



Phoenix Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122532
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281291
Inspection dates 27 June 2006 to 28 June 2006
Reporting inspector Ms. Joanne Harvey AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Phoenix Avenue
School category	Community		NG4 4EL
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9539927
Number on roll	164	Fax number	0115 9871866
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.D Leighton
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Pamela Jordan

Age group 3 to 7	Inspection dates 27 June 2006 - 28 June 2006	Inspection number 281291
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly smaller than average sized school serving the community of Gedling on the outskirts of the city of Nottingham. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly below the national average. A small percentage of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and there is an even smaller proportion whose first language is other than English. There are fewer pupils with special educational needs than found in most schools nationally. The school achieved the Investor in People Award in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is a highly effective school giving exceptional value for money. The needs of the children are at the forefront of all its work. The school knows it is very good but it is sometimes modest in the overall judgements it makes about how outstanding it is. It was considered to be an effective school at the time of the last inspection and it has continued to flourish and develop since then. Highly effective leadership by the headteacher, supported by able staff, has ensured that the personal development of pupils, the quality of teaching, the curriculum and the care provided are now exceptional. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are outstanding, such that the children in the Nursery and Reception Year make rapid progress, as do pupils in Years 1 and 2. Standards across the school are significantly higher than in most schools nationally. The school provides an oasis of calm where everyone feels exceptionally well cared for and valued, and pupils' behaviour is excellent. There is plenty for pupils to do apart from their lessons; lunchtimes, playtimes and after school are active and fun occasions. Parents and pupils are unanimous in their praise for the school. The wonderful opportunities children are offered, which add considerable enrichment to the curriculum, are greatly valued. Despite the current outstanding provision the school remains committed to continuing improvements. For example, though it has had exceptional success in helping pupils to know and understand the targets which help them with their next steps of learning in literacy, this approach is going to be extended to mathematics and other subjects. The success the school has had in the past and its determination to do even better mean that the capacity for sustained and future improvement is great.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the approach to target setting in mathematics to equal the exceptional success of that seen in literacy.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children enter the school with levels of knowledge and skills which are similar to those of most children nationally. They make rapid progress in the Nursery and continue to progress well in Reception Year. By the time they enter Year 1, children have reached the expected national standards and many have surpassed them. The outstanding provision made for children in the Foundation Stage prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of their learning. Pupils continue to progress very well through Years 1 and 2 in acquiring skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who have learning difficulties make similar progress. More-able children meet with considerable success. For the past few years results in national tests have been consistently above or well above average. In the 2005 tests, a high number of pupils in Year 2 exceeded the standards expected of them. Inspection evidence confirms that this year's results in the national teacher assessments and tasks for Year 2 are again very high. Standards

seen during the inspection were also extremely high in science and the arts and above average in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school provides a safe, secure environment in which pupils blossom and make outstanding progress in their personal development. Pupils enjoy coming to school and therefore attendance is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils respond very well to the routines and rewards that are offered to them and are keen to do well. Successful teaching about healthy lifestyles has made them very enthusiastic about taking part in physical education and sport. They enjoy the daily fruit or vegetable snacks and know how to make healthy eating choices. This is helped considerably by the healthy and tasty school meals on offer. They demonstrate a very good awareness of how to stay safe. Members of the developing school council take their role as playground monitors very seriously and feel that adults take notice of their views. Pupils make very good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through lessons, visits and visitors. Pupils are self-confident and respond very well to opportunities to develop their own independence in learning or to work with others cooperatively. This, together with high achievement in basic skills, prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Through fund-raising, children show an economic awareness and commendable concern for the well-being of others in the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers in the Foundation Stage provide a stimulating environment that makes learning fun for young children, with an excellent balance of adult-led and structured play activities. Consequently they make excellent progress. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour so that they are very attentive and respond quickly to instructions. Very good relationships provide and ensure a supportive learning environment for pupils. Teachers provide effective challenges to pupils of all abilities that result in very good progress in all subjects. A wide range of methods are used, which engages and motivates pupils, and the pace of learning is usually very good as a result. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities usually have clear and relevant targets, although a few are too broad. Support from able teaching assistants is focused very well on supporting these pupils so that they make rapid progress. Work is marked frequently and comments that help the pupils to improve in future tasks in most classes. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and this information is used to plan work carefully for all abilities. Targets are shared each term with parents and pupils who have an excellent knowledge of improvement targets for literacy. Pupils' progress

would be even better if they had such a well developed knowledge of how to improve their skills in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Great care is taken to ensure that lessons are planned and adapted to meet the needs of all abilities so that progress continues to be very good for all. Provision in the Foundation Stage is excellent, with a wonderful array of stimulating activities to promote very good progress in all areas of learning. A strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy has led to outstanding achievement by pupils. They often practise their literacy and numeracy skills to high standards in other subjects. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the development of investigational skills in science and this has led to improved progress. Pupils' ability to learn independently has improved significantly since the last inspection. For example, there is now a greater emphasis on problem solving in mathematics which the pupils say they find challenging but enjoy very much. All pupils have opportunities to direct their own learning, for example through role play and fantasy areas created in every classroom. A great deal of care is taken to ensure that the curriculum is enriched by exciting and fun activities for the pupils. These include many visits out and visitors to school, themed days and weeks and particularly high quality experiences provided in the visual and performing arts and in environmental education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care, guidance and support are outstanding. Arrangements for child protection and health and safety are securely implemented. Procedures to promote good behaviour and safety are consistently applied by all members of staff with very good results. Pupils effectively learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and regular exercise is very well planned, including playtime activities. Induction procedures are very good so children settle quickly into Nursery and Reception classes. The school works closely with its partner junior school to make the transition from Years 2 to 3 as smooth as possible. Pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties are identified early in their school career and supported very effectively in class so that they achieve very well. The assessment of children's attainment and progress is very effective. Targets for improvement each term are shared with parents and pupils. All pupils demonstrate an extremely good understanding of how they need to improve their work in literacy but many are less sure about mathematics and other subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding overall. There is a proven track record of sustained high standards whilst continuing to bring about improvements in provision. The headteacher has successfully built a hardworking and cohesive team in which

senior management and staff work together to ensure high levels of academic and personal achievement. Everyone focuses on developing and extending the pupils, whatever their needs and abilities. Everyone feels equally included and valued. As a result, pupils are very happy and confident and thrive on the challenges their teachers give them. Because of the high quality of information it collects, the school has a clear picture of its strengths and areas for further development, despite its sometimes cautious approach to the overall judgements it makes about itself. Performance management and professional development reinforce improvement planning and build on effective monitoring and evaluation systems. This effectiveness will be strengthened even more by planned improvements to the presentation of the information the school uses to track pupils' progress. Governance is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school and its development. Parents and the schools' other partners are very supportive of its work and are happy that their views are listened to and acted upon. Funds are astutely managed and many improvements have been made to the building and resources as a result. The resources for information and communication technology have improved significantly recently, and more improvements, including staff training, are quite rightly planned which will improve still further its effectiveness in supporting teaching and learning. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised at the last inspection and the leadership of the school has ably demonstrated their capacity to continue to improve.

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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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 were pleased to meet you and all the staff and very much enjoyed the time we spent with you. Thank you for making us feel so welcome, talking to us and helping us to find out so much about you and your school. You go to an outstanding school where all the adults work hard to do everything they can to help you do your best in everything and be the best that you can be. They take very good care of you and make sure your lessons are exciting and fun. You have lots to do outside lessons, which make playtimes and lunchtimes happy times of the day. It was lovely to see you all behaving so well, getting on so well together and working really hard. You all make very good progress and when you reach the end of Year 2 you reach standards which are much better than those of most children at other schools. Because the teachers are determined that you will do even better they are now going to make sure that you all know and use your targets in mathematics as well as you know and use them in English! We would like to wish you the very best for the future.