



Thurnby Lodge Primary School and Speech and Language Unit

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 120057
Local Authority Leicester City
Inspection number 291614
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Terry Elston

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

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Dudley Avenue |
| School category | Community | | Leicester |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 | | LE5 2EG |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0116 2413086 |
| Number on roll (school) | 187 | Fax number | 0116 2431914 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Peter Oldfield |
| | | Headteacher | Sheila Driver |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11 June 2001 | | |

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
| 3–11 | 20–21 September 2006 | 291614 |

Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws pupils mostly from the local housing estate, which is an area of social deprivation. Most pupils are of White British origin but around 11% are from Asian backgrounds. Compared with most schools, a high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. There is a unit for 27 pupils with speech and language difficulties that admits pupils from across the county. A higher than average number of pupils join the school part way through the year. The school has suffered significant staffing problems in recent years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's provision is satisfactory and improving rapidly. This confirms the school's own view. The inspiration, direction and energy provided by strong leadership, not least by the headteacher, have made possible big improvements in a short time, particularly in the standards of pupils' work and behaviour. Teachers have risen well to the new challenges set for them by the leaders and the quality of teaching is now good throughout the school. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons but their achievement over time is still only satisfactory as they have a great deal of headway to make up. Standards are below average. In most subjects, they are close to those found nationally and this is a big improvement on previous years. There are still weaknesses in writing and mathematics, but the school has begun to tackle these and there are already signs of improvement. Some of the best achievements are by pupils with learning difficulties. They make good progress because of the good quality of teaching and effective support by teaching assistants. Those in the speech and language unit thrive as a result of the well-planned range of activities and specialist teaching to meet their particular needs.

Behaviour is good because pupils develop an excellent sense of right and wrong. They enjoy the rich curriculum and the many activities provided at lunchtime and after school that help to make school fun. Parents are delighted with the way the school is improving and say how much their children enjoy learning. Children make a very good start in the Nursery class. They settle quickly into school and learn quickly because of the outstanding quality of provision. One parent commented, 'My daughter likes school so much she wanted to come on Saturday'. Parents value highly the good quality of care, support and guidance that keeps their children safe, provides vital support when needed and prepares them well for the future. Teachers know their pupils very well and track their progress carefully. They do not, however, always make best use of these assessments to set pupils challenging targets to help them progress even faster.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6, particularly by providing more opportunities for pupils to practise writing and number skills in other subjects.
- Make more effective use of assessment to show pupils what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage enter school with skills well below those found nationally. They make rapid progress, although they are still below average in all areas except physical development by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are close to those found nationally. The test results for pupils in Year 6 in recent years have been well below national averages and progress has been too

slow. The latest results are a big improvement and the school exceeded its, albeit modest, targets. Standards are now still below average overall, but close to those found nationally in science and reading where pupils achieve well. In mathematics and writing, standards are below average and the school rightly sees raising standards in these subjects as priorities. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those in the unit for pupils with speech and language difficulties, make good progress towards their targets. Pupils whose first language is not English achieve well. They benefit from good support and effective teaching that ensure they make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall, but their moral development is outstanding. This is illustrated by their consistently good behaviour and excellent understanding of right and wrong. In lessons you can hear a pin drop. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and rates of attendance, while still below those of most schools, are steadily improving. Pupils are well prepared for the future and have the confidence to undertake responsibilities. For example, the enthusiastic members of the school council take their duties very seriously and have made possible real improvements in the school. In particular, their recommendations have led to the school providing an exciting range of play activities in the playground. Pupils feel safe at school because bullying is rare and older pupils take good care of the younger ones. They have a very good awareness of how to live healthy lives and have responded very enthusiastically to the school's drive for more healthy eating.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. In the Foundation Stage, the high quality of the teaching gives children an excellent start to school. Here, teachers provide a very good balance of work and play to improve children's language, number and social skills and give them confidence to develop their independence. Throughout the school, teachers have good knowledge of subjects and use this well to develop pupils' understanding. They use resources such as large whiteboards attached to computers very effectively to make lessons interesting. Teachers are careful to tell pupils at the start of lessons exactly what they should have learned by the end. This works well, and helps both teachers and pupils judge the progress they have made. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are generally high, and particularly so in reading and science where pupils make the best progress. However, in Years 3 to 6 teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and number skills in other subjects and this helps to explain why standards in writing and mathematics are lower than in other subjects. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good, and results in

good progress. In particular, the specialist teaching of pupils in the speech and language unit is very effective and parents are quick to say how much it helps their children learn. Assessment systems are satisfactory. However, while teachers make regular checks on pupils' progress, they make too little use of this information to set their pupils challenging targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that makes learning interesting and relevant to all pupils' needs. Detailed planning ensures that lessons meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils. The good personal, social and health education plays a big part in teaching pupils how to live healthy lives and respect one another's feelings. The school has worked effectively to link subjects such as history, geography and religious education in the planning and this helps pupils develop a deeper understanding of topics. The school recognises the need to link writing and mathematics with other subjects in the same way in order to help raise standards. The excellent curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage gives them an outstanding start to their school life. The good planning for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the setting of challenging targets explains why they make rapid progress. The curriculum for pupils in the speech and language unit is very well planned and provides good opportunities for them to join other classes whenever possible. The school enriches the curriculum with a good range of activities at lunchtime and after school, all of which are well attended. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance are good. Children in the Nursery settle into school very well because staff build such good relationships with families before they start. There are good procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils, with good attention given to risk assessments and child protection. Working relationships between the school and health, social and welfare professionals are good and contribute much to pupils' well-being. The 'Nurture Group', for pupils who feel particularly vulnerable, is a very valuable initiative that does a lot to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully but the school recognises the need to provide better guidance on how they can improve their work. The school monitors attendance very carefully, and the measures put in place to reduce absences are working well. One parent's view of the quality of care, support and guidance, typical of many, reads, 'The staff understand children's needs so well, and make them feel special'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, with effective support from the senior team, leads very well and has made a significant difference to the quality of provision in a short time. In particular, the leaders have been very successful in rectifying weaknesses in teaching that have led to underachievement in the past. The headteacher's clear vision and high expectations have, in the words of one member of staff, given the school 'a real sense of purpose, and a universal feeling of optimism'. The school's good use of data to compare its performance with other schools, and its eagerness to consult parents and pupils about the provision, give it a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. This enables staff to focus clearly on the main priorities. For example, following a rigorous review of the school last year, the measures put in place to raise standards have already led to higher attainment in reading and science and improved behaviour and attendance. The unit for pupils with speech and language difficulties is very well led and managed. The school ensures these pupils benefit from high levels of specialist support that enable them to make good progress and take a full part in school life. Governance is good. Governors support the school very well and are fully involved in strategies for improvement. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and is very well poised to do even better.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

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 | 1 |
| 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? | 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 | 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 | 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? | 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 | 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 | 2 |
| 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 such an important part of the recent inspection of your school. You made the inspectors feel very welcome and we really enjoyed seeing you work and play so enthusiastically. Those of you who spoke to us made it clear that you are very proud of your school and try to do your best.

We found the best things about your school are:

- You make good progress in reading and science.
- Your behaviour is good because you know the rules and have an excellent understanding of what is right and wrong.
- Your teachers are doing a good job.
- Your headteacher has helped to make big improvements since she came last year.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a very good start because the staff know exactly what the children need to learn.

We have asked your school to make some improvements. These are to:

- help the older pupils to do better in writing and mathematics
- use the information that teachers have about your progress to show you how to do even better.