



Farnsfield St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134202
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 282488
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Alan Lemon LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Branston Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		NG22 8JZ
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623 882494
Number on roll	269	Fax number	01623 882957
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Tim Fifoot
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr. David Hutchinson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school was formed in September 2004 from the amalgamation of two primary schools in Farnsfield. One was a community school and the other a Church of England voluntary aided school. In its first year the buildings of the two former schools were used to accommodate Key Stages 1 and 2, respectively. The children and staff came together under one roof in September 2005 when the school's new building was finished. The school is of average size and serves a relatively affluent population living in the villages and countryside in a wide area around the school. There are few children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. When they first start school, the children's level of knowledge and skills is, overall, above average for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The school has judged its effectiveness as satisfactory. However, low standards due to weaknesses in teaching and in leadership and management do not sustain the school's self-evaluation. As a result, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money. The management and leadership of the school have failed to secure appropriate standards of attainment and the quality of provision. The monitoring of the school's overall effectiveness and especially pupils' performance is underdeveloped. The quality of teaching has not been rigorously examined in order to identify priorities and eliminate weaknesses. The staff and governors have worked hard to establish this new school, overcoming many difficulties on the way. Unfortunately this has been at the expense of pupils' achievement, which is unsatisfactory. The school provides adequately for the care, guidance and support of pupils and their personal development is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and enter Year 1 with above average standards. Thereafter the pupils make too little progress and national test results from Years 2 and 6 reveal noticeable underachievement, particularly amongst the most able. Teaching is unsatisfactory, as its quality varies considerably across the school. Only in the Foundation Stage is teaching consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Good provision for pupils with learning difficulties ensures their needs are being met and they make the expected progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement, in line with pupil capabilities, by improving the performance of higher attaining pupils and the systematic use of assessment information to inform teaching and learning; - Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that pupils are appropriately challenged in lessons and make satisfactory progress; - Strengthen leadership and management throughout the school so that there is clear direction and high expectations, based on rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, reach all of the early learning goals and achieve highly in mathematical development. When they enter Key Stage 1 most have reached above average standards. While many pupils are at a good starting point in Year 1, they do not make the progress expected and by the end of Year 2 their standards are only average. Assessments in 2005 highlighted a worrying dip in pupils' writing, which the school has started to tackle, though it has not analysed sufficiently why boys performed significantly worse than girls. The progress made by pupils in Key

Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Standards are average overall when they should be higher and the more able pupils are not achieving the levels of which they are capable. The underperformance of girls in the 2005 tests was a particular concern and the school's response to this has been too limited. Results in science were unacceptably low, a situation which is now being dealt with by the introduction of investigative science, which should help raise standards. Pupils with learning difficulties make expected progress overall, and in a few cases their progress is outstanding. This is the result of good, well-targeted provision based on accurate assessments of these pupils' learning difficulties. The school is at an early stage of gathering information on pupils' attainment. The data collected is not sufficiently robust to inform teaching and learning and is not used consistently well to set challenging targets for pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall, although good in the Foundation Stage. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good throughout the school. Spiritual development is promoted well through reflection and prayer. Pupils have helped formulate behaviour rules and have a good understanding of right and wrong. They behave well, consider the needs of others and mix easily. Pupils are developing a wider understanding of cultural strengths and differences beyond their immediate experience. Visits to the local Anglican cathedral provide musical opportunities shared with other schools and there are trips to other faiths' places of worship. Pupils respond well to instructions and encouragement. They make a good contribution to the school community and beyond. The influential school council makes suggestions for school improvement and organises itself effectively. Through managing the school council's budget and involvement in staff interviews, pupils develop some skills for their future economic well-being. Pupils organise fund-raising events and support charities. They diligently carry out routine administrative tasks and help to organise class assemblies. Pupils feel safe and enjoy most lessons, especially in the case of children in the Foundation Stage. Pupils play and learn safely. They take part in physical activities and have a good understanding of how to live and eat healthily. Attendance is satisfactory and most pupils arrive promptly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Overall, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and some is outstanding. Here, the assessment of children is thorough. As a result, the capabilities of the children are clearly understood and this leads to well-planned and challenging learning opportunities. However, this is not the case in the rest of the school. The recently introduced measures to gather assessment information are not often used effectively to plan challenging work. Too frequently,

pupils are taught what they already know, with the result they are not as actively engaged in learning as they might be. Higher attaining pupils often have work that fails to meet their learning needs. Even when their work is challenging, teachers sometimes spend too long explaining facts and leave too little time for pupils to get down to doing the things that really help them learn. The marking in pupils' books and comments in their written targets fail to provide sufficient guidance on how to improve standards. In too many lessons the work planned is not adjusted well enough to suit the range of ability in classes except in the case of pupils with learning difficulties who are closely and effectively supported and learn well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory, overall. It is reasonably broad and balanced and it is good in the Foundation Stage. However, planning in Key Stage 1 does not take sufficient account of the arrangements for pupils in Year 1 moving between classes mid-year and this slows their progress. The arrangements for children and pupils receiving additional support ensure that they have full access to the curriculum. Personal, social and health education contributes well in many aspects of pupils' personal development. Specialist groups visit and promote pupils' awareness of substance abuse and personal safety. French has been introduced in Years 3 and 4 and is to be extended into Years 5 and 6. The provision for information and communication technology has improved and is satisfactory. There is a good range of extra activities that broaden children's experiences including visitors to the school and residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The provision for care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. The school cares well for children and pupils and makes good use of outside agencies. Good behaviour is encouraged effectively. There are good procedures for health and safety aided by active governor involvement. Staff training for child protection has been brought up to date and staff are aware of the procedures. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is good. These pupils' needs are assessed thoroughly and provision is well targeted. The school seeks to involve parents in supporting their children's progress. However, because of the limited data currently available the academic guidance and support for pupils and their parents are unsatisfactory except in the Foundation Stage.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. All of the staff have worked hard to establish the new school. However, the time and energy spent by the headteacher and governors on preparing the new building and bringing two schools and their

communities into one have resulted in too little emphasis given to raising standards and achievement. The headteacher has not provided a sufficiently clear direction on raising standards with the result that the school's leadership has been ineffective in ensuring pupils make adequate progress. The Foundation Stage and provision for pupils with learning difficulties are the exceptions. In both cases there is a clear focus on understanding and meeting children's and pupils' needs, which is achieved through the good use made of thorough assessments. While staff work together as a team, their teamwork is ineffective in promoting high achievement. The school has started to develop systems for assessing and analysing pupils' progress. However as there is no-one directly responsible for this aspect of the school's work, it is not yet consistent or comprehensive. The underachievement revealed in the 2005 national tests and assessments has not been followed up with determined actions to bring about improvement at a faster rate. The monitoring of the school's work by senior staff and governors is unsatisfactory and this is hindering essential improvements. In particular, while some monitoring of teaching has been undertaken by the headteacher, this has not provided sufficient analysis of the quality of provision or clear feedback about what needs to be improved. The limitations of monitoring and evaluation procedures mean that the school is not in a strong enough position to take all the necessary actions to raise standards and the capacity to improve is inadequate.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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	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	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	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

Many thanks to you all for the way you helped in the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed and valued the opportunities for talking with many of you and you told us a lot about what you think of your school and your work. I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and with how well you get on with each other and your teachers. You work well together in lessons and we saw many of you, from the youngest to the oldest being very helpful towards each other. We think most of you could be making much more progress, especially in English, mathematics and science. We were impressed by how well children in Class 1 and 2 are doing. Otherwise, many of you find that the work you are given is too easy and there is a lot more you could be learning. We have asked your teachers to make sure your work is right for you and to show you more clearly how to improve. Your headteacher, the staff and school governors have been asked to check more closely on how well you are progressing and how the school in general is improving. In order for this to happen, we feel that your school should be given help. So inspectors will come back to the school soon to see how well you are doing. You can play your part by ensuring that you continue to work hard. We greatly appreciated your friendliness and helpfulness.