



The Park Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112672
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289369
Inspection dates 21–22 September 2006
Reporting inspector Ms. Joanne Harvey

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Orchard Close
School category	Community		Park Road, Park Road
Age range of pupils	3–7		Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG20 8JX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623 742487
Number on roll (school)	227	Fax number	01623 742487
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr. Christopher Cooper
		Headteacher	Ms. J V Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school situated on the outskirts of Shirebrook near Mansfield. There are high indicators of considerable deprivation in the area. The school forms part of an Economic Development Area, Neighbourhood Renewal Area, Sure Start and the North East Derbyshire Excellence Cluster. The number entitled to claim free school meals is much higher than in most schools. When they start school, pupils have a level of knowledge, skills and understanding which is well below those of most children. Despite this, they have fewer pupils with a learning difficulty or disability than in most schools. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Most pupils are White British and English is their first language. The school offers extended provision. It has achieved the Health Promoting Schools Award and the Silver Artsmark. The school has had a recent period of staffing instability.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that this is an effective school which gives good value for money. The needs of the children are at the forefront of all its work. Passionate and tireless leadership by the headteacher along with her able and supportive staff have ensured that the environment provided, pupils' personal development, the quality of teaching, the curriculum and the care provided for pupils are all good. This is despite the limitations of a building where pupils have to walk outside between all teaching areas. The small school hall is in a poor state of external repair and internally the lack of storage results in a cluttered environment for dining and physical education. Teachers in the Reception Class do well with what they have available but the outdoor curriculum does not match the quality of the curriculum that pupils experience in the classroom. A real strength of the school is the shared commitment to their aims and values. Adults and children really are 'together a happy family...working hard and sharing, having lots of fun'. The school places itself at the heart of its community which it serves well. It does all it can to actively promote successful partnerships with other agencies from which the pupils benefit a great deal. As a result, pupils in all phases of the school achieve well. Pupils who begin school with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding which are well below those of most children are able to achieve standards which are similar to those expected for their age by the time they leave the school. Staff get to know each child well so that academic and personal needs can be met. Skilful support staff work closely with teachers to ensure those who need extra help also do well. Senior staff have done well to ensure that leadership and management have continued to be good but at present, curriculum leaders are not having sufficient impact on school improvement. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in school. Everyone feels happy, valued, well cared for and respected. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils questioned could not think of anything they did not like about the school. 'I want to stay here forever,' volunteered one child. Pupils contribute effectively to the community. The school council helps to develop a sense of responsibility as do the many jobs pupils are given to do. There is plenty to do in and out of lessons to extend skills, interest and enjoyment. Playtimes are active and joyful occasions. Pupils enjoy working and playing together, helping each other and helping others in their community and beyond. Pupils are well aware of how to keep safe but they do not make healthy lifestyle choices so consistently. The school is working hard to improve attendance and it is satisfactory, but a few parents take their children on holiday in school time. The success the school has had in the past and its determination to do even better means that the capacity for sustained and future improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure curriculum leaders play a full role in monitoring, evaluation and school improvement.
- Ensure the quality of the outdoor curriculum in the Reception Class at least matches that which children experience in the classroom.
- Ensure the external fabric and internal arrangements of the school hall make it fit for its purpose.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve very well. Most pupils enter the school with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding which are well below those that are found in most schools. Their skills are particularly weak in communication, language and literacy. Pupils make very good progress in the Nursery and Reception Class and are prepared well for the next stage of their learning. By the time they enter Year 1 many pupils are achieving the goals set for them. Pupils continue to progress well through Years 1 and 2 in acquiring skills in reading, writing and mathematics. For the last six years and from consistently low starting points, pupils have achieved results in the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 which have remained around what is expected for children of their age. This is confirmed by inspection evidence and represents good progress for most pupils. All pupils who regularly attend school, including those who have learning difficulties, do equally well. A few pupils who do not have a high attendance rate do not achieve as well as they could.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Personal and social skills are developed particularly well. By Year 2, pupils are confident, polite and friendly. They have a good awareness of themselves, are kind and helpful to others and have a very well developed sense of right and wrong. Pupils with behaviour difficulties make good progress against their targets. The Golden Rules for conduct in school, reinforce the school aims, are well known, and pupils try hard to keep them. They are delighted to be mentioned in the Gold Book and publicly commended in assembly. Pupils' awareness of differences between people grows steadily, and they develop tolerance. They empathise with others when they raise funds for charities. The attendance of a few is poor where parents take their children on holiday in school time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching supports academic and personal development well. There is a consistent approach to managing behaviour, so pupils are crystal clear about expectations and consequences. Staff give frequent feedback and show that they value pupils, who are confident and prepared to 'have a go'. Assessment is satisfactory. Pupils are involved in assessing their work and that of others; they also know what their group targets are, like 'sitting still on the carpet' in the Nursery. Teachers plan well for pupils of different abilities, so that all are challenged but able to experience success too. Teaching assistants provide skilled support for groups and individuals. Occasionally,

teachers do not monitor pupils working in all groups, and the pace of some pupils' work slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is most relevant to pupils' needs, and supports well pupils' academic and personal development. There is a good quality personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. Teachers increasingly plan work around themes that link subjects together, making learning more meaningful. In addition to visitors to lessons, a good range of visits, clubs and other activities add to the pupils' experiences and provide enjoyment. A few parents are concerned about mixed year groups in classes, but careful planning ensures that each year group has the experiences required. For pupils with learning difficulties, there are additional programmes, such as positive play and a recently formed nurture group. The school recognises that there is scope for making learning experiences more practical and appealing to pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very caring school where staff 'go the extra mile' to support pupils and their families. To help with this, they tap into a wide variety of external support agencies. There is strong guidance for pupils, to help them develop academically, socially and emotionally. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively, and additional support provided where expected progress is not made. Transition arrangements are very good, and parental attendance is very high at year group transition meetings. Most pupils approach class changes with confidence. The school works hard to encourage good attendance, and is in the process of strengthening procedures. Supervision is good and ensures pupils' safety at all times. There are satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Suitable checks are made on staff and governors; risks associated with activities are carefully assessed and action taken to minimise these.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has a proven track record of maintaining standards and ensuring good progress for its pupils, giving confidence that it can improve still further. The headteacher provides a very good role model. Despite a period of staffing instability, she has been successful in creating and sustaining a hardworking team, united in their aim to provide the highest quality education. Teamwork is paramount, as seen in the consistent approach to school initiatives and the valuable contribution of teaching assistants. The senior management team has a clear picture of school strengths because they have maintained good practice in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and making sure challenging targets are met. Priorities for improvement are effectively grouped into manageable projects for staff to deliver but curriculum leaders are not having enough impact on improvement. The relatively new governing body

has a satisfactory understanding of the school and its development. The school provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 September 2006 Dear Children The Park Infant School, Orchard Close, Park Road, Shirebrook, Mansfield, Nottingham NG20 8JX 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 a good 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 fun. You have lots to do outside lessons and playtimes and lunchtimes are happy times of the day. It was lovely to see you all behaving so well, getting on so well together, looking after each other and working really hard. You all make good progress from the minute you come in to the Nursery to when you leave the school at the end of Year 2 and you reach standards which are similar to most pupils at other schools. Everyone at the school is very keen to make sure you do even better. Those who lead the school are going to make sure that everyone gets a chance to play their full part in checking on the work of the school and making it even better. They are going to make sure the school hall is in good repair and that the inside is better for you to do PE and eat your lunch. You do well in the Reception Class but they are going to make sure that you do as well when you are working outdoors. You have to do your bit too. Attendance is not as good as it could be. This is because a few of you are having days off to take holidays in term time. When you miss school, you cannot learn as well as you should. We would like to wish you the very best for the future. Joanne Harvey Lead Inspector Sue Aldridge Team Inspector