



Inspection report

Norbriggs Primary School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 112705
LEA Derbyshire

Inspection number 275574
Inspection dates 13 and 14 June 2005
Reporting inspector Mr R Hartley HMI

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.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Norbriggs Road
School category	Community		Mastin Moor
Age range of pupils	3 to 11 years		Chesterfield
			Derbyshire
			S43 3BW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01246 473398
Number on roll	178 full-time	Fax number	01246 470917
	36 part-time		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs C Ludlow
Date of previous inspection	March 2004	Headteacher	Mrs S Eyre

Age group

Published

Reference no.

Introduction

When Norbriggs Primary School was inspected in March 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on two occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in June 2005.

Description of the school

Norbriggs Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the small town of Staveley in North East Derbyshire. The school has 178 full-time pupils and 36 part-time pupils in the nursery. The school serves an area of economic and social disadvantage. Almost all the pupils are from white British backgrounds. Thirty six per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is above average. Sixty one pupils have been identified as having special educational needs including four with a Statement of Special Educational Need.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

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.

Norbriggs Primary School has experienced staffing difficulties for a considerable period of time. At the time of the last inspection the headteacher was on extended sick leave and an experienced headteacher had recently been seconded to the school; she is now the substantive headteacher. All the pupils in Key Stage 2 have been adversely affected by constant changes in teaching staff which in part have been responsible for gaps in the pupils' learning, depressed standards and a significant proportion of underachievement. The headteacher is providing firm and purposeful leadership and management, and is supported well by the hard work of the senior teacher members of the senior management team.

There is a determination to do well and a willingness to make changes so that the school is now providing a satisfactory education for its pupils. However, standards are below national averages and below what they should be, but they are beginning to rise as a consequence of teaching which is almost always satisfactory, often good and occasionally very good. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are mostly good although there are signs of restlessness when the work lacks sufficient challenge.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of March 2004 required the school to address key issues concerned with the pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching, and leadership and management. There has been satisfactory progress in raising pupils' achievement, and good progress elsewhere, although the quality of learning and standards need to rise further.

Capacity to improve

The school is now making good progress in the first phase of its improvement. Many of the initiatives are recent, but there is good capacity both to consolidate the gains already made and to make further improvements. The headteacher has set a clear agenda for development and gives a high level of support and encouragement to the staff. A priority has been to put basic procedures in place to aid planning and teaching, and to address issues of behaviour, assessment, and the provision for pupils who have special educational needs. The headteacher receives good quality support from the local education authority (LEA) and the governors. Together, all these encouraging elements are providing a context for continued improvement especially in refining the quality of learning.

There is a thorough programme to monitor the school's performance, and assessment procedures are beginning to identify strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' learning. A new system has been established for tracking progress over time. The co-ordinators for the

core subjects have produced plans of action, but their full impact on raising standards has yet to be seen.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities for the school's development plan are to:

- raise standards and improve the progress made by pupils in English, mathematics and science especially in Key Stage 2;
- improve further the overall quality of teaching;
- ensure the assessment information is used effectively to influence the teaching and learning in lessons.

Achievement and standards

The children make a good start in the Foundation Stage classes. Many of them enter school with a limited range of skills and educational experiences, although by the end of the reception year a significant number reach standards expected for five-year-olds; for example in their communication skills, confidence, independence and general attitudes to work. The pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, but more variable in Key Stage 2 where weaknesses in past provision and more recent inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have led to a significant amount of underachievement.

The unvalidated results in the 2005 national tests at Key Stage 1 show that most pupils reach the expected levels and some exceed them. The school's assessments for Key Stage 2 pupils indicate that overall standards are currently below expectations.

Overall, most improvement has been made in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and increasingly in science, although there are good examples in other subjects which reflect individual teachers' expertise. The school knows that despite these improvements standards remain too low, and that the quality of learning is uneven particularly at Key Stage 2.

Personal development

Overall, the pupils are well behaved. They are polite and increasingly show an interest in each other's work. They respond well to praise and are becoming confident in offering opinions and ideas. The pupils are learning good work habits, know the established routines, and sustain their concentration although some need reminders to maintain the pace at which they work. Under the guidance of a member of staff the pupils run a school council comprised of representatives from each class. It meets weekly and talks about

matters which concern the pupils; for example, rough play at break times, or new initiatives introduced by the staff, such as the marking of work.

Attendance is now 93.8 per cent, a figure which is almost in line with the national average, and punctuality has improved reflecting the school's efforts to promote good attendance.

The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The staff are working hard to develop a positive ethos in the school, often through vibrant and interesting assemblies which encourage the pupils to reflect on relationships and knowing what is right and what is wrong. There is a range of extracurricular sporting and cultural activities available for the pupils, including residential experiences for the oldest pupils. The school is keen to broaden the pupils' understanding of wider world issues such as poverty, water shortages and natural disasters by encouraging them to provide practical help; for example, through collections for charities such as Water Aid, the tsunami disaster appeal and Dr Barnardo's.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has shown improvement over the last year. It has been almost always satisfactory, often good and occasionally very good. Planning is consistent throughout the school, lesson objectives are shared with the pupils, and most of the lessons are well prepared and organised. The tasks are mainly well judged according to the needs of different pupils, although in some isolated lessons the pace of learning is hindered by over-directed teaching. The large number of teaching assistants make important contributions to lessons, particularly leading groups or supporting individual pupils.

A range of assessment procedures has yielded information which has been analysed and provided the school with a clear view of pupils' attainment. The school has successfully begun to use the information to set individual targets for the pupils. The impact of the data on improving teaching and learning has yet to take full effect, although it has been put to good use identifying pupils who need additional support, as well as those who are at a similar level of attainment. The headteacher has taken responsibility for developing the assessment system in school and much has been achieved in a short time. The information is now available to enable subject co-ordinators to influence the learning and track pupils' progress in their subjects.

The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is securely based. The co-ordinator has established effective administration systems and all the pupils have individual education plans with relevant actions and targets. The co-ordinator is given a regular allocation of time to monitor the pupils' progress. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the school uses the national strategies and plans work for the foundation subjects based on a range of topics. However, there are variations in how the work is planned and organised to meet the different learning needs of the pupils. There are some examples of individual teachers drawing links between subjects, but overall the school has not yet addressed formally how best to use skills gained in one area of work to help promote learning in others.

Leadership and management

The difficulties experienced at the school have built up over time. They have been caused by previous weaknesses in leadership and management, and by a failure to recruit and retain teaching staff causing discontinuities for the pupils in their learning. The present headteacher came to the school shortly before the March 2004 inspection; she has provided good leadership and management, has a clear vision for the school and has embarked on a broad raft of improvement measures. Overall, she has judged the pace of change well and the capacity of the staff to respond to new ideas. Many of the changes are at an early stage of development and their full effect on the quality of learning and standards has yet to be firmly established. Nevertheless, the headteacher responds quickly to emerging issues: for example, providing time for co-ordinators to carry out their responsibilities; raising the standards of pupils' presentation of work; enabling teachers to share their expertise in literacy and numeracy to raise standards in Years 5 and 6; and tackling the underlying reasons for some disappointing test results in Key Stage 2.

The newly established senior management team has grown in confidence and for the most part effectively carries out its individual responsibilities, enabling the headteacher to concentrate on the broad issues for improvement. Co-ordinators now need to make best use of the information available to directly influence pupils' standards of achievement. The recent improvements in the monitoring of teaching and learning have provided information to help the school evaluate its effectiveness. At present, this is done mainly through regular discussions and the analysis of test data. This is helping the staff to know where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie.

The headteacher, with the help of the LEA and governing body, has led most of the strategic development since the last inspection. She has successfully identified key areas for improvement and ensured that systems are in place to support important aspects such as assessment and the management of behaviour.

The LEA has given consistently good quality support on a very regular basis in training the staff, providing specialist teaching, monitoring progress, and especially giving regular support to the school through its link advisers.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Norbriggs Primary School was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in March 2004. 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 October 2004 and in February 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of March 2004.

In June 2005, one HMI and one 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.

During the visit 18 lessons or parts of lessons were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior teachers, a representative from the LEA and informally with other staff. Account was 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 March 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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