



John Davies Primary and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122473
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 281275
Inspection dates 21–22 November 2006
Reporting inspector Dorothy Bathgate HMI

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Barker Street |
| School category | Community | | Huthwaite, Sutton-in-Ashfield Nottinghamshire NG17 2LH |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01623 487087 |
| Number on roll (school) | 310 | Fax number | 01623 487087 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mr R Geeves |
| | | Headteacher | Mr S P Bowler |
| Date of previous school inspection | 28 February 2000 | | |

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

John Davies Primary School is situated in the village of Huthwaite, near Mansfield. The school is in a deprived area where there are high levels of unemployment. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average. The pupils, who are mostly from White British backgrounds, enter the school with below average standards. Although very few have a statement of educational needs, the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than average. Each year, a group of children from a local infant school join John Davies at the beginning of Key Stage 2.

There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection, including the appointment of the current headteacher. There have also been major changes in the governing body.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

John Davies Primary is an outstanding school. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with what the school provides. One parent's comment that her child, 'really enjoys school, loves to learn, and is thriving at John Davies Primary,' sums up the views of many others. The culture in the school is one of high aspirations. This has been achieved by creating a positive learning ethos where learning is fun, through establishing good relationships built on confidence and trust, and in a passionate belief that every child can succeed.

In the Foundation Stage the children achieve very well in all areas of learning and reach, or exceed, age-appropriate goals. This good progress continues through Key Stages 1 and 2. At the end of Key Stage 2, overall standards have been above average for the last two years, representing outstanding achievement from pupils' low starting points on entry to school. A dip in writing in 2006, mainly due to a small group of boys who did not meet their targets, has been swiftly addressed, and the school is on track to meet challenging writing targets for 2007.

The pupils' achievement is outstanding because they are well motivated to learn and the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The richness of the curriculum, combined with high quality teaching, mean that learning provides excitement and adventure, resulting in high achievement. However, some pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented in subjects other than English and mathematics, do not always experience a wider range of enriched learning opportunities to enable them to reach their full potential.

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The children's behaviour is exemplary. They gain high self-esteem through carefully planned encouragement to become independent, make choices, and take on responsibilities. The school has good systems to monitor attendance which has improved consistently over the past three years and is just in line with the national average. The school has recently been awarded the 'National Healthy Schools Gold Award' in recognition of its outstanding work on healthy lifestyles. All pupils make outstanding progress in acquiring basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT).

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and contribute strongly to pupils' progress, enjoyment and well-being. Pupils value the practical guidance they are given through individual targets and teachers' marking that tells them what they need to do better.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The school is led by a highly motivated headteacher and senior management team who work closely together to provide the best they can for the children. A commitment to review, evaluate and develop provision means that there is a constant drive for further improvement. Governors fulfil their roles very effectively.

Since the previous inspection, the school has made significant improvement and demonstrates outstanding capacity to continue this trend.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve writing, particularly that of boys, by using a range of relevant stimuli.
- Provide a range of enriched learning opportunities for gifted and talented pupils in subjects other than literacy and numeracy, so that they are able to reach their full potential.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement and standards are outstanding because of the excellent teaching, innovative curriculum, and high quality care that the school provides for each child. The challenging targets for improvement that have been set over the past two years, and met, mean that almost all pupils are making better than expected progress. Progress is tracked and monitored rigorously to ensure that any identified weaknesses are quickly remedied through appropriate action, which leads to rapid improvement.

Most children enter the school with skills that are less well developed than expected for their age. Throughout the Foundation Stage pupils make very good progress and meet age-expected goals by the end of the Reception year. Standards reached by the end of Year 2 have improved consistently over the past three years, and are now in line with national averages.

Pupils continue to make very good progress through Key Stage 2, and national test results for the last two years have been well above average in mathematics and science. Although there was a dip in writing standards in 2006, the school has taken swift action to address this issue and is on track to meet the challenging writing targets set for 2007. The high standard of writing seen during the inspection in the current Year 6 classes, both in lessons and in pupils' workbooks, confirms this. Writing now is generally of a high standard, nevertheless, the wider use of a range of relevant stimuli for boys especially is needed. Overall, pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 2, from their low starting points on entry to school, is outstanding.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make outstanding progress because of the degree of attention that is paid to providing work to meet the needs of individual children.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good because it is given a high priority by the school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, work hard in their lessons and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Pupils are developing a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives. They make good choices at lunch time from a varied menu and are keen to show visitors their healthy lunch boxes. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community through an effective school council and through undertaking a variety of other responsibilities, such as being, 'playground buddies'.

Pupils enjoy managing their class budgets to buy games and activities for wet play times, and this is helping them to develop financial management skills for the future. Although attendance is only just in line with the national average, it is no reflection of the pupils' attitudes to school. It has improved consistently over the past three years but, a small minority of parents continue to take their children on holiday in term time, which means that pupils miss valuable work.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. However, whilst assemblies provide good opportunities for reflection, other opportunities for reflection and for promoting pupils' cultural awareness, are not fully exploited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding and promote very effective learning. The very positive relationships between staff and pupils promote an atmosphere of care and trust. Activities are well matched to ability and resources chosen carefully to suit the ages of the learners. Pupils enjoy their lessons because the pace of work is good and they remain motivated. Lessons are extremely calm and well organised. Teachers set high expectations and identify clear objectives for different groups. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning. Teachers make outstanding use of interactive white-boards. Pupils in the Reception class, for example, were brimming with excitement as they used the white-board to develop their understanding of reflective symmetry.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding range of activities to help pupils to learn both in and out of lessons. A high priority is given to literacy and numeracy, with every opportunity taken to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects. ICT is used well to support learning in all subjects and learning is enriched through themed weeks such as art week, decade week (history), and media week. Children in the Nursery and Reception class enjoy a range of stimulating activities both inside their classrooms and in the stunning outdoor areas, where an excellent range of learning activities is provided. Educational visits, visitors and links with a local secondary college, provide good first hand learning opportunities which support pupils' achievement. Pupils who want to take part in extra-curricular activities such as sport, dance, art or music are encouraged to do so at a level that ensures they meet with success.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and are key features in all aspects of the school's life and work. Pupils say they feel safe in school because of the positive relationships which are built on confidence and trust. Parents agree that their children are looked after extremely well. Child protection procedures are in place. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified early and well supported through effective links with parents and a range of local agencies. The strong commitment and partnership between teachers and teaching assistants play an important part in the high quality of care and support given to every pupil.

The quality of academic guidance for pupils is also outstanding. Individual targets for literacy, numeracy and personal development provide pupils with clear and well understood ways to improve. Pupils agree that targets are helpful and are clear about what they need to do next to improve. Teachers' comments in pupils' work underline the thinking that every child matters by building pupils' confidence and feeling of self worth, as well as enabling them to reflect upon and improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides strong, passionate leadership. He has created a committed and dynamic senior management team which sets the tone for the school, and provides excellent care, guidance and support for the children. The school's processes for self-evaluation are exemplary and take account of the views of staff, governors and parents. There is a rigorous and effective programme of monitoring, evaluation, support and intervention. Performance management systems are robust and teachers are held accountable for the standards achieved by the pupils. Challenging targets are set for all pupils and progress is tracked through systematic and accurate analysis of assessment information. Governance is good and governors discharge their responsibilities well.

Since the last inspection the school has successfully tackled the issues that were identified and has raised achievement and improved provision, demonstrating outstanding capacity for future improvement.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 1 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 |

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

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 November 2006

Dear Children,

John Davies Primary, Barker Street, Huthwaite, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 2LH

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much and enjoyed talking to many of you in your lessons, at lunchtime, in the playground and in small groups. We really enjoyed hearing about the Year 5 visit to Cadbury World and would like to thank you again for the chocolates you brought back for us.

We know you are all very proud of your school and rightly so. We agree that your school is a great place to learn. Your teachers are really good at helping you to learn in exciting ways. I enjoyed watching some of you make chocolate buns and listening to you describe what happened to the mixture as you added the ingredients. Your behaviour is outstanding and this makes your school a calm and peaceful place. You care for each other well and I was pleased to see some Year 6 pupils taking their buddy responsibilities very seriously. You make healthy food choices at lunchtime and enjoy lots of physical activities in your wonderful playground and barn.

Even really good schools like John Davies need to continue to improve and I have asked Mr Bowler to improve two things. Many of you enjoy writing and are developing good writing skills. However, some of you, particularly some boys, would enjoy writing even more if you were able to write about things that really excited you. All pupils at John Davies are good at something and Mr Bowler makes sure he knows exactly what that is. I have asked your teachers to find as many exciting ways as possible to help each of you achieve your best, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.

I hope you will carry on working hard and continue to make your school a great place to learn!

With best wishes from

Mrs. Bathgate

Her Majesty's Inspector