

Cantrell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122413
Local Authority	CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LA
Inspection number	292391
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Moore
Headteacher	Mrs Dilys Cranstone
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001
School address	Cantrell Road Bulwell Nottingham NG6 9HJ
Telephone number	0115 9155770
Fax number	0115 9155771

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves the town of Bulwell on the outskirts of Nottingham. Numbers have risen since the last inspection. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is above average. The children come from a broad range of cultural backgrounds, although the majority are of White British heritage. Attainment on entry to the school is often well below expectations. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is above that found in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. It has made good progress since the last inspection and is well set to maintain the momentum. All of the key issues have been resolved and the school has made significant strides in improving the quality of education, particularly in terms of monitoring the progress of the pupils. As a result, the quality of teaching is now good and standards are rising. The children really enjoy coming to school because the curriculum is well matched to their needs. As one pupil commented, 'Cantrell is special because the adults make it special for us.' The school provides an outstanding level of care for its pupils to ensure they feel safe and secure. The school is at the heart of the community that it serves and works well with other schools.

The children make good progress in the Nursery class, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills. This is because the school is very successful in enabling the children to settle quickly into routines. Furthermore, the school places great emphasis on the development of the children's speaking and listening skills; consequently, the overall quality of the children's experience in the Nursery provides a secure foundation for their future learning. However, there is a lack of rigour in the teaching in the Reception classes and so the children do not consistently build on their early gains in learning. The children's progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall.

The pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Although standards are below average at the end of Year 2, by the time that the pupils leave school their achievement is good. However, the boys' achievement in reading and writing lags behind that of the girls but there are signs that this is an improving situation. This is because the pupils now have a much clearer idea of what they need to do to improve and the teaching is putting much more emphasis on encouraging the development of boys' literacy. In mathematics and science, there is little difference between boys' and girls' achievement. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average because the school lacks up-to-date resources.

The personal development and well-being of all pupils are exemplary. Attendance rates are improving because the school has been resolute in its drive to eliminate unauthorised absence. Staff respect and value the pupils. Consequently, pupils develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline; their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and they respond very well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. They work hard and play well together, forming excellent relationships with one another and with adults in school. The school works hard to help prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.

Leadership and management are good. The senior leadership team provides a very clear direction for the work of the school and staff work very well as a team. The school's view of itself is accurate and has resulted in a clear strategy for continuing improvement. The quality of governance has improved as governors have developed a range of strategies to gauge the school's effectiveness and to measure its performance. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise boys' achievement in literacy.

- Improve the quality of teaching in the Reception classes to ensure that the children build successfully on their Nursery class experience.
- Improve the quality of the provision for ICT.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils make good progress and achieve well overall. They enter school with levels of attainment which are often well below expectations, especially in their language and personal development. The children make better progress in the Nursery class than they do in the Reception classes. Although standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average, Year 6 test results in English, mathematics and science have risen. This is because the quality of teaching has improved and the school has a much clearer idea of the pupils' potential. However, the boys' achievement in literacy falls markedly below that of the girls. Pupils with learning difficulties receive sensitive support and this enables them to make good overall progress. The school makes good arrangements for the brighter pupils to make sure that they are suitably challenged and enabled to reach their potential. Progress in ICT has been limited by a lack of up-to-date resources. Furthermore, work remains to be done on providing more opportunities for the pupils to practise their computer skills in a variety of contexts. Standards in singing are above average and strongly support the pupils' excellent personal development.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's positive ethos is a major contributory factor in ensuring the pupils' behaviour is exemplary and that they show respect for others. They are confident learners who work very well together. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and the uptake for the wide range of out-of-school activities is high. School concerts provide an excellent means of involving parents in their children's education. The pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and the broader community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They understand how to make healthy choices and are keen to take part in regular exercise. The pupils are very safe in school and know precisely what measures to take to ensure this is maintained. The school council has a major role in bringing the pupils' views to the fore. Pupils' skills for their futures are developing well: for example, the recruitment process for peer mediators is excellent in helping pupils understand how to apply for positions of responsibility, which will stand them in very good stead in their working lives. Attendance is satisfactory overall and pupils who attend school regularly are recognised and rewarded.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, with some outstanding features. Teachers plan stimulating lessons that pupils agree are interesting and fun. The teachers' strong subject knowledge and very good relationships with their pupils help pupils to succeed. Learning objectives are clearly explained at the beginning of lessons and, at the end, teachers involve the pupils in assessing their own progress. Pupils know their specific targets in literacy and mathematics, which helps them to understand what they need to do next. The pace in lessons is generally brisk. Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and provide an

appropriate degree of challenge to meet their individual needs. However, this is not consistently the case in the Reception classes.

The fact that the pupils thoroughly enjoy learning is one of the main reasons why behaviour in lessons is excellent. Most teachers mark pupils' work thoughtfully. Interactive whiteboards are used well to support learning but there are too few opportunities for the pupils to use computers. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and valued members of the team who provide good support for pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad and interesting curriculum is planned carefully to meet the needs of the pupils. Pupils enjoy the challenging work. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'I find religious education challenging because I don't always believe in what I'm told but it makes me think.' The many partnerships with outside organisations add relevance and excitement through visits, visitors, themed weeks and events such as concerts. The school encourages the pupils to be creative and to make links between different subjects. However, the use of ICT to support learning across different subject areas is still developing. There is a well established and very effective curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education. Many pupils participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Good links with the local secondary schools provide an effective induction programme for the Year 6 pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding level of care, guidance and support is a major strength in the work of the school. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount. The culture within the school is one of nurturing pupils to build their confidence and self-esteem to help them achieve their best. Pupils are very aware that they can approach adults in the school if they have any concerns or worries. The 'worry box' works well in this respect. Peer mediators operate as a 'well-oiled machine' to ensure any concerns of the pupils are dealt with properly. They are confident that any unresolved issues will be treated sympathetically by staff. Pupils with very complex needs are very well supported both in their learning and by being helped to cope with their behaviour and emotions.

Pupils are very well supported academically. This is because procedures for checking and tracking their progress have been systematically refined and are used shrewdly. The school has an excellent system for setting and reviewing personal targets which gives pupils a clear understanding of how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She maintains a clear view of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school and has acted resolutely on the appropriate areas to bring about good improvement since the last inspection. Key elements of her success are the high quality relationships and the strength of teamwork. These have enabled the staff to grow in confidence and to share the responsibility for effective school leadership, as can be seen in the leadership team's successful work in strengthening and sharpening assessment

arrangements. The school makes very effective use of local and national initiatives to improve the quality of learning. The community recognises the success of the school and, consequently, pupil numbers have remained buoyant. Governors are committed to the work of the school and provide conscientious support.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1

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?	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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

11 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cantrell Primary School, Bulwell, NG6 9HJ.

We really enjoyed our visit to your school this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. We were very pleased to be able to work with you in your classrooms, join in with your morning assemblies, meet the school council and be part of the audience for your wonderful production of 'The Jungle Book'. We can understand why you enjoy your school so much as there are so many things that make your school very special. Here are some of them.

- You clearly want to do your best to learn in lessons and are prepared to work hard.
- Everybody understands the school rules and your behaviour is wonderful.
- Everybody tries to be friendly, thoughtful and helpful. Well done!
- All of your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- The school provides a wide range of activities and visits to keep you interested.
- You sing beautifully.

You are very fortunate to be able to attend Cantrell Primary School. Many schools are not as good as yours. This is because Mrs Cranstone and the staff really understand how to make learning fun and work very hard to help you. It is really important that you remember to thank them and continue to work hard. I know that you achieve well, but I am asking your teachers to give you more opportunities to work with computers. We also want the school to find ways to help the boys to improve their literacy. The school should also do more work to make sure that the Reception classes are as good as the Nursery. This sounds like a lot of work but we know that the school can do it.

Very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector