



Queen's Park Lower School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109437
LEA BEDFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278195
Inspection dates 19 September 2005 to 20 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Godfrey Bancroft LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chestnut Avenue
School category	Community		MK40 4HA
Age range of pupils	5 to 10		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01234352901
Number on roll	449	Fax number	01234 269426
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	.Not Known
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	. Not Known

Age group 5 to 10	Inspection dates 19 September 2005 - 20 September 2005	Inspection number 278195
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of three additional inspectors

Description of the school

The school is larger than average size. It is in an area of social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. The percentage of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is very high. Pakistani and Bangladeshi children make up the predominant ethnic groups. A number of pupils are refugees and some others are asylum seekers. The school also has children who are looked-after by the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, a view shared by the inspectors, parents and the school itself. Pupils from all abilities and backgrounds achieve well and make good progress. This is because teaching and learning are good. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is also good. Standards are improving steadily. However, the good work being done with their speaking and listening is not yet paying off in terms of improvements in their writing. The vast majority of pupils work hard and behave well. That said, a small number do not maintain their concentration for long enough and find it difficult to work without direct adult support. Attendance is well below the national average and some children are often late for school. This was an issue at the time of the last inspection and the school is working hard to help parents to overcome these problems. The leadership and management of the school are good. Procedures to measure how well it performs are satisfactory. Strengths and weaknesses are clearly identified and the school knows what it needs to do to improve. The issues from the last inspection, with the exception of improving attendance, have been addressed successfully. This is against a background of many changes that have affected the school in recent years, including significant expansion in 2004 when it took the pupils from a nearby school that closed. The strong leadership of the headteacher, the good teaching and the effective work of the governing body mean that the school is well placed to continue the current pattern of improvement. The school provides good value for money

What the school should do to improve further

- Link the teaching of children's speaking and listening more closely to the development of their writing so that standards are raised.
- Improve some pupil's concentration and their ability to work without direct adult support.
- Work closely with parents to improve attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start in the nursery with skills and knowledge which are well below average for their age. Many have little or no English and very limited social skills. They make good progress, because of the good provision in the nursery and reception years. The school carefully tracks the progress that pupils make and judges their achievement to be satisfactory. Inspectors judge that children achieve well. Those who speak English as an additional language, who form the majority of the school's pupils, are supported well and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs also do well. Very few pupils attain at levels that are above average in reading, writing or mathematics. The school has introduced some effective measures to improve the quality of pupils' writing, but the links between their speaking and listening and their writing are not being developed sufficiently well and this is having a negative impact on pupils' learning. All pupils receive good teaching, which raises standards from well below average when children start school to below average at the end of Years 2 and 4. This represents

good progress. There is clear evidence that over the last two years standards have improved and are getting closer to the national average. Given the school's rigorous testing procedures and the realistic, but challenging, targets they have been set for pupils' attainment, it is likely that these improvements will continue. The good teaching and good leadership and management also make a positive contribution to this improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school is a happy and caring place in which pupils make good progress. The provision made for the personal development and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strengths of the school. Pupils enjoy school and show enthusiasm for learning. They feel safe and know that adults will listen and respond to their concerns. Pupils enjoy working together. This is evident during the recently introduced, daily, Enjoyment and Enrichment sessions. These sessions promote pupils creative development well. Behaviour is good. However, a few pupils find it difficult to concentrate for long enough without adult help. Pupils and parents show an interest in school life and respond positively when their views are sought. For example, parents welcomed the opportunity to discuss the new school uniform, which has helped the pupils to develop a sense of identity and pride. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthy food and the school provides a good range of sporting activities to promote physical well-being. The pupils report that they really enjoy them. Through fund-raising activities pupils are encouraged to think of others and understand the contribution they can make to their community. This also helps pupils to gain economic awareness. Attendance is below the national average and some pupils are often late for school. The school makes every effort to encourage good attendance. Pupils receive certificates, and good attendance is celebrated each week during assembly. The education of some pupils is disrupted by long holidays taken during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to make good progress. Teachers plan interesting lessons and clearly explain what pupils are going to learn, so that they know what to do. Teachers expect good behaviour and most pupils respond well. However, there are a few in some classes who find it difficult to concentrate. Sometimes this is because they find it hard to learn or, in some cases, they do not understand English well enough. Tasks challenge all children well. Those who find it hard to learn have plenty of good help, particularly from teaching assistants. Teachers pose thoughtful questions and encourage children to think. For example, children in Year 4 were asked 'What do you want to know about Mount Etna?' After some discussion they replied 'We would like to know if it is in the city or the country.' The school works effectively to help children to improve their speaking and listening. However, teachers

do not give children sufficient opportunities to link their speaking and listening closely enough to their written work. Teachers assess what each pupil knows and plan the next stages of learning effectively, but they do not always let pupils know exactly what is that they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and effectively meets the needs of all the pupils and the requirements of the National Curriculum. This term the school has introduced an exciting new curriculum which gives pupils a wider understanding of their own and other cultures through the imaginative presentation of subjects such as history, geography, art and design and technology. There are daily enrichment activities and pupils choose from a broader range of activities than might otherwise be possible in their classes. This gives them the chance to develop other interests, often whilst working together and supporting each other. The enrichment activities seen during the inspection were successful and pupils clearly enjoyed their learning. The curriculum is also enriched well by a wide range of well supported after-school sports clubs and a very popular parent-and-child pottery club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Teachers know the pupils well. They provide learning activities which meet their needs well, helping them to make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because knowledgeable teachers provide good levels of support and guidance. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Pupils work hard to achieve challenging targets. However, because there are some weaknesses in the quality of marking in some classes, pupils do not always know what they have to do to improve their work. There are good procedures in place for ensuring all pupils are safe. Child protection arrangements are good. Effective links with social services, the educational psychologist and speech therapists have a positive impact on the pupils learning. Pupils who are looked after by the local authority are well supported.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school make a good contribution to improving standards and to ensuring that all pupils are supported well. The headteacher has been in post for just over two terms. In partnership with the governors and staff she has introduced effective measures to bring about improvements and higher standards. There is a clear focus on developing the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, whilst ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning. The school involves parents and pupils well when considering how it might improve. The headteacher and the effective governing body have a very productive working partnership. Together, they understand

the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what it needs to do to improve. The school improvement plan is a well-structured document that shows clearly how improvements will be brought about and evaluated. This is based partly on the good procedures for the analysis of test results and for evaluating pupils' progress. There are plans for senior staff and subject leaders to check on and assess the quality of teaching and learning. However, these are at an early stage in their development, mainly because many staff are new to the school. The governing body and headteacher work effectively to make sure that the available resources are used well.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for talking to us and for being so helpful during the inspection. We were pleased to hear that you like your school and think that it is good. We also think your school is good. We like the ways in which your teachers take good care of you and help you to do as well as you can. We also think that your headteacher and school governors are good at making sure that everything at your school works well. There are some things that your school can do to make your learning even better. Your teachers will be trying to help you with your speaking and listening in ways that will also make your writing as good as it can be. You will also have to help as much as you can. You can do this by listening carefully to you teachers and by keeping going with your work, especially when your teachers want you to work on your own. The school will also be helping you and your parents to make sure you attend as often as you can and that you arrive at school each day on time.