



Northgate Primary and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122428
LEA CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LEA
Inspection number 281261
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Michael Best LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Suez Street
School category	Community		NG7 7GB
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9156896
Number on roll	209	Fax number	0115 9156897
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Ruby Ul Haq
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	15 May 2006 - 16 May 2006	281261

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is broadly similar in size to other primary schools. Pupil mobility is much higher than average. Social and economic need is well above that found in most schools. The attainment of children entering the Foundation Stage is extremely low. The proportion of children with learning difficulties is above the national average. Pupils come from many minority ethnic groups. About 60% are from White British backgrounds, with the proportions of pupils from East European and African backgrounds rising. Some 25% of pupils speak English as an additional language, with many at the early stages of learning.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school that provides good care and support for its pupils. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that, at present, its effectiveness is satisfactory. The school's capacity for further improvement is good and it provides satisfactory value for money. Relationships are good. Pupils have positive attitudes to work, behave well, and are helping to improve and develop the school. The school has sound links with parents and its other partners. The curriculum satisfactorily promotes pupils' learning needs, and their personal and social development, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum. The standards and quality in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 6 are rising but, overall, remain exceptionally low compared with national averages. Nevertheless, all pupils make sound progress and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' use of assessment information does not always challenge all groups sufficiently well, particularly in the development of their problem-solving and investigative skills, and in how they reflect on what they learn. The clear and purposeful vision of the headteacher is successfully driving the school forward. The quality of self-evaluation is good, and priorities for improvement are well chosen and effectively resourced. There is a strong team spirit within the staff who are focused on raising standards. Subject leaders look at teachers' planning and pupils' work but do not systematically monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching to help teachers improve their performance. The governing body knows the school's strengths and shortcomings, and satisfactorily evaluates its work.

What the school should do to improve further

- continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6
- improve pupils' investigative and experimental skills so that learning time can be more productive
- provide pupils with more time and help to reflect on what they have learned
- develop pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum
- improve the monitoring and evaluation skills of subject leaders so that teachers can share good practice effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When they start in the Foundation Stage, many children have very limited skills and experiences, especially in language and communication. The proportion of children reaching the early learning goals by the start of Year 1 is much lower than in the majority of schools. In the 2005 National Curriculum assessments and tests, compared to national averages standards at the end of Year 2 were exceptionally low in reading and writing, and broadly average in mathematics. At the end of Year 6, standards were broadly average in English, with pupils exceeding the school's targets following an

intensive programme of teaching and learning. In mathematics and science standards were exceptionally low compared with national averages, and targets in mathematics were missed because of weaknesses in pupils' problem-solving and investigative work. However, there is an improving trend in standards in English and mathematics, and the school is reversing the decline in standards in science over time. Achievement is satisfactory. Overall, differences between boys and girls are not significant compared with other schools. Whilst the 2005 Key Stage 2 test results highlighted pupils' very good progress in English, they also identified that some groups of pupils, notably those pupils with the capacity to reach the higher levels and some boys, were not achieving as well as they could, particularly in mathematics and science. The school is successfully addressing these shortcomings through an intensive support programme. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress. Those with additional learning needs make satisfactory progress. The impact of teachers setting more challenging targets is starting to bring about improvements in learners' work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are very positive about school. They thoroughly enjoy learning and taking part in activities outside lessons. Most children get on well with each other, try their best, and work and play harmoniously. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils respond well to the school's strategies for improving attendance, particularly the weekly 'best class' attendance awards. The number of fixed-term exclusions of boys and girls, which amounted to 14 in the last school year, has been reduced sharply. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. The school celebrates the wide variety of cultures and languages and pupils have good respect for others' beliefs and customs. They develop confidence and self-esteem because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory although they are not given enough opportunities to reflect on their experiences and learning. Pupils understand well the importance of healthy eating, regular exercise, and keeping safe. They help each other in lessons and in the playground, and show a good respect for each other's views and property. Pupils are successfully developing skills related to making decisions. For example, school council members are successfully managing the school's recycling scheme and organising litter-picking patrols. Pupils are successfully developing key skills in literacy and numeracy, and learning to work together in teams which is contributing significantly to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, reflecting the school's own evaluation. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Relationships are good and staff successfully promote a calm and productive learning atmosphere. Learners are keen to succeed, and respond promptly and positively to instructions. Support

staff provide good quality help for pupils with additional needs and those learning English as an additional language. Where teaching is good, staff use a good range of teaching styles and resources, including the interactive white board, to capture learners' interest and concentration. They share clear and achievable learning objectives with learners, and successfully encourage pupils to make choices and take responsibility for their learning. Time is used well and staff use questions effectively to check progress during, and at the end of lessons. Where there are shortcomings, the pace of learning is not fast enough. Teachers tend to direct pupils' learning rather than giving them sufficient opportunities to develop their investigative and problem-solving skills or to reflect on what they have learnt. At times, more able pupils are not stretched enough by their work. The school has effective systems for assessing and recording learners' attainment and progress. Teachers are improving their use of targets to provide a better challenge for pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils steadily develop knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. Visits, such as to Winmarleigh Hall, and visitors, such as African drummers, help to bring learning to life for them. Themed weeks, for example on local history, help to stimulate pupils' interests and break down barriers between subjects and promote learning. As a result, learners' horizons are broadened considerably as they move through school. Teachers plan and review carefully what is taught to ensure that work matches the needs of most pupils. In mathematics and science, problem-solving and investigative work are given too little attention. Pupils do not use computers widely enough across the curriculum to develop their ICT skills. A wide range of after-school clubs, such as circus skills, cheerleading and football training benefit pupils of all ages, and Spanish is taught in Years 3 and 4. As well as adding to pupils' enjoyment of learning, these rich experiences help to develop healthy and varied lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils and parents express their confidence in the school. Staff take good care of pupils and demonstrate a genuine concern for their welfare. Health and safety systems are good, and child protection procedures rigorous. High expectations of pupils, and much use of praise and encouragement, are helping to improve behaviour. Effective support for vulnerable pupils is reducing the number of exclusions and the school has good procedures for re-integrating pupils following exclusion. There are good systems to monitor and improve attendance. Support for pupils, particularly those with additional needs and those learning English as an additional language, is good and benefits from regular contact with external agencies. There are effective systems in place to record information about pupils' achievements and to track their progress as they move through the school. The school has rightly identified how teachers can

make better use of this information in their lessons to set their pupils more challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The recently appointed headteacher leads and manages the school well. Her clear and purposeful vision for the school's development is firmly focused on raising standards for all pupils. The headteacher and her deputy work well together and there is a strong team spirit within the staff. The successful implementation of the Intensive Support Programme to raise standards in literacy and numeracy bears witness to the headteacher's commitment to raise adults' expectations of what pupils can achieve, to make the curriculum more relevant to pupils' needs and to improve their attitudes and behaviour. The work of subject leaders is satisfactory. They regularly look at teachers' planning and pupils' work but their systematic monitoring of lessons is underdeveloped. The school's procedures for self-evaluation are good. It gives an honest and accurate picture of its work, and takes appropriate account of stakeholders' views. Improved analysis of pupils' performance, together with effective monitoring of teaching and learning by senior managers and local authority specialists, is successfully identifying the way forward in raising the achievement of all learners. The school's priorities for improvement are ambitious but achievable. Carefully costed, each priority has clear success criteria. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating progress towards these targets are secure. The governing body is supportive of the school. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their role in evaluating their work of the school is satisfactory. The budget is effectively deployed, with reserves within recommended levels. The school has satisfactorily addressed the issues identified at the previous inspection. Its capacity for further improvement is good.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	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	3	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	3	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	3	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	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 making us very welcome when we visited your school earlier in the week. You enthusiastically told us about all the exciting things you do during lessons and after school, especially the circus skills. We are particularly pleased to hear how you are helping to improve the school through the elected school council. Your good behaviour and respect for each other impressed us. We are very pleased to see that the number of exclusions is very much lower than last year. Mrs Anderson and the staff are working hard to improve the school. They look after you well and give you a lot of support when you find your work difficult or when you are upset. To make your work more interesting, they plan special 'themed' weeks when you study different subjects and arrange for visits and visitors to help you learn more. You clearly enjoyed your local history project! We think your teachers know how well you are doing with your work but they don't always make enough use of this information to help you do as well as you could. You say that your work is now more challenging work and that you like this. We agree with you. You are getting much better results in English and your numeracy work is also improving. We think you could do even better! In mathematics and science in particular, we want your teachers to improve your skills in problem-solving, carrying out investigations and conducting experiments. We also think they should give you more time and help to think about what you learn in lessons and hear in assemblies. We're pleased to see that you now have some super new laptop computers and want you use make more use of these to research information and present your work. There are a lot of interesting things going on in your lessons. We want your teachers to spend some time visiting other classes to see what you are learning about and how well you are doing. This will help them make their lessons even better. Do keep working hard and enjoying school.