offers strong support for their social development. A budget recovery plan has been agreed with the LEA.

35. The work of the governors is good. There is only one vacancy on the governing body and appropriate minutes are kept of meetings. The representation of parents has improved greatly. Governors have received relevant training which is helping them to carry out their responsibilities. Some are very active in the school. A sound policy for monitoring has been drawn up.

### **Implementation of the action plan**

36. The inspection report of September 2002 required the school to address seven key issues. These principally related to: raising standards; leadership and management; the quality of teaching; the pupils' behaviour and attitudes; provision for the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development; the level of care provided for the pupils; and more effective relationships with parents.

37. Standards have begun to rise, most significantly in Year 1 and Year 6. The leadership and management of the school have improved, but at present there is an acting headteacher and the deputy headteacher is on long-term leave. The quality of teaching has improved and unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated. The improvement in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes has been significant; exclusions are now very rare. The school has established very good provision for the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development as part of a wide-ranging approach which promotes the pupils' personal development. The level of care has been improved because the school is now an overtly caring community. The assessment of the pupils' work is also better: they receive more-accurate advice about their progress. The school has also successfully promoted healthy eating. Relationships with parents are now a strength of the school, with parents contributing to after-school clubs.

## **Appendix – Information about the inspection**

The school was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in September 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in March, June and October 2003, and in January 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of September 2002.

In July 2004, two HMI and an Additional Inspector returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Twenty five lessons or parts of lessons, one assembly and three registration sessions were inspected. The pupils were observed at break and lunch times and samples of their work were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff and other school staff, two of the governors and a representative of the LEA. Informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was also taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of September 2002 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.