



Albany Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122546
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281294
Inspection dates 15 November 2005 to 16 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. David Speakman LI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Pasture Road
School category	Community		NG9 8HR
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01159176550
Number on roll	213	Fax number	01159176551
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Averi Wynne
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Dave Allen

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Albany Junior School is an average sized school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught in three mixed-age classes and those in Years 5 and 6 in single age classes. The proportion of pupils on free school meals is average. Nearly all pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of children with special educational needs is about average. Attainment on entry to Year 3 is below average overall. The school has achieved the Investor in People Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is an effective school, although the school more modestly judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory as it is always seeking further improvement. Pupils achieve well and attain satisfactory standards from a below average starting point. Standards in science and reading are good and they are average in mathematics. Although average overall, the school is working hard to improve the quality of pupils' writing in English and across other subjects. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are rising. The vast majority of parents are very happy with all that is done for their children. The school gives good value for money. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are energetic in their approach to teaching and make learning interesting and enjoyable. Pupils, therefore, willingly engage themselves in lessons and are enthusiastic learners, showing very high levels of enjoyment. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Spiritual, moral and social development are good and cultural development is satisfactory, particularly in relation to pupils' multicultural awareness. The school provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities. The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of the majority of pupils, including those in mixed age classes, but learning opportunities for the higher attaining pupil and those identified as gifted and talented need to be further developed. There is excellent provision for extra-curricular activities and curriculum enrichment. Leadership and management are good and have supported the good level of improvement since the previous inspection, especially in addressing the key issues. School self-evaluation is good. It accurately identifies areas for development and progress towards improvement is closely monitored. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards of writing in English and in other subjects. - Ensure that higher attaining pupils and those classed as gifted and talented have opportunities to reach the levels of which they are capable. - Raise pupils' multicultural awareness.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Results of assessments made soon after pupils start school show attainment at the beginning of Year 3 to be below average, with weaknesses in the quality of writing. Pupils' achievement is good and by the end of Year 6, standards are average in mathematics, above average in science and reading. Writing, although broadly satisfactory, needs further improvement to address weaknesses in the basic structure of pupils' writing, such as sentence construction or basic grammar. There are also some weaknesses in spelling. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well against the challenging targets set for them in their individual education plans. In recent national tests at the end of Year 6, not as many pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in writing and in mathematics as the national figure. The school is aware that it needs to provide more challenge for pupils capable of higher attainment and for those

identified as gifted and talented. Scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and the schools' comprehensive assessment and tracking data give clear evidence that standards are rising. There have been good gains in the areas of weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in music are better, as shown by good quality singing in assembly and other aspects of music seen in lessons. Pupils' performance in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved. Standards in these two subjects are good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils of all ages report that they really enjoy school because their 'teachers make learning fun'. Pupils' willingness to rise to the challenge of demanding tasks significantly improves the quality of their learning, such as in Year 5 music where pupils put enormous enthusiasm and energy into successfully mastering complex musical tasks. Most pupils behave extremely well and relationships are very good. At lunchtimes, pupils play together happily and they say that they feel safe because bullying is rare. Attendance has improved and is currently close to the national average. Pupils understand the hazards that young people face, such as alcohol and drugs, and know how to avoid them. Consequently, pupils are adopting increasingly healthy lifestyles, which is reflected in their enthusiastic participation in lunchtime and after-school sporting activities. The active school council promotes citizenship successfully and pupils contribute well to the school community, through activities such as litter picking and collecting supermarket vouchers for sports equipment. Opportunities to work collaboratively with other pupils, in addition to the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills and good ICT skills, provide a good preparation for the next steps in their education and for the world of work. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. However, pupils do not fully appreciate the richness and diversity of cultures other than their own.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teaching seen was never less than good and examples of outstanding teaching were observed. Teachers adopt lively and enthusiastic approaches to teaching, which capture pupils' interest and motivate them to become active participants in learning. There is a consistent approach to behaviour management across the school and teachers are very successful in supporting pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning. Teachers monitor pupils' academic progress well and plan effectively to meet their learning needs. They plan together to ensure that pupils in different classes in the same year group receive the same learning opportunities. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' achievement, including those pupils who have special educational needs. Marking is generally good and teachers' comments are helpful in enabling pupils to know where they might

improve. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of marking which the school is working to address. Teachers' subject knowledge was criticised at the time of the previous inspection, particularly in ICT and music. There has been a significant improvement through effective staff development and the appointment of teachers with very good skills in these areas. All staff now show a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and this supports pupils' learning well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good quality and range of learning opportunities. Curriculum planning is thorough, ensuring that pupils in parallel classes benefit from the same opportunities. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good, but the school recognises the need to further develop learning opportunities for those capable of attaining the highest levels. There is good provision to enable pupils to acquire skills which equip them well for life. They learn about road safety. Opportunities to develop an understanding of sex and relationships and the dangers of drug abuse are included in the curriculum. Curriculum enrichment is excellent, with a wide variety of visits out of school and interesting visitors into school. For those who don't take part in the residential visit, there is an equivalent activity where good use is made of the school grounds and the community as a learning resource. Pupils enjoy and value the outstanding range and quality of extra-curricular activities and the majority of pupils take part in these.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Standards of care are good. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being are secure. The headteacher and governors check any potential hazards carefully and take suitable steps to safeguard the pupils. Child protection arrangements are thorough and recent training has ensured that all staff know how to respond should the need arise. The school works closely with other agencies to ensure that the school's most needy pupils receive appropriate support. Because staff provide a secure, happy and caring environment, pupils are confident that there is always somebody to turn to if they are hurt or upset. Staff monitor pupils' progress carefully and set challenging personal and group targets, which actively involve pupils in their learning and have been influential in raising standards. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities receive the support that they need to overcome these and achieve well. They are fully included in all that the school has to offer.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, working in close partnership with the deputy headteacher, provides good direction and has been effective in building and leading a team of enthusiastic and highly committed staff.

Staff with responsibility for subjects and other important areas, such as assessment or special educational needs provision, do their jobs well and are effective in contributing to the good quality of education provided. This good leadership is moving the school forward well. It is ambitious and not afraid to take risks or to make difficult decisions. School self-evaluation is thorough. It is based on reliable evidence, including assessment of pupils' achievement and in monitoring carefully the quality of teaching and the curriculum. As well as all staff and governors' views, those of parents and pupils are sought in establishing the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is in a stage of transition with the appointment of several new governors. This is the result of the period of service of a number of governors ending simultaneously. The chair of governors has a good knowledge of the school. She is determined to develop the new governing body so that it has the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence so while remaining supportive is also more challenging in holding the school to account. Plans for the training and development of new governors are already in place. The governors ensure that financial resources are used efficiently and all statutory requirements are met fully.

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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?	2	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	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	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	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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?	2	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	2	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	2	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 being so friendly when we came to visit your school. We were pleased to meet you and we enjoyed the time we spent with you. Thank you very much for making us feel welcome, talking to us and helping us find out about you and your school. You go to a good school. The headteacher, teachers and all other grown-ups working at Albany Juniors do their very best for you. They look after you well and care for your well-being. Your teachers do their very best to make learning interesting and enjoyable and they work very hard to help you make good progress in lessons. Your excellent behaviour in class helps you to learn effectively. You had good things to say about your school, teachers and friends and it is obvious that you enjoy being there. You told us that you really like the after school clubs and we agree that these make an excellent contribution to the good learning opportunities the school provides for you. There are some things that could be improved and we are asking your headteacher, teachers and the governors to think about helping you to improve the quality of your writing, to provide more challenging activities for those of you capable of harder work and to develop your knowledge and understanding of the lives and customs of people from other cultural backgrounds. We hope you all do well in the future.