

Heatherbrook Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 120067 |
| Local Authority | Leicester City |
| Inspection number | 291618 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 March 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Roger Sadler |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 166 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Wayne Hollingsworth |
| Headteacher | Loretta Jewitt |
| Date of previous school inspection | 4 November 2002 |
| School address | Astill Lodge Road Beaumont Leys Leicester LE4 1BE |
| Telephone number | 0116 2357721 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Three quarters of the pupils are from White British families and a quarter from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all pupils speak English as their main language at home. The number of pupils that arrives or leaves the school other than at the normal time in the year is above average. A larger proportion of pupils have learning difficulties than is typical nationally. An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals and the area is one of some economic disadvantage. The school operates a daily breakfast club.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The quality of education, the quality of leadership and management and the progress and achievement of pupils are satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skill levels below those typically found at this age. Good induction arrangements from the recently established pre-school setting help children make a confident start in Reception. Good provision ensures they make good progress in all aspects of their learning and in many areas of learning they attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. The children's personal, social and emotional development and their speaking and listening skills, however, remain below expected levels. In Year 1, pupils make satisfactory progress. Progress in Year 2 is good. Standards attained by Year 2 pupils have steadily risen over the last three years and since 2005, most have attained average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Standards are rising steadily and in Years 3 and 4, pupils are now attaining close to the national averages. Standards are also improving in Years 5 and 6, and in Year 6 progress is good. However, pupils started in these year groups with below-average standards. They have not yet caught up sufficiently to reach the standards expected for their age so attainment is below average. Staff have recently carried out some useful work to improve writing, especially that of boys, and standards of writing are beginning to rise.

Care, guidance and support are good. The school keeps a close eye on the progress of each pupil and provides extra help for those who are not attaining quite as well as others in the class. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In most classes, pupils know their writing targets and demonstrate a clear understanding of where they need to improve. This is less effective in mathematics, where a system for sharing learning targets has not been introduced. Teachers mostly work effectively to ensure that pupils concentrate and behave in lessons, but sometimes they expect too little of the pupils and a few, mostly boys, act immaturity. This slows the pace of learning. In some classes, pupils do not evaluate their own or others' work sufficiently because teachers miss chances to establish clearly what a good piece of work should look like. Home reading and other homework is well organised and many parents make a helpful contribution to the progress their children make. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress because teachers make careful assessments and ensure they are well supported by teaching assistants.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. In Reception it is interesting and helps pupils enjoy school from an early age. Although the curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge for pupils, this is not always the case for the most able pupils. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils show consideration for their own and others' safety and feelings.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve opportunities for the most able pupils to do their very best and expect more of them.
- Ensure all teachers regularly specify what a good piece of work should look like so pupils see how to evaluate and improve particular aspects of their work.
- Ensure that pupils in all classes are challenged to concentrate fully and behave well in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

On entry to Reception, most children's knowledge and skill levels are below those typically found. They are weakest in their personal development and in their speaking and listening. They make good progress in all aspects of their learning and many are attaining the expected standards, although attainment in personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening remain below expected levels by the end of Reception. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards have risen in recent years and attainment is at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2006, although Year 6 pupils attained below-average standards in national tests, they made satisfactory progress between the age of 7 and 11. School records and pupils' work indicate that progress accelerates in Year 6 because of good teaching and high expectations. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are achieving appropriately and standards are beginning to rise. In Years 3 and 4, standards are now much closer to average. The starting points for the current Year 5 and 6 pupils were lower and there is still some way to go before they catch up and reach the national expectations. Standards of presentation are below average and pupils take insufficient pride in their work because sometimes not enough is expected of them. Writing, especially punctuation and grammar, has improved following some determined work by the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Many pupils enjoy lessons and talk enthusiastically about their work. The school has worked effectively to ensure pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time, and attendance is satisfactory. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Their spiritual development is good. They are encouraged to reflect on how they treat each other and how it feels to be treated with respect. Pupils' satisfactory appreciation of other cultures is developed through special theme days to appreciate and celebrate diversity. Most pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They display good manners and form strong relationships with adults and their friends. A minority of pupils, mostly boys, find it hard to get on with others and sometimes distract others and need regular reminders of the need to co-operate. The school council and environment group have a positive effect on life in the school community. They help other pupils to show a good understanding of how to be healthy and to stay safe. Older pupils are keen to take on extra responsibilities as monitors and they set a good example for younger children. Adequate basic skills are developed as pupils move through the school so that pupils are given satisfactory preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Learning and progress are best in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are often given very clear guidance and helpful checklists of the key features of a good piece of work. Pupils are frequently required to assess their own and a partner's work. This helps them learn how to improve particular aspects of their work and pupils consequently make good progress in these year groups. In other classes, pupils receive too

little guidance on how to evaluate their own work and to see where it should be improved. In some classes, when not enough is expected, pupils show too little pride in their work and leave work unfinished. In Year 6, pupils are given frequent opportunities to practise their speaking skills using increasingly complex sentences. Also in Year 6, pupils are given chances to discuss the teacher's questions before answering. In other classes, chances to develop speaking skills are missed. Some teachers are a little slow to challenge poor listening and concentration and, although behaviour often improves as lessons proceed, the pace of learning slows because of the immature behaviour of a few pupils. Teachers show clear understanding of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and good support enables these pupils to make satisfactory progress. Sometimes, the highest-attaining pupils could do harder work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved and pupils enjoy using computers and the Internet. In the Foundation Stage the teacher plans a good range of activities which are well matched to children's needs. The school's focus on improving pupils' writing skills has resulted in improved standards, especially at the end of Year 2, where writing is now at nationally expected levels. The curriculum is adapted to enable pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to receive the additional attention they need. It is less well developed to challenge the most able pupils and some lessons are too easy for them. There is a suitable range of clubs and opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports. Provision for pupils to learn about healthy eating and how to stay safe is good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. Child protection arrangements are secure and the school works effectively with other agencies. Pupils are very well supported when they join the school and as a result they settle in quickly. Good links have been established with the pre-school on site so that children make a smooth transfer and confident start when they join the Reception class. Throughout the school, the needs of pupils with learning difficulties, and those whose first language is not English, are carefully assessed and the school has good links with other professionals to support these pupils if necessary. Pupils' work, especially their writing, is marked carefully and constructively and marking often indicates where improvement is needed. Sometimes, however, marking does not focus clearly on pupils' targets. Pupils and their parents are given clear guidance about homework. Tasks that pupils can do at home are carefully planned, taken in regularly, checked and monitored by teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and her deputy have an accurate overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses, analyse data on pupils' learning thoroughly and use this information to allocate additional support to underachieving pupils. Because monitoring and evaluation are effective, the school improvement plan focuses on the correct issues and the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. Some teachers' expectations of

achievement and behaviour go unchallenged and this slows learning in some classes. Subject leaders provide good support to colleagues and monitor planning and pupils' work in their subjects. For example, in English, the subject leader has arranged effective staff training that has helped improve writing. Monitoring of lessons by subject leaders is very limited so they are not able to provide sufficient feedback and guidance to help ensure that teaching is consistently good. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is well managed and these pupils progress at a similar rate to others. Because of difficulties in recruiting and retaining governors, governance is not fully effective. Governors play a sound role in the strategic development of the school and provide support for the senior management team. However, the lack of a programme of regular visits by governors limits their capacity to find out for themselves how well the school is doing and to offer sufficient challenge.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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| 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 | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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| 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

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 3 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 3 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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? | 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? | 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| 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 |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making Mrs Edwards and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that many of you enjoy your school and that almost all of you attend regularly. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn. We think your school is properly run and is giving you a satisfactory education. The work you do and the clubs you are offered are sometimes interesting. Adults provide satisfactory teaching and care well for you so that you make sound progress. Reception children settle into your school quickly and make good progress. You show understanding of the importance of eating the right food and exercising regularly. Although most of you know how to behave, some of you, especially a few boys, do not concentrate as well as you should and interrupt lessons too often. Most of you know right from wrong, show enough consideration for others and are friendly and helpful to each other. Older pupils take responsibility for helping others within the school and the School Council works well to help make life in school better. Those of you who find learning hard make satisfactory progress because teachers and teaching assistants help you learn. You are being given satisfactory preparation for your next school and for the world of work beyond.

There are three things that we have asked your school to work on:

- give the most able of you harder work and expect you to do your very best
- make sure that all teachers show you what your work should look like to help you assess and improve particular aspects of your work
- ensure that you all concentrate hard and behave well in lessons.