



Ellistown Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119914
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291570
Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006
Reporting inspector Brian Holmes

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Whitehill Road
School category	Community		Ellistown
Age range of pupils	4–11		Coalville LE67 1EN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01530 260301
Number on roll (school)	195	Fax number	01530 260301
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Anne Saunders
		Headteacher	Margaret James
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ellistown Community Primary School is a small primary school in a village near Leicester, whose numbers are rising. Most of the pupils come from Ellistown itself. There are close links with the local community through the community centre next to the school. There are lower than average proportions of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, with learning difficulties and disabilities, and from minority ethnic backgrounds.

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 school with strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being. This judgement matches the school's own view. Since its last inspection the school has maintained a satisfactory rate of improvement. It now has good capacity to improve because of the dynamic leadership team recently put in place and the impact it is beginning to have on the work of the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The good provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress. Most children achieve well to attain the goals expected of them at the end of the Reception Year and a considerable number of children exceed them. In the rest of the school, pupils attain average standards and achieve satisfactorily. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and are strengths of the school, particularly their behaviour, attitudes, and moral and social development. Good relationships exist at all levels and the school makes good provision for pupils' care and support, although the academic guidance they receive is satisfactory. The pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and live healthily. They enjoy school and make a positive contribution to its life in different ways. They are soundly prepared for the future. Teaching is satisfactory, but the level of challenge provided for different groups of pupils is inconsistent. In assessing pupils' performance and planning their work, teachers make use of class and group targets, but day-to-day marking makes insufficient reference to these targets. The current system of setting targets for pupils does not ensure that their individual needs are met sufficiently well. A good range of enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs enhances pupils' learning experiences and contributes to the satisfactory curriculum. Within the curriculum pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, governors and leadership team have a clear vision for the improvement of the school. A number of procedures have been put in place to raise standards and achievement but their impact has been limited so far because checking procedures are not yet fully in place.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all the procedures for improving pupils' standards and achievements are more effective through regular evaluation.
- Provide pupils with individual targets and ensure that consistent levels of challenge and day-to-day assessment, including marking, helps them to achieve them.
- Extend the opportunities pupils have to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects..

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the school with skills and experiences that are slightly below those normally expected for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage to attain the goals

expected at the end of the Reception Year, with some children exceeding them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards broadly in line with what is found nationally. This trend is continued in Years 3 to 6, with most pupils on course to achieve the targets set for them. All pupils, including pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. The national test results in 2006 show an improvement from those in the previous year, particularly in Year 6, and indicate that achievement is improving. More able pupils did better, particularly in Year 6, and their achievement was satisfactory. Standards in writing are satisfactory and improving, with many pupils making better than expected progress in a recent whole-school focus on writing. The school sets itself challenging targets and is working hard to reach them. Its procedures for setting targets are proving effective for whole classes and year groups but the school acknowledges that it has more work to do to make them work effectively for individual pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in a wide range of activities. Most attend school regularly and attendance is satisfactory, although a few pupils take time off too often. Pupils behave well and show courtesy and respect for each other by listening attentively. They show kindness to others by looking after younger children and organising playground games that everyone can enjoy. They are keen to take on responsibilities. For example, the school council organised a non-uniform day to raise funds for new play equipment. Pupils understand how to eat healthily and enjoy many sporting opportunities to keep fit. They know how to keep themselves safe in school and to whom they turn when problems arise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They attend a variety of clubs and activities and develop a good sense of team spirit through team sports. They develop independence and confidence through presentations in assemblies and going on residential visits. Pupils contribute well to their community and initiate activities such as recycling through the 'little rotters' scheme to show they understand the importance of caring for the environment. They develop a good awareness of the wider world by meeting visitors and visiting interesting places, including Leicester for the Divali celebrations. Visitors also give them an insight into the world of work and the importance of working hard at school. Their average standards in basic skills prepare them for future life satisfactorily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, which is why pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and helps children to make good progress. Teachers have worked hard to provide pupils with a stimulating environment for

learning. Good relationships exist in all classes, which give pupils the confidence to contribute in lessons. Pupils' needs are met satisfactorily. In the 'Big Writing' project, for example, many pupils' needs were effectively catered for, which helped them to make good progress in their writing. However, the levels of challenge provided for different groups of pupils are inconsistent. This is partly because teachers do not use marking consistently as a method for helping pupils improve. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well in class, enabling them to be involved in all activities and make satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. All areas of learning are covered in the Foundation Stage but the outdoor space is not used to maximum effect. In Years 1 to 6, teachers are working to make the links between subjects more evident so that learning makes better sense to pupils. At present, some opportunities are missed to ensure that the level of challenge is sufficient to raise the achievement of all pupils. In some subjects there are too few opportunities taken for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in order to improve their performance. Purposeful intervention programmes are used to boost support for particular groups of pupils and external guidance is sought for those with specific learning difficulties. An effective programme is in place to support pupils' good personal development. In addition to the wide range of activities and sports clubs, many visits and visitors into school enrich the curriculum well. Good links with other schools help pupils appreciate what is on offer beyond their own school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory but with strengths in the pastoral care given to pupils. Parents and pupils confirm that this is a very caring school. Procedures to deal with child protection, safety, bullying and unacceptable behaviour are all good. The school takes the necessary steps to maintain good attendance and relevant agencies are brought in to deal with the few who have high rates of absence. Support for pupils with learning difficulties, whilst good in one-to-one or small group situations, is satisfactory overall. External guidance is available when needed and parents are kept fully informed. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. Good evidence is gathered to check how well pupils are achieving. This information is not always used effectively to plan work that matches pupils' individual needs. Teachers set class and group targets, but pupils are not actively involved in identifying personal targets to support good learning. Teachers' marking is inconsistent in guiding pupils as to what they have done well or how they could improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. A new leadership team has recently been established with staff who share the headteacher's vision for the school. There is a clear focus on improving achievement and a number of recent initiatives have had some impact. For example, the 'Big Writing' project saw a considerable number of pupils make better than expected progress in their writing. There is a clear cycle of checking provision by subject leaders and the performance management process places clear demands on teachers by linking the achievement of their classes to their performance. Although the checking procedures for improving achievement are robust, the procedures for evaluating their effectiveness are not fully in place. This means that some recent initiatives have not had a sustained impact. The governors are fully supportive of the school and now take a much more active role in the life of the school and in checking its work. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, have equal access to the opportunities the school provides. Parents have very positive views about the school and have confidence in the quality of its work.

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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?	3
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	2
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	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	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

- Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you had to say about the school. You told us a lot about what you like and what you would like to see improved. We really liked the healthy dinners and the 'little rotters' in the school grounds. Here are some of the things we found out about your school. The school gives you a satisfactory standard of education. Most of you are making satisfactory progress and some of the very youngest children are making good progress. The school has some strengths but there are some things that it could do better. These are the main things we found that your school does well.
- You behave well and have very good attitudes to your learning.
- You get on well with each other and with all the adults in school.
- The school provides you with some interesting activities to help you learn and a lot of interesting clubs.
- Your teachers take good care to keep you safe and healthy. There are some things that we have asked your headteacher and the rest of the staff to improve so that the education you receive at school is even better than it is now.
- Check that all the things they do help you to improve your work.
- Give you your own targets and help you to reach them by marking your work so you know what to do next, and giving you more work that challenges you.
- Give you more chances to develop your writing and mathematics in all of your work. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and doing your best all the time, and also by learning to understand the targets you are set so they help to make your work better.