

Slater Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120101
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	291628
Inspection date	3 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Gillespie
Headteacher	Robert Wilford
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2003
School address	Slater Street Leicester LE3 5AS
Telephone number	0116 2624587
Fax number	0116 2537409

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated close to the city centre of Leicester. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds. However, the overall social and economic circumstances of pupils are less favourable than is the case nationally. This is reflected in the above average proportion who opt for a free school meal. Attainment on entry is low and varies between being well below and below average. About 17% of pupils have English as an additional language and this figure is increasing. Pupils are at varying stages of learning English. At over 25% , the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above average. Pupil mobility is high.

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 overall effectiveness is satisfactory leading to satisfactory achievement. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and good progress in the Foundation Stage where teaching and provision for personal and social development are good. Current standards are broadly average by the end of Foundation Stage and Year 2. Standards in Year 6 are below average but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in writing tend to be low and, generally, pupils find work that requires skills such as enquiry, evaluation and investigation difficult. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress initially in developing sufficient English to help them communicate with others. However, their progress then levels off as the school has not yet developed specialist provision or teaching strategies to meet their needs fully. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features, though planning is sketchy and work is insufficiently matched to individual needs. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they could. Whilst the school has good systems for assessment, and teachers know how well their pupils are doing in lessons, systems for tracking the progress pupils make as they move through the school are not as well developed. Hence, the progress made by individual pupils over time is not effectively monitored and teachers can not tell quickly enough if pupils are underperforming, for example, pupils currently in Year 6 have had to make up for some lost ground in previous years. Though they have made good progress this year, their standards remain low. Given progress in literacy and numeracy, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their next steps in education and future life.

Curricular provision is satisfactory overall and there is a successful programme for personal, social and health education. As a result, pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their well-being are good. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and make good efforts to adopt these. Pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Because pupils are well cared for and looked after, they enjoy school and feel safe. Good behaviour contributes to the pupils' sense of safety.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has set a clear direction for development which is well focused on raising standards. His monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school are rigorous and incisive. As a result, the school has an accurate view of how good it is and what its weaknesses are. However, most other staff with leadership responsibilities have yet to become actively involved in checking the quality of work in their areas. Governors provide sound oversight of the school and its work. Given the systematic approach to school improvement and accuracy of self-evaluation, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve lesson plans to ensure that work is sufficiently challenging and well matched to the needs of individual pupils.
- Develop pupils' writing and skills such as enquiry, evaluation, analysis and investigation.
- Establish systems for supporting pupils in their learning of English as an additional language.
- Make subject coordinators more effective in driving these developments through regular monitoring and evaluation activities. A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment in the National Curriculum tests in 2006 was well below average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. In both year groups, there was a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and many pupils taking the tests had not been at the school since the start of the key stage. Some of these pupils came with little or no English. Progress was satisfactory and pupils who had been at the school since the age of four met challenging targets. Results in previous years have been better, as are current standards, but progress and achievement remain satisfactory. Weaknesses in pupils' writing and more sophisticated learning skills such as enquiry, problem solving and investigation slow down their progress. Pupils who arrive at the school with little or no English make good initial progress in gaining sufficient command of the language for communication purposes. This enables them to understand what is going on in lessons and to access the curriculum, but not enough to demonstrate the standards they are capable of. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress against their targets and across the curriculum. Standards at the end of Foundation Stage are close to average and pupils achieve well. Standards in language and literacy and creative development tend to be lower but pupils make good progress in language and literacy from their low starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Moral and social development are particularly good; spiritual development is satisfactory and has scope to be better. Cultural development is good and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds get on well with one another. Pupils like school and most show an interest in lessons and other activities. They are polite and friendly and good relationships exist throughout the school. Attendance is below the national average but improving each year as a result of strategies introduced by the school. Pupils are actively involved in the school council, where they are given an individual budget to spend, and the school operates a 'buddy' system to support more vulnerable or new pupils.

Pupils show a good level of respect for the lives and cultures of others and incidents of bullying and racism are low. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Exclusions are low and only used when appropriate. Pupils are very aware of how to remain healthy and safe. Their basic skills prepare them satisfactorily for life ahead, and for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils which secures their cooperation in lessons. Teaching assistants are well deployed, especially to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, planning is not detailed enough to identify how the needs of different groups of pupils are to be met or how they are to be assessed. As a result, tasks are often not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs and there is, at times, overuse of worksheets. Support from teachers and support staff enables pupils to make at least satisfactory progress but this on its own is not enough to promote better progress, especially for able pupils and those learning

English as an additional language. In the best lessons, there is good use of questioning to promote pupils' thinking. Teachers mark work regularly and make effective use of information and communication technology. In the Foundation Stage, practical activities are well designed to promote good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Statutory requirements are met and the school has met the demands of adapting the curriculum for mixed age classes. The programme for personal, social and health education successfully helps pupils to mature and become confident and articulate by Year 6. Older pupils greatly enjoy residential visits and visitors to school help enrich provision. Extra-curricular activities support pupils' personal development well. The school is well on the way to developing an extended schools programme to provide additional activities after school.

At present, there is only limited innovation in lessons and this restricts how exciting they can be. Links across subjects have yet to be established. Some work has been done to develop problem solving and investigative skills, especially in science, but more is required. Pupils with learning difficulties are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. Pupils learning English for the first time receive some additional support when they join the school which enables them to access the curriculum. However, systems for supporting their learning as they become more advanced are not yet in place. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and provides children with interesting activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Provision for child protection and health and safety are good. The small number of pupils at this caring school ensures that pupils are able to settle into school quickly. All the necessary checks to safeguard pupils are carried out. The school works appropriately with outside agencies when necessary to support their children.

Pupils feel confident to talk about any difficulties they encounter and this helps ensure their well-being. The school has received Sportsmark and Healthy Schools awards and pupils are actively helped to understand how to live healthy, happy lives.

Class teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and assessment is particularly good in the Foundation Stage. Pupils know their targets and how to improve their work, though written comments do not always make the latter clear. The monitoring of progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is systematic and ensures they make satisfactory progress. However, systems for setting targets and monitoring English language development for pupils learning English as an additional language are not in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has established positive working relationships amongst pupils and staff and knows what must be done to raise attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science. Management systems and structures are developing well, though these have not all been in place long enough to have had sufficient impact. Children's progress as they move through the

Foundation Stage is very well monitored. However, a similar system has yet to be implemented across the rest of the school. As a result, though teachers know how well pupils do in their classes due to good assessment, there is less secure knowledge of how well pupils progress over time. Whilst the headteacher actively monitors and evaluates the quality of the school's work, most other staff are not as involved and, hence, not in as good a position to drive forward improvements in their subject or area of responsibility. Governors meet regularly and are supportive of the school. They are becoming more challenging at meetings and actively involved in monitoring standards and provision. Resources are well used, though the school buildings are old and not so easy to work with. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<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

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

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	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?	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.

Annex A

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

4 May 2007 Dear Pupils

Inspection of Slater Primary School, Leicester, LE3 5AS

We enjoyed our time at your school very much and we particularly liked visiting your classrooms and talking to you. We would like to thank you very much for making us feel welcome.

The school is providing you with a satisfactory education. We saw a number of things that were good including ways in which you help to make the school a better place:

- You get on well with one another and your behaviour is good.
- You become mature and confident by the time you are in Year 6.
- Children in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their education.
- You are well cared for and looked after and, as a result, you feel safe and happy at school.
- Your headteacher and staff team work well together. They know how to make the school better.

There are some things that could be better. These include:

- Ensuring that lessons are well planned and focused on your individual needs so that you get work that is at the right level for you.
- Improving your writing and skills of evaluation, investigation and enquiry so as to help you achieve better in subjects like English, mathematics and science.
- Developing systems that support those of you learning English as an additional language.

You can certainly help to improve the school by continuing to work hard and doing your best to attend regularly.

We wish you all well in the future.

Gulshan Kayembe Lead inspector