



Pear Tree Community Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112727
LEA City of Derby LEA
Inspection number 279002
Inspection dates 30 March 2006 to 31 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Raymond Jardine LI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Pear Tree Street
School category	Community		DE23 8PN
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 760610
Number on roll	283	Fax number	01332 761810
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Sara Bolton
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2004	Headteacher	Mrs. Maddie Oldershaw

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size community junior school situated in the centre of the city of Derby. The area it serves is socially disadvantaged and ethnically diverse. Most pupils are of Pakistani, White British, other White and Indian heritage. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is above average. A significant proportion are newly arrived in the country and are non-English speakers. Almost two thirds of pupils do not have English as their first language. There are 11 children of refugees or asylum seekers and 19 Travellers' children. Additional funding is provided in all for 42 minority ethnic learners to support their learning. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is considerably above average. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The school has been led by an acting headteacher and acting assistant headteacher from January 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate. The school's view is that it is satisfactory although it agrees with inspectors that both pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching are inadequate. The school is not providing value for money. Overall standards are very low. Pupils' progress has been inadequate compared to that in other schools nationally in recent years and the school was significantly below its Year 6 targets in 2005. There is still considerable underachievement currently in the school but less so in Years 3 and 4 than in older year groups. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They behave well and relationships amongst the many ethnic groups in the school are good. Most pupils enjoy school. However, the poor attendance of a significant minority in Years 5 and 6 adversely affects their standards. The quality of care is satisfactory. Learning mentors are having a positive impact on pupils' attendance and well-being. The curriculum is also satisfactory. However, teaching is inadequate. While some teaching is good, it varies considerably. Some is unsatisfactory, mainly because pupils are not appropriately challenged to enable them to make progress. The pace of improvement in remedying the serious weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection has been too slow. A new headteacher has very recently been appointed, but other aspects of the school's management, including its staff structure and responsibilities, are not secure and this undermines the drive to raise standards. The school's self-evaluation is inadequate, particularly the rigour with which teaching is monitored and developed. Curriculum leaders and governors are not involved enough in monitoring, reviewing and improving the school's performance. The school is using assessment to identify where there is underachievement but the impact of its work to address it is patchy. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by improving the quality and consistency of teaching and ensuring that all pupils are appropriately challenged.
- Secure the school's management structure and staff roles and responsibilities to provide a strong direction for improvement at all levels.
- Ensure that the quality of self-evaluation is rigorous, inclusive of staff, governors, parents and pupils and is embedded in the school's work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average. By Year 6, standards are very low and pupils' progress inadequate. Since the last inspection in 2004, standards have remained very low in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and

science. In 2005, science standards improved a little but English standards fell still further. Few pupils attained above the expected level for Year 6 pupils in any of these subjects. The school fell significantly short of its targets for English and mathematics in 2005. Pupils' progress from their standards at the end of Year 2 has declined since 2003. In both 2004 and 2005 overall progress was inadequate compared to typical progress in schools nationally. In 2005, it was inadequate in English, mathematics and science. Progress amongst specific groups such as pupils of Pakistani origin, White British heritage, those whose first language is English and lower attaining pupils was also inadequate. Higher attaining pupils made satisfactory progress. The school's targets for 2006 are lower than for 2005 but are realistic. Some inadequate teaching and use of assessment to ensure pupils are sufficiently challenged have been contributory factors to the underachievement, which the school acknowledges is still there among its pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In Years 3 and 4, there are early signs of more pupils making the expected progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have reasonable opportunities to experience and learn about the many cultures represented in the school. Most pupils enjoy school although, despite the good efforts of the school, too many fail to attend regularly. This is one factor in pupils underachieving, particularly in the acquisition of basic skills, which leaves many of them ill prepared for their future. Relationships with teachers are good. Pupils co-operate willingly and they are keen to get down to work. Whenever the opportunity arises they happily work together or independently. When lessons are engaging, the quality of concentration is good. These positive attitudes lead to good behaviour. Pupils feel safe. They say they are not bullied and have confidence that if they ever were it would be dealt with effectively by staff. The school promotes pupils' fitness and health and they know the importance of a good diet. Physical education is satisfactory and many take part in sports after school. Pupils make satisfactory contributions to the life of the school and, occasionally in the community such as taking part in a tree planting project.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The inspection team agrees with the school's evaluation that the quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. There is some good teaching but overall, it is too variable, some is less than satisfactory and the impact of it is not good enough to raise standards. In good lessons, planning is detailed and well thought out so that the purpose of the lesson is made clear to pupils. They respond positively to these lessons and are keen to learn. Pupils are well motivated when the work they are given is varied and challenging. In the weaker lessons the level of work is too hard or too easy so that

most cannot make the progress of which they are capable. Some teachers have too low expectations of how much pupils should learn in lessons. The pupils like finding things out for themselves and they benefit from working with learning partners when given the opportunity, but in some lessons, whole class teaching is too drawn out to enable this. Most teachers mark pupils' work carefully but there is inconsistency in practice. Marking is generally encouraging but too often does not tell the pupils how to improve their work so that the same mistakes continue. The use of assessment to help identify gaps in pupils' learning and to build on what they know is sometimes not used well enough to inform teaching. Satisfactory support is provided by teaching assistants when working with individual pupils in lessons, for example, those at an early stage of speaking English. Homework is set regularly and is taken seriously by a lot of pupils as evidenced in the over-subscribed homework sessions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. There have been recent improvements in the provision for literacy and numeracy as the role of subject leaders has developed. As a result, pupils are beginning to make progress in their basic skills. Resources and provision for information and communication technology (ICT) have also improved since the last inspection with each pupil now being taught for one lesson a week. ICT is increasingly being used in other subjects to broaden learning opportunities but more work is needed to develop pupils' skills fully. A wide ranging programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is giving pupils opportunities to express their feelings and prepare them for their future. Local artists help pupils to develop their artistic talents and drama is now being used across the curriculum to make learning more varied and to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils benefit from a number of after-school activities, including a games club, music group and maths club. Pupils in Year 3 work on an allotment and this is helping them to develop a variety of new skills. Pupils also enjoy participating in regular visits and welcome visitors to the school who will extend their learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, the care provided for pupils is satisfactory. The school's systems for ensuring pupils' protection and safety are robust. Pupils think the school is a friendly and welcoming place and they readily adopt the school's positive values. This means even though pupils are from many different backgrounds they get on well together and behave well. The school is resolute in managing behaviour and does this well with rewards and clearly understood sanctions. The school takes effective steps to identify vulnerable pupils who are given good care and support through programmes developed by the school's learning mentors. The support for pupils who do not speak English is satisfactory. The assessment information being collected is now used well in identifying under-achievement and pupils with learning difficulties. This has led to the organisation of support to those underachieving. However, assessment information is not always

used effectively to focus work at the right level, for example, in booster lessons to accelerate specific pupils' learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Overall leadership and management are inadequate. Serious weaknesses were identified at the last inspection, including the way performance is monitored and improved, the role of curriculum leaders and the school's use of assessment. Since then, leadership and management have been ineffective in addressing these weaknesses to improve standards adequately. The school has had temporary leadership since January 2006 following almost a year of uncertainty while governors tried to appoint a new headteacher. The acting headteacher was appointed permanently very recently. But the roles and responsibilities of other key staff remain under review with a new staffing structure being considered. While staff morale has improved under the new headteacher, leadership as a whole is not providing the drive needed to improve the school's performance. The quality of the school's self-evaluation is inadequate. The methods used to monitor and develop teaching quality are not rigorous in evaluating the impact of teaching on learning and pupils' progress. Consequently, some teaching remains inadequate. A new framework for evaluating teaching quality is currently being devised to focus more attention on how well pupils learn. The role of curriculum leaders is also not developed enough, although it is better in literacy and numeracy. The governors are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the school's work, although the chair of governors understands the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school is working to involve parents more and to take account of their views but this is also at an early stage. However, assessment is now better used to identify underachieving pupils. The school's improvement plan focuses mainly on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy and improving teaching. But the impact so far is patchy and too little has been done to improve science standards. The plan is currently being revised by the headteacher to provide a longer term focus for improvement. The school is not demonstrating a secure capacity to improve its performance. Improvements since the last inspection in pupils' achievement, teaching quality and management have been slow. Weaknesses in all these remain and undermine any confidence that recent signs of improvement in achievement can be sustained.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	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	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	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

We enjoyed visiting your school recently and speaking with many of you, including your School Council. We were looking at what the school sees as its strengths and what needs developing further and we agree with the school about many of these. I am writing now to tell you about what we found out about your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the politeness and respect that you show each other and your teachers. You co-operate well when working together in lessons. You work willingly and many of you take advantage of the homework sessions provided. You told us that you enjoy school, feel safe and secure and that you are learning how to live healthily. However, many of you could be doing better in subjects like English, mathematics and science if lessons took more account of what you can already do. Some of you find the work you are given too easy or too hard. We have asked your teachers to make sure your work is right for you and to give you more guidance in their marking on how to improve. Your headteacher agrees. Staff and governors have also been asked to check more closely how well the school is doing to ensure it keeps improving. We feel that your school needs help so that it can make things better as quickly as possible. So some special measures are being taken to help the school to improve. Your teachers will receive some extra help and inspectors will visit the school regularly to see how well it is doing. You can also play your part by ensuring that you attend regularly and continue to work hard. With all good wishes for your future at Pear Tree Community Junior School.