



Eastlands Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122497
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281282
Inspection dates 8 May 2006 to 9 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Keith Edwards LI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Netherfield Lane
School category	Community		NG20 9PA
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623842257
Number on roll	136	Fax number	01623847381
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Rodney Hogg
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr. John Smith

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Meden Vale. Most of the children live locally. There are 136 girls and boys on roll who are taught in five classes. The majority of pupils are White and all come from homes where English is the first language. The range of socio-economic circumstances is broad. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, including those with statements of special educational need, is above that of most schools. Until September 2005, the school had much difficulty in recruiting and retaining a deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's self evaluation matches the inspection judgement that the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory standard of education within a caring environment. Standards in Year 6 are now broadly in line with the national average and the children's overall progress is satisfactory. This represents an improvement on the school's recent history as there have been clear pockets of underachievement as a result of a lack of rigour in monitoring children's progress and the quality of the school's work, especially in the lower school. The school has dealt with the issues from the last inspection, particularly the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and has made satisfactory progress since that time. However, there remains scope for improvement in children's writing. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with particular strengths in Years 5 and 6, where assessment information is beginning to be used more accurately when planning the children's work. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. School effectiveness has been strengthened by the recent appointment of a new deputy headteacher and the closer working partnership with the local education authority through the 'Improving School Initiative'. This has resulted in accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which puts the school in a sound position to improve further. Nevertheless, more rigour is still required to ensure all of the children are achieving their best. The personal development of the children is satisfactory, but there is still much to be done to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in writing and so improve the quality of provision. - Apply more rigour in evaluating the school's performance. - Improve the quality of teaching, by making sure that the work set is well matched to the children's abilities, particularly in Years 3 and 4. - Fully implement the school's outline plan to prepare the children for life in a multicultural society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Because of the more effective use of assessment information and determined teaching, standards in the current Year 6 classes are broadly in line with the national average. In relation to their attainment on entry, most children now make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. This represents a clear improvement on recent years during which there has been a history of underachievement due to a lack of rigour in monitoring children's performance and a lack of challenge in the work set. In recent years, the school has consistently failed to meet its academic targets in the national tests for Year 6 children, and its performance has been amongst the bottom twenty percent nationally. Although the current Year 6 children are performing better than previous cohorts, they will not reach their ambitious targets. Standards in writing have

been unsatisfactory, and the school has rightly placed more emphasis on speaking and listening to develop the children's expressive language, but more work needs to be done. Children's computer skills have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Children with learning difficulties receive sensitive support to boost their self-esteem and this has impacted positively on their academic progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development is satisfactory overall. Most children enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. Attendance rates have much improved as a result of the school's sharper monitoring procedures and are now good. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory. Most children behave well in lessons and are polite and helpful. They understand what kind of behaviour is acceptable in class but the school has not yet eliminated pockets of rough behaviour in the playground in spite of a concerted effort to encourage the children to take more responsibility for settling disputes. There are good relationships in most classrooms, setting a suitable atmosphere in lessons. When the teaching is pitched at the wrong level, the children continue to behave satisfactorily, although they tend to fuss and chatter as their attention wanes. Children know how to keep themselves safe and they care for each other well. They are aware of the needs of others and work to support the local and wider community through, for example, the provision of musical entertainment or fundraising. Children develop satisfactory literacy, numeracy and computer skills that prepare them well for the next stage in their education and the future world of work. They make the most of the many opportunities that the school provides to be fit and active but this is not matched by their understanding of healthy eating. The children's spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory, although they do not learn enough about the richness and diversity of other cultures. The school has suitable arrangements to take the views of children through the school council, which has been involved in the recent initiatives to improve playground behaviour.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The quality of teaching is better in Years 5 and 6 than it is in Years 3 and 4. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together for the benefit of the children. Good quality relationships are a strong feature of the school and support the good standard of discipline in class. The more effective teachers use a good range of methods to help the children to learn. The better lessons are characterised by the strong focus on speaking and listening to develop the children's confidence in expressing their ideas. 'Talking partners' are a key feature of many lessons to support language development. This emphasis on direct first-hand experiences is successful in helping the children to learn. Although only one lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory, a common weakness is the lack of accuracy in the

use of assessment to set work at the right level for the different groups of learners. Most of the feedback provided for the children is helpful. Children with learning difficulties, including those with Statements of special educational need, receive sensitive support and are enabled to achieve satisfactorily. The headteacher has clearly identified the relative strengths of his staff but has not implemented a programme to improve the weaker elements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum complies with statutory requirements. It meets the needs of the children and supports their learning satisfactorily. There is satisfactory provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, although there are too few opportunities for the children to develop these skills through other subjects. The children comment that they particularly like lessons where they are encouraged to be active and are given opportunities to work together. They are also enthusiastic about the regular programme of residential visits where they have the opportunity to work as teams and to develop their sense of worth. However, there are few day visits to places of interest to support learning. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport, and has achieved much success in competition with other schools. Provision for children's personal, social and health education is effective and ensures that they develop good levels of self-esteem and feel able to keep themselves safe. However, the school does too little to prepare the children for life in a multicultural society, although it is a priority of the school improvement plan.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Children are well cared for because the school makes a high priority of health and safety. Child protection procedures are clear and understood by staff. There are good systems in place to enable children to transfer easily between classes each year and to their secondary school at the end of Year 6. Satisfactory programmes to support children's personal development and to help them make life choices have been introduced. Relationships with the children are warm and reassuring and the children know that they can always turn to an adult if problems arise. The work of the school has the respect of most of the parents. The needs of children with learning difficulties are known to and supported sensitively by staff. Since the arrival of the new deputy headteacher, children's progress has been tracked accurately. There is clear evidence to show the children's progress in literacy and numeracy and where they make the most gains. However, this information has not been used consistently to provide children with guidance on how to improve their performance or to match work more closely to the needs of all learners in order to improve achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The longstanding headteacher has nurtured a family atmosphere in which the children feel safe and secure and their voice is heard. He has maintained staff morale in the face of falling rolls and recent recruitment difficulties. Issues from the last inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily. However, there is a lack of rigour in his monitoring of the impact of teaching on learning and in monitoring the performance of the children to ensure that they achieve their best. There is little evidence of successful intervention strategies to improve the quality of teaching, and assessments have not been used to guide planning. Consequently, the achievement of the children has not always been as good as it might have been since the last inspection. However, the tide has turned. Since September 2005, the school has been working closely with the local authority on its 'Improving Schools Initiative' and there is already evidence that standards are rising. Tracking and assessment procedures have been established and the deputy headteacher, who is an effective model for subject leadership, is beginning to build momentum into the work of other staff with management roles. A senior teaching assistant has taken on the role of Special Educational Needs Coordinator to strengthen this area of the school's work. The governing body provides satisfactory support. It has strengthened its monitoring role and so has a clearer view of standards and the significance of performance management. Consequently, the school has the capacity for further improvement he school now provides satisfactory value for money.

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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?	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	NA	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	3	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	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	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	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?	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?	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

I really enjoyed my visit to your school earlier this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I thoroughly enjoyed the many conversations I had with you and especially the school council who were brimming with good ideas. I was just sorry that those of you in Year 6 were so busy with your SATs that I could not see so much of you in lessons. But I did enjoy the colourful displays of your work that make your building so attractive. In fact, there are many things that make your school special. Here are some of them: - The adults in the school really try hard to keep you safe and well. - The school provides two terrific adventure holidays to give you all a chance to enjoy beautiful scenery. - Everybody tries to be friendly, thoughtful and helpful. - The school is very successful at sport. As in most schools, there are still things that can be done to make your school even better: - I know that you can do even better with your work, especially your writing, and I know that your teachers will help you with this. - I am asking your teachers to plan lessons a little more carefully, especially in literacy, to make sure that they are more fun and neither too hard nor too easy. - I am also asking teachers to teach you more about the lives and beliefs of people from different cultural backgrounds. - Finally, I am asking your headteacher and the governors to keep a more careful check on how well the school is doing, so that the school will continue to improve