



# Cosby Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119919  
**Local Authority** Leicestershire  
**Inspection number** 291571  
**Inspection dates** 30–31 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** David Driscoll

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Portland Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Cosby
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Leicester LE9 1TE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2863103
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	258	<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2863429
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Melvyn Booley
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Withers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Cosby is a medium sized school that serves a reasonably affluent area. Very few pupils come from a minority ethnic background and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average.

## **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, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 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 in the school.

The school has been in steady decline since it was last inspected. Standards have fallen to below average and pupils' achievement is inadequate because they do not make enough progress in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. The underachievement in mathematics is a result of inadequate teaching that fails to demand enough of middle and higher ability pupils. The problem in science lies with the inadequate curriculum; pupils are simply not taught enough lessons in science. While pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good, their overall personal development is only satisfactory because they are not developing the basic skills they will need in the next stage of their education. Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start. They are taught well and take part in activities that they enjoy.

Parents are becoming more concerned about the quality of teaching and the progress made by their children. Nevertheless, they recognise that pupils are well looked after, although the overall quality of care, support and guidance is only satisfactory. This is because of some inconsistencies in the quality of academic guidance that pupils receive.

The school's managers make good use of data to identify the main strengths and weaknesses. However, leadership and management are inadequate because managers fail to act on the areas that most need improving, or act too slowly. There are lots of systems for checking on what is going on in the school, but these paint a picture that is inaccurate because insufficient attention is paid to the mismatch between what the school does and the results it achieves.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress in mathematics by ensuring that teachers have higher expectations of what can be achieved by middle and higher ability pupils.
- Improve achievement in science by ensuring that sufficient time is devoted to the subject.
- Strengthen leadership and management so that the most important weaknesses in the school's performance are suitably prioritised and swiftly addressed.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Children join the school with standards that are below average, particularly in their reading, writing and number work. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, and start Year 1 with standards that are average. Steady progress is made in Years 1 and 2, but from Year 3 onwards their standards start to fall. By the time they leave

school, their standards are below average and they are underachieving. Progress in English is satisfactory, but progress in mathematics and science is inadequate. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress, but middle and higher ability pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable, especially in mathematics and science.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Most pupils enjoy school life, but a significant minority have yet to develop a real thirst for learning. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils are attentive in lessons and settle well to tasks, working very cooperatively with each other.

Good manners and consideration for others are consistently evident when pupils are moving round the school and at playtimes. Pupils' understanding of their role in the community is good. They are keen to take on responsibilities, and initiate ideas for activities and school improvements. The 'PALs' scheme, where trained peer supporters are available every lunchtime to help those who have worries or concerns, is particularly successful in ensuring that incidents of bullying are rare and can be dealt with promptly. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, and there are strengths in their moral and social attitudes.

Pupils have good awareness of how to keep safe and the importance of healthy eating and exercise. However, pupils' underachievement in numeracy means that they are not equipped adequately for the next stage of education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Lessons are managed well across the school, so incidents of misbehaviour are rare. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because their teachers expect them to work hard and do well. The activities chosen really stretch the children, so they make rapid gains in learning while enjoying themselves. In contrast, the teaching in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 demands too little of higher and middle ability pupils. Tasks are often too easy, or repetitive. Lower ability pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress because they receive lots of practice in doing a particular type of sum. Middle and higher ability pupils, on the other hand, do too much practice and are not moved on quickly enough so they fall further and further behind the standards of which they are capable.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enjoy learning, for example, when discussing the initial letter sounds of things washed up by the sea. Pupils in

other years enjoy going on visits and taking part in enrichment days, but pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not sufficiently inspired by the rest of the curriculum. Too little time is given to the teaching of science, so pupils do not cover the topics they need to have a sound knowledge of the subject by the time they leave school. Pupils have said that they would like more 'fun' in their learning. Outside of the school day, there is a good range of extra clubs and activities for pupils to attend.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Staff know pupils well and their pastoral and medical needs are dealt with sensitively and effectively. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to concerns sympathetically. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety are promoted well. Good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils are safe and secure. Planned programmes of induction for each stage of learning ensure that pupils are confident about moving on.

Road safety is developed particularly well as part of the very successful initiative to encourage pupils to walk to school, which also improves their health. The annual Life Education visit ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of drugs issues, risks and appropriate sex education.

Guidance to pupils on how to improve their work is satisfactory. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are now in place and closely monitored. Targets in English and mathematics are in place for each ability group in classes and pupils and their parents are fully aware of them. However, pupils do not have specific targets relating to their individual learning needs. Clear learning objectives for each lesson are shared with pupils but the quality of written guidance on how to improve their work varies from high quality to almost non-existent, depending on the class.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The school has been in decline since it was last inspected. Standards have fallen and pupils' achievement is now inadequate. The school's managers have been too slow to take actions to stem the decline. Frequent tracking of pupils' progress began in September 2006, and served to demonstrate the lack of progress made in Years 3 to 6. Senior managers now make good use of the data available to them to identify weaknesses in performance, but these weaknesses are not prioritised effectively. The biggest weakness is in science, for example, but this does not form a specific part of the school's plan for improvement. Senior managers have worked hard to bring about improvements, although not always in the most important areas. Too little is expected of middle managers in terms of leading initiatives that will drive up standards. Governors are not sufficiently aware of the school's weaknesses, especially in terms of standards reached by pupils.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4
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	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	4
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for being so helpful when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed by your good manners and behaviour. We thought the way you take on jobs in the school was particularly good, especially those of you who are in the 'PALs' scheme. You get off to a good start in Reception, where you have fun learning lots of new things. Many of you told us that you like the trips and creativity days, but would like more fun in your lessons. All of you are well looked after by the grown-ups, but some of you could be told a little more clearly how to make your work better. You could help yourselves here, by making sure you always do what the teacher tells you to, such as doing your corrections in maths.

Unfortunately, we found that some of you are not doing well enough in your maths and science in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The work is too easy for many of you in maths, so you are not learning enough. In science you are not learning enough because you do not get enough lessons. To get this sorted out, we have asked your teachers to cut down the amount of practice you do and give you some harder work instead. We have also asked the people who run the school to make sure there are enough lessons in science.

The school has been getting worse since we last checked it, and the education that you are getting now is not good enough. This is because the people who run the school have not been working on all the things that need sorting out, or have not got around to sorting them out quickly enough. They know what the problems are, so we have asked them to make sure they tackle the biggest ones first, and as quickly as they can.

Thanks once again for your welcome and help.