



Gotham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122644
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281315
Inspection dates 30 March 2006 to 31 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Patricia Cox LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kegworth Road
School category	Community		NG11 0JS
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01159 149751
Number on roll	116	Fax number	01159 149897
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.R Plant
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. S Lymn-Brewin

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 30 March 2006 - 31 March 2006	Inspection number 281315
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this small school are of White British background and all speak English as their first language. The proportion eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average and the proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties is somewhat higher. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. Although the number on roll has fallen significantly in the recent years, few pupils leave or join during their school career. Attainment on entry is below that usually expected for the children's age. The school has moved into a new building this term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides its pupils with a good education. From a lower than usual starting point, the children in Reception make a good start. The pupils make good progress through the school and achieve well. Standards are currently similar to the national levels in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6 because the teaching is good and the pupils consolidate their skills and knowledge thoroughly. However, progress in writing is less marked and these skills are not developed well enough in other subjects. The teachers use their detailed assessments to mostly plan their work very accurately. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but some subjects do not receive enough time to cover them in sufficient depth. Although a few gifted pupils with particular skills and talents have been identified, the school does not yet cater specifically for them. Pupils feel that lessons help them to learn but are not always interesting. The pupils' personal development is good; they behave well and mostly enjoy school. The school provides well for their spiritual, moral and social development, and their cultural awareness is developed satisfactorily. The pupils are cared for well and the school uses its very good assessment information to guide their academic progress. This data is also used very well to measure the quality of the school's work, so that it knows itself well. The inspector's agree with the school's evaluation of itself. The headteacher provides good leadership and management so that the school is always firmly focused on raising standards. Links with the community are strong and parents are mainly positive about the school. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a sound knowledge of the school. The school gives good value for money and there is good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the way in which pupils' writing skills are developed and used in all subjects.
- Improve the balance of the curriculum, so that all subjects receive sufficient time to give pupils a thorough grounding in each one.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 have been variable over many years. In 2005, they were similar to the national average. The results at the end of Year 6 have been stronger, and often above average, as they were in 2005. They showed that the pupils had made good progress since Year 2, particularly in mathematics, and exceeded the targets that had been set. The children enter the school with limited skills, particularly in communication, mathematical and social development. They make good progress in the Reception class and standards are similar to those expected by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils continue to make good progress through the school and standards in English, mathematics and science of those currently in Year 2 are similar to the national average. The pupils presently in Year 6 had lower than average attainment at the end of Year 2 and have made good

progress so that their standards are now similar to the national average and they are mostly on course to meet the challenging targets the school has set. However, standards in writing are lower, although the school has already implemented measures to improve them. Writing is not developed well enough across subjects. Many pupils write neatly but work in mathematics is not presented as carefully. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) was an issue at the last inspection, but has improved and is now satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well, work hard and get on well with each other. Playtimes are lively and fun occasions. Most pupils are happy to come to school where they feel safe and valued. Attendance rates are average. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They have a secure understanding of right and wrong and are able to reflect on the consequences of their actions. The school promotes pupils' knowledge of the lives of people in other countries soundly, and cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils' understanding of multi-cultural issues closer to home, however, is not as well developed. They make healthy lifestyle choices. They say they enjoy taking part in sporting and other clubs but would like to have more from which to choose. Pupils value the opportunities they have to influence what happens in school through the work of the school council. They show a great deal of empathy and make a good contribution to enhancing the lives of others in the community through fundraising activities and performances within and beyond school. The school helps pupils acquire personal and academic skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education and their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. The staff in the Reception class have a clear understanding of the needs of young children. They plan well for them and for the Year 1 pupils in the same class. Throughout the rest of the school, teachers plan lessons carefully and the lessons build well on earlier learning. The teachers make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and sometimes review this at the end of the lesson. The teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and set work at the right level for the different groups in the class. However, there is an over-dependence on worksheets in some subjects. Behaviour is almost always good but pupils become restless when the pace of the lesson slows or they sit on the carpet for too long. The pupils know their targets and understand how they can achieve them. They like assessing their own progress, when given the opportunity, and this encourages them to think about their learning. The teaching assistants provide good support to the pupils they help and enable them to make good progress. Marking is good in English

but inconsistent in other subjects; not all helps the pupils to know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Careful planning ensures that it has the necessary breadth. There has been a strong emphasis on English and mathematics to ensure that the pupils continue to achieve well in these subjects. Links are being made between subjects and French is a well-established part of the curriculum. However, there is insufficient balance to ensure that all subjects receive enough time to give pupils a thorough grounding in each one. Although they felt they were doing well, a few pupils commented that some subjects were not interesting. The use of ICT in classrooms and to support learning across the curriculum is much improved since the last inspection and is developing well. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, contributing significantly to their personal development. However, although the school has identified the pupils with particular gifts and talents, it has not yet started to cater specifically for most of them. The curriculum is further enriched by a range of visits and visitors as well as by a few lunchtime and after-school clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance for pupils are good. The school's effective use of robust systems for health and safety and child protection enable pupils to stay safe and be happy. Relationships are good and most pupils say there is always someone they can turn to if they have a problem or worry. Effective assessment practices ensure that teachers have much useful information about pupils that is used well to set individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics. These targets help pupils with the next steps of their learning and have a positive impact on standards. Pupils with specific learning needs are supported well and make good progress. Education plans for these pupils are of good quality and particularly child friendly. Parents and pupils are involved in writing and reviewing them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy are clearly focused on raising and maintaining standards. They, and the staff, work closely together and the move to the new building has been managed well. Self-evaluation procedures are effective. Parents are mostly positive about the school. Through the analysis of test results and regular scrutiny of pupils' work in all areas, the school has a good view of its strengths and where improvement is needed. However, it has not fully identified the shortcomings in the balance of the curriculum. Evaluations of lessons are helpful to staff, identifying suitable areas of strength and points for development. Strategic planning for school improvement is good; the plan shows suitable priorities in all areas

of the school's work and has a long-term overview, taking into consideration any further likely fall in numbers of pupils on roll. The success criteria and monitoring and evaluation arrangements are not always precise, but these are in the process of being improved. Strategies employed to raise and maintain standards have had a marked impact. The work being done to improve provision and standards in ICT is proving to be effective. The subject leaders for English and mathematics have a sound understanding of standards in their subjects and plan well to bring about the necessary improvements. Financial planning and management are good. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a sound knowledge of the life and work of the school and check that the planned progress is being made.

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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	2	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	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	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?	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?	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

First of all, I would like to thank you for the way you welcomed us when we visited your school last week, and for your help and good manners. We enjoyed talking to you and having lunch together. We thought you might like to know what we found out about your school. You told us that you go to a good school and we agree - you can be proud of your good behaviour and hard work and the way your teachers help you to get on quickly. You know your targets and how well you're doing, and in most lessons the work is right for you. If you're very clever, sometimes you need harder work. You do well with your reading, mathematics and science, although you need to work at your writing a bit more. We think that you could do better if you wrote more in other subjects instead of having to fill in worksheets, so we want your teachers to ask you to write more for yourselves. We like your new building a lot, but agreed with you when you said that work could be more exciting. So we want you to do more fun activities in English and mathematics, as well as spending more time enjoying other subjects, such as music, art and history. Our thanks once again, and best wishes for the future.