



St Elizabeth's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112907
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 279053
Inspection dates 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. David Simpson LI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Matlock Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | DE56 2JD |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01773822278 |
| Number on roll | 197 | Fax number | 01773880600 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr. Robert Hobson |
| Date of previous inspection | 11 October 1999 | Headteacher | Mr. Bryan Lowe |

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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 situated in the town of Belper and serves a very wide catchment area. The proportion of the pupils who are entitled to free school meals or who are identified on the register of special educational needs is below the national average. Almost all pupils are White British. The headteacher has been in post for two terms following a period where the school had been managed by a temporary headteacher. The school was unsuccessful in its attempt to appoint a deputy headteacher for September 2004 and currently has two acting deputies.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Elizabeth's is a school where pupils enjoy their education and benefit from the very good care and guidance they receive. Overall, provision is satisfactory. The senior leadership team currently judges some aspects of the school's performance too generously. However, they are an effective team who are rapidly becoming more rigorous and are rightly ambitious to see the school make further headway. The school has improved since the last inspection and is well placed to make rapid further progress given the dedication of the staff, the enthusiasm of the pupils and the good support of parents. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and attain levels which are higher than those expected for their age. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall until they leave the school at the end of Year 6. However, the school recognises that it needs to monitor their performance more regularly in order to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential. In particular the school wishes to further challenge the more able and has introduced a range of strategies to improve standards in mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is some good practice where teachers use a variety of strategies to engage the pupils' interest. This needs to be more widely disseminated throughout the school. The curriculum is good and the pupils' education is enriched by the wide variety of experiences offered to them. Provision for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has significantly improved and is an integral feature of teaching. The school works well in partnership with other organisations to promote pupils' well-being. It is an effective school which gives sound value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the pupils' rates of progress, especially by challenging the more able, and particularly in mathematics. - Analyse the pupils' performance more regularly to quickly identify and remedy underperformance. - Improve the proportion of teaching which is good or better by further sharing good practice.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The children make good progress during the Foundation Stage and enter Key Stage 1 with levels of attainment that are above those expected for their age. Their standards in mathematics are lower than those in English. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and attainment in end of key stage teacher assessments and tests has been generally above average in recent years. In 2005, a smaller proportion of the pupils attained the expected standard for mathematics by the end of Year 6 but significantly more pupils attained the higher level 5 in English than the national average. The school is rightly ambitious to see more pupils attain the higher levels and to stretch the more able. It has introduced effective strategies to address specific weaknesses in mathematics, for example, to improve the pupils' problem-solving skills. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. However, whilst the school

monitors pupils' progress, this is not sufficiently regular or rigorous to rapidly address individual instances of underachievement or to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is demonstrated by good attendance, punctuality, the pupils' enthusiasm for lessons and positive parental views. Pupils generally behave well and there have been no exclusions in the last year. Adults present very good role models, enabling pupils to learn to show respect and consideration towards each other. Pupils know what to do if they experience bullying, although occurrences are extremely rare. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Events, such as 'Multi-Cultural Weeks', effectively help pupils to gain a greater awareness of other cultures. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop independence. Older pupils gain valuable skills for future life by costing and organising fund-raising activities. The school council makes a strong positive contribution to school life. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and keeping fit. Very strong links with the community give pupils a good awareness of the wider world.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers have very secure relationships with pupils and discipline is usually very effective. Work is carefully planned and many teachers provide an exciting range of activities that stimulate most pupils' interest. It is often set at different levels to cater for the range of abilities within the class, although sometimes greater challenge is needed for the more able. However, introductions are at times too lengthy and teachers do not always ask searching enough questions, resulting in some pupils' not making as much progress as they could. Teachers' more consistent approach towards assessment is starting to help pupils understand how they can improve their work. Older pupils value their increasing involvement in setting targets for future development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good curriculum that has improved since the last inspection. Provision is enhanced by good quality extra-curricular opportunities including a wide range of musical activities, which pupils greatly enjoy. Recent initiatives, such as 'Health Weeks', have given the curriculum greater breadth. The school uses visits and visitors very well to enhance pupils' learning. Strong links with local secondary schools ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of the pupils' education. There is a good

programme of personal, social and health education, including sex, relationships and drugs education. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides an appropriate range of activities and, elsewhere in the school, teaching time is used effectively, resulting in a balanced and interesting curriculum. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good, enabling these pupils to achieve well. Improvements in ICT since the previous inspection have ensured that this subject is now an important part of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care provided by the school is good overall, with some very good features. Parents rightly regard it as a strength of the school. The school caters well for the physical and mental welfare of its pupils. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are very effective. Good child protection and health and safety procedures are firmly in place and staff provide very good pastoral support for individual pupils' needs. There are suitable arrangements to ensure the security of the site, although dangers accessing the entrance to the school, identified during the previous inspection, remain a problem. Pupils feel that the school provides a safe environment and are confident they can confide in an adult. The 'worry box' provides a secure, anonymous method for pupils to communicate worries. Recent developments are starting to address the needs of a small group of vulnerable pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led by the headteacher who is providing clear and dynamic direction to the school's work. He has accurately identified the priorities for improvement. He is valued by staff, pupils and parents, one of whom described him as 'brilliant.' He has established an effective temporary senior leadership team which includes two acting deputies and the member of staff in charge of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. There is a common sense of purpose based upon high aspirations for the school. The headteacher has systematically established procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work, whilst ensuring that staff receive the necessary training to further improve. However, the school recognises that it needs to refine procedures to track the progress of individual pupils more frequently and ensure that they are on track to fulfil their potential. The headteacher is also aware that the role of subject co-ordinators needs to be developed to increase their involvement in monitoring and school improvement. Sensible adjustments to the next development planning cycle will enable the school to better take account of the pupils' performance in end of year assessment to set future priorities. The views of parents and pupils are actively sought and acted upon; for example, resulting in changes to the school uniform. The chair of governors took up post in the summer term. He has a clear sense of the school's priorities and is rightly looking to develop the governing body's monitoring of the school's performance. The introduction of a curriculum monitoring group is a useful development, although it is too soon to measure its impact on raising standards.

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Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 | 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 | 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? | 3 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | 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 | 2 | 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? | 3 | 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 | 3 | 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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed talking with you, visiting your lessons and coming to your assembly. We could see that you try hard to do your best and help each other. Well done! We also had a good time talking with your teachers and the many other adults who help you with your learning. We were very pleased to see how you all get on with each other in lessons and around the school. You are well cared for and your views are listened to. For example the 'worry box' is an excellent idea and you've helped to change the school uniform. It was good to see that so many of you are taking part in the very impressive range of clubs and activities available, including learning how to play the guitar or violin. Your teachers, Mr Lowe and other adults in the school work very hard to make sure that you have an interesting and worthwhile time at the school. We have asked Mr Lowe to do a few things that should help you all get on even better than you are doing now! We want your teachers to make sure that you keep working your hardest and get the best possible results you can before you leave the school. To help you with this we have asked Mr Lowe to check more often that you are getting on with your work as well as you should. Finally we have asked the teachers to share with one another the things that they do which make your lessons exciting and interesting. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.