



Aldercar Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112555
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278959
Inspection dates 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Andrew Cook LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Godkin Drive
School category	Community		NG16 4GL
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01773713428
Number on roll	147	Fax number	01773713428
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Andrew Page
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Gayle Shiels

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. Most children are of White British heritage and a small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. Children enter the nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding which is below that which is typical for their age. The percentage of children who are identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly below average. The school has an Enhanced Resource Facility (ERF) for children who are deaf or hearing impaired. At the time of the inspection, there were four children supported by this provision. Children in this provision are taught through the medium of British Sign Language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be a good school and inspectors agree. It has particular strengths in the way that it cares for and guides children and supports deaf and hearing impaired children. The headteacher is a good leader and is effectively improving the school working with a management team of senior staff. She leads the emphasis on care that is given to the children and in doing so acts as a good role model for what the school believes in. The governors of the school offer satisfactory support and get involved in moving the school forwards. Children in the Nursery and Reception years get a good deal. They respond well to how teachers organise their work and praise and encourage them. Overall children make good progress as they go through the school, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Recent work has been done to improve how mathematics is taught and there is evidence in children's work and the school's good tracking systems that this has raised standards. Overall, teaching is good, although in a few lessons more able children were not given sufficiently challenging work. The curriculum the school provides is good and is especially enriched with a number of visits and visitors for each topic the children study. Attendance is below average and there is a need for improvement. The school provides good value for money. It has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve children's attendance by continuing to work with families and the local authority.
- Focus more on giving appropriately challenging tasks for more able children so that they make as much progress as would be expected.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From a below average start as they enter the Nursery, children make good progress so that by the end of Year 2 they reach average standards. Children with learning difficulties make at least good progress as do deaf and hearing impaired children. The assessments made by teachers for the Year 2 children in 2005, showed that children had made good progress especially in reading and writing. In mathematics, although overall the progress they had made was good, there were only a few Year 2 children who attained above average standards. However, because of the focus the school has had on mathematics, the picture now looks better and more Year 2 children are on course to reach the above average level. In the Year 2 tests, boys and girls do equally well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children join the school with positive attitudes to school, which staff nurture effectively. Consequently, they make good progress with their work. Older children enjoy their schooling too, because work is interesting, teachers help them develop good work habits, and they know that they are cared for. They have good attitudes to work and behave well, particularly on the playground at dinner time when there are lots of activities for them to do. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children develop a caring attitude towards each other and raise funds for charities. The school has an excellent 'Dream Den' that helps pupils improve their behaviour and confidence. One pupil said, 'It's my favourite room.' The school works hard to improve attendance. It has improved but is below average, so there is further work to do. Children have a good understanding of what to do to be healthy and can talk sensibly about the value of exercise and eating wisely. Parental surveys confirm that children feel safe in school. Through their learning in English and mathematics, children make good progress in gaining the skills needed for their future working lives. The school council is active and, for example, has created a 'friendship bench' for anyone who does not have a friend to play with at break times.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is effective and results in children learning effectively and making good progress. Children who are deaf and hearing impaired receive excellent teaching. The programme of work they are given is very carefully matched to their needs and helps them deal with their disability and become confident learners. Teachers' planning is good and ensures lessons are well thought out and interesting. Teachers often match the work carefully to children's different needs so that they build on what they already know. However in some lessons more could be done to make sure that higher attaining children are challenged with appropriately difficult tasks. Children enjoy learning. They respond well to the organisation of lessons and the way in which teachers praise and nurture them. Children are encouraged to get on with each other and help each other. All of this helps to create a place where children flourish and learn well. Well qualified teaching assistants effectively support teachers and work as part of the team of staff. They teach small groups, work with children who need extra help, using an effective range of skills. They are good at adapting work to help children learn and make good evaluations of the progress children make. The school works well with parents involving them in children's learning through sending home children's learning targets and holding parent workshops on different curriculum areas.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and it allows pupils to make good progress. The school has a number of national and other awards that confirm the good quality of its work. These include the Health Promoting School Award, the Intermediate Award for Anti Bullying and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school provides children with many practical activities that make learning enjoyable. The school makes good use of visitors and of visits to interesting places locally. Each topic has an enriching activity. For example, work about the seaside was supported by a visiting drama group who taught pupils about what the seaside was like in Edwardian times. Extra curricular activities are good. They are well attended and enhance children's understanding of, for example, safe and healthy living. Teachers are increasingly planning lessons that focus on children's skills that they can use across different subjects. For example, children need reading skills to understand how to answer many problems in mathematics, and lessons increasingly focus on giving pupils the capacity to do this. The school has made a good job of improving the mathematics curriculum. As a result, standards have improved because teachers are more responsive to children's needs and make sure that they have consolidated key points in lessons before they move on. Higher attainers in some lessons have more demanding tasks to do to improve their rate of progress, but this is not always the case. Children who are deaf and hearing impaired have a very well organised programme that thoughtfully blends lessons to help children learn new skills individually and to be included in whole class lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The well-being of children is at the heart of the school's thinking and teachers promote children's health, safety and well-being effectively. The school diligently ensures that children are safe. There are clear policies to guide practice. The arrangements for child protection are robust and the school carefully attends to assessments of physical risk around the site and on visits. Teachers keep a close watch on how children are getting on, both in their academic work and personal development. Although children have targets in English and mathematics the school recognises that these could be used more effectively. The support given to children with learning difficulties is good. Children with disabilities are outstandingly well cared for. The Enhanced Resource Facility (ERF) gives deaf and hearing impaired children an excellent start. The school works well with other agencies when the need arises, to ensure that children are well supported and can make good progress. The school provides access for parents of very young children to a voluntary pre-nursery session (Aldercar Acorns) in the hall. Parents and their children enjoy the experience and these weekly sessions introduce very young children to the school environment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a good role model for her staff and has exciting plans for the future of the school. She leads a management team of senior staff which is increasingly taking on extra responsibility and facing up to any challenges that come along. This effective leadership and management have created a school where children respond well to the care they receive and as a result are confident, happy and learn. The governors of the school provide satisfactory support and challenge. They know the school is doing well but also know that in some areas it could do even better. The governors, working with the management team, have drawn up good development plans to improve the school further. Leadership and management of the ERF for children who are deaf and hearing impaired are good and this provision is a strength of the school. The school effectively evaluates how well it is doing and challenges itself to do better. Parents and children are listened to and appropriate action is taken when they raise ideas. The headteacher and her management team have shown that they can improve the school, for example through the work they have done in improving the teaching of mathematics. This work proves that they have the capacity to make even further improvements.

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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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	3	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	3	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	2	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	2	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	3	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

I am writing to say thank you for being so friendly to us when the inspectors visited your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and seeing some of the lovely work you do. Here are some of the things we liked best: - We thought the adults in the school were doing a really good job, looking after you and caring for you. - The special way everyone looked after those of you who are deaf or have hearing impairments. - Your work showed us that you are all doing really well. - We thought your behaviour was good especially at dinner time when there were lots of things for you to do. - The Dream Den is brilliant! (We both wished we could have stayed in there longer). We have asked Mrs Shiels if she can do two jobs: 1. We think too many children do not go to school everyday. This is not very good! We have asked Mrs Shiels to see if she can do something about this. 2. Make sure that all of you have work that really makes you do your best in every lesson. We hope that you keep on caring for each other because it makes your school a good place to be in.