



Pottery Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112787
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289413
Inspection dates 27–28 November 2006
Reporting inspector Roy Bowers HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kilbourne Road
School category	Community		Belper
Age range of pupils	4–11		Derbyshire DE56 1HA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01773 823383
Number on roll (school)	376	Fax number	01773 823383
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr P Hawkins
		Headteacher	Mrs G Hutton
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pottery Primary School is larger than average size. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than average. The school's social and economic context is generally very favourable and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin and there are no pupils who have English as an additional language. Attainment of pupils entering the school is similar to that found nationally. The site is relatively small with five buildings and a small playground. There is no grassed play area.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. The headteacher and governors have managed the school well though a period of instability reflected in a significant number of staff changes. The majority of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, now make sound progress and their achievement overall is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average.

Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and standards are above those expected by the end of the reception year. This momentum continues so that standards and achievement remain good at Key Stage 1. However, the rate of progress varies at Key Stage 2. Although there are indications of improvement, pupils underachieve in Years 3 and 4. They do not make as much progress as they should, particularly in writing and mathematics. This is because expectations of what pupils can do are too low and pupils are not guided carefully enough by teachers' marking and ongoing assessment. The momentum returns in Years 5 and 6 so that pupils make good progress and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above national average in science and average in English and mathematics.

The overall condition of the buildings and site is poor. This has a significant impact upon the day-to-day running of the school and quality of provision. Nevertheless, staff do all they can to compensate for the limitations imposed by the school property and despite difficulties, standards are not adversely affected. The school provides a happy environment where pupils' achievements are celebrated and all are valued. As a consequence, pupils behave well, show mutual respect, care for each other and have good attitudes to their work. They are proud of their school and speak confidently about their achievements. The pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. Parents are very positive. One parent said, 'Both my children are really happy at school and find the teachers caring, understanding and enthusiastic'. Pupils' personal development and well being are good.

The quality of the teaching and the curriculum is satisfactory overall and meets the learning needs of most pupils. In classes where pupils underachieve, however, some of the teaching is relatively weaker, especially in writing and mathematics. The quality of care, support and pastoral guidance for pupils is satisfactory overall. Pupils are well looked after but some are not given enough help to improve their work and progress is slow.

The school's collective leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's analysis of assessment information provides a strong and accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement and progress. The relatively new senior staff are rapidly developing their skills of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. The signs suggest that they are gelling into a cohesive team and are beginning to have a positive impact on raising achievement. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory and improvement since the last inspection has been sound.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement further, particularly in writing and mathematics at Year 3 and Year 4.
- Strengthen and improve the quality of teaching, particularly in assessment and marking so that pupils' achievement is consistently good.
- Ensure that accommodation and facilities are more able to meet the needs of the school more effectively; especially in relation to teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The skills of the pupils when they enter school are average. In the Foundation Stage the good teaching and well-planned play activities ensure that pupils make good progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils enjoy their learning and standards rise to above average. Pupils continue to progress well in Year 1 and Year 2 and reach standards which are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Progress slows in Year 3 and Year 4 where too many pupils underachieve, particularly in mathematics and writing. Pupils progress well in Year 5 and Year 6 and make up for some of the underachievement in the previous years. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards are average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The school's own analysis accurately shows the inconsistency between the different year groups and the lack of progress for some pupils in writing and mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Strong relationships within the school contribute well to pupils' enjoyment, good behaviour and achievement. Pupils feel valued and respected. They enjoy coming to school and take seriously their responsibilities. For example, the School Council helped raise money to buy 'buddy benches' which allow pupils to support those who need help. These activities and the attention during lessons to the way pupils communicate with each other and learn basic skills help them prepare adequately for later working lives. Attendance is good and above the national average. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and safe through the well organised Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and their active involvement in the Health Promoting Schools Award. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, but the provision for multicultural education is not yet fully embedded within the daily life of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. In most year groups there are examples of good or outstanding teaching where the pace is brisk and there are high expectations of each child. In these classes, pupils find learning fun because they are achieving well and because emphasis is placed on learning through doing. However, in those classes where pupils do not achieve as well, there is too much teacher talk, expectations of the pupils are too low and pupils are not helped to improve their work well enough. Consequently, pupils lose pride in their work and they take little care over the presentation. Teachers and support staff work effectively together especially when supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Good use is made of computers and new technology. This is making an effective contribution to pupils' achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and effectively meets the learning needs of pupils. There is a suitably strong focus on English and mathematics which is helping to raise pupils' achievement. The lack of a playing field, the poor surface of some of the play areas and the small size of the school hall limit the range of physical education activities. Despite the constraints of the outdoor conditions, standards are not adversely affected and there is a good range of stimulating learning activities for pupils in the Foundation Stage. This enables these young children to achieve well.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. They are supported well during lessons and through well organised individual education plans which are reviewed regularly. Pupils of all ages benefit from a good range of enrichment activities to support the curriculum, including clubs, visits to places of interest and visitors who come into school to share their expertise. French lessons are enjoyed by the pupils and valued by the parents. The provision for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and is being used effectively to raise achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support. Pupils feel confident, happy and secure, and trust the adults to help them should problems occur. Arrangements to ensure their safety and well-being are securely in place and understood by all staff. The school has detailed procedures to measure pupils' progress and set challenging targets. These procedures are used effectively in some classes but are not sufficiently embedded in the classes where pupils underachieve. Transition arrangements on entry to the Foundation Stage and with the neighbouring secondary

school to ensure the pupils' well-being are good. Links with other external agencies and services such as the before and after school care clubs are also good. In spite of recent improvements, the general condition of the buildings is poor and imposes significant limitations upon the quality of provision for pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

After a period of high staff absence and without a senior management team, the school is now more settled. Recent senior appointments and the development of the role of the coordinators for English and mathematics have already had an impact upon raising pupils' achievement and they are supporting the headteacher well. Governance is good. Governors have successfully worked to reduce staff absence and are keeping a watchful eye on the school's progress. The headteacher's skills of analysis of the test results and the tracking of pupils' progress are good. She accurately identifies areas of weakness and is clear about what needs to be done to improve upon pupils' achievement. Challenging targets are set for both staff and pupils. Although there are still areas where underachievement needs to be eliminated quickly, indications are that the action taken is proving to be effective. The school gives satisfactory 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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

29 November 2006

Dear Children

Pottery Primary School, Kilbourne Road, Belper, Derbyshire, DE56 1HA

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a pleasurable experience. It was a delight to talk to you and to see how happy you are. We learned a lot about your school from you and we enjoyed visiting your lessons. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We could see that you try hard to do your best and help each other.

We had a good time talking to your teachers and other adults who help you. They are kind and helpful and want you all to do your best. It was good to see how well the adults and children get on together.

I have asked Mrs Hutton and the other adults to continue with all the good things that are happening in your school. I have also asked her to make sure that some of the teaching gives you even better opportunities to achieve well. We think that you can do even better in writing and mathematics, especially some of you in Years 3 and 4. Some of your teachers are very good at helping you to improve by talking to you in lessons about your work and by good marking. We would like to see all the teachers helping you in this way and Mrs Hutton has agreed. We would like the governors to work with the appropriate people to try and improve the school accommodation and facilities so that you can do more activities, especially in PE.

We shall take away many good memories about your school and have very much enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Lead Inspector