



Leas Park Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122441
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 292401
Inspection dates 31 October –1 November 2006
Reporting inspector Anthony O'Malley HMI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Ley Lane
School category	Community		Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield Woodhouse
Age range of pupils	7–11		Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG19 8LD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623 477629
Number on roll (school)	276	Fax number	01623 477631
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Briggs
		Headteacher	Mrs Helen Atkins
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
7–11	31 October –1 November 2006	292401

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Leas Park is a larger than average junior school in Mansfield. Pupils are almost entirely from White British backgrounds. The number claiming free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties including those with a statement of special educational need is below average. Attainment on entry to Year 3 is above 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) 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 overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate and it provides inadequate value for money. Weaknesses in the leadership's self-evaluation and monitoring procedures have led to senior staff having an unrealistic view of key aspects of the school.

In 2006, standards at the end of Year 6 were generally above average. The progress the pupils make, however, is not good enough when measured against the standards they had reached when they started at the school. Standards have dropped since the previous inspection. Pupils do better in Year 6 and make good progress but this is insufficient to make up for the slower progress they make in the other years. Progress has been significantly below what most schools achieve for the last four years. In 2006 progress declined still further. Girls' achievement in the school is exceptionally low. This is a result of low expectations, particularly in classes where boys outnumber girls. In these classes the girls are compliant but their needs are not met, as lessons tend to be dominated by the boys. The school has consistently failed to tackle this underachievement. The more able pupils are not making the progress they are capable of in writing or mathematics. This is because expectations are not high enough and the work set is often too easy. Pupils with learning difficulties are also making inadequate progress and they fail to meet their targets at the end of Year 6. Some children with special educational needs are unable to recall their learning targets. These children have too many targets; or targets that are too broad to be easily achieved.

Personal development is satisfactory. The pupils behave well in school and their attendance is good. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently, discuss ideas with partners and take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils' social and moral development is good. Their spiritual development and cultural development are satisfactory. The care, support and guidance the pupils receive are inadequate because their learning is not carefully monitored and as a result they do not make good enough progress.

Teaching and learning are inadequate. During the inspection good and satisfactory teaching was observed. In individual lessons progress is satisfactory. The poor progress the pupils make over time is evidence, however, that work is not always matched to their needs and abilities. This is because lessons are not planned carefully, using what is known about pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Marking is inconsistent. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a suitable range of clubs and residential trips which the pupils really enjoy. Child protection and staff vetting procedures are satisfactory.

Leadership and management are inadequate. Since the last inspection the leadership team and governors have been insufficiently focused on improving progress. They do not have a realistic view of the school's weaknesses and consequently the school has not made adequate improvement since its previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of pupils, especially girls, by monitoring and evaluating learning more rigorously and providing good academic support where it is needed.
- Increase the rate of progress made by the pupils, especially the more able, in English and mathematics by ensuring that teaching and the curriculum meet the needs of all learners.
- Improve leadership and management so that it has a more accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is more clearly held to account by governors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The standards pupils reach at the end of each year are not good enough when compared with their performance at the age of seven. Results from the national tests taken by the children aged 11 show that standards and achievement fell in 2006. This is a consequence of the poor progress they make when they are younger. For example, in some year groups more than half the children miss their targets. The achievement of girls is particularly weak in English and mathematics. Far too many have made no measurable progress when they are tested at the end of each school year. The standards achieved by the more able are also too low in English particularly in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school is a calm environment where pupils feel safe. Behaviour is good and well managed. Attendance is good and above the national average. There are good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the life of the school. For example, the school council has helped improve the playground and raise money for many good causes. The pupils eat healthily and enjoy physical activities. Their spiritual awareness is satisfactory and their moral and social development is good. The school does not develop the pupils' awareness of multicultural issues sufficiently.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Whilst some satisfactory and good teaching was seen during the inspection, the impact of teaching on learning over time is inadequate. Relationships in class are positive, pupils are managed effectively, and they behave well. Where good teaching was seen, children found lessons interesting, challenging and enjoyable. However, some tasks lack imagination, pace or challenge. Opportunities to make children think hard, discuss their work and develop independence in their learning are lost. Marking is up to date and supportive but often does not help pupils progress. Pupils themselves are not clear about their individual targets and what they need to do to achieve them. Procedures for assessing and tracking the progress pupils make are improving but they have not been used consistently enough to ensure satisfactory progress for all pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils' creativity and enjoyment are developed satisfactorily. The links between subjects are satisfactory and developing further. The curriculum is successful in developing pupils' knowledge of safe and healthy living. There is a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs. The pupils are rightly proud of their sporting achievements. Pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being is just satisfactory because the pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology should be better.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Pastoral care is satisfactory and pupils feel well looked after. The school makes great efforts to ensure that all pupils are safe in school. However, academic guidance is inadequate because the school fails to monitor progress with sufficient rigour. The school works closely with a wide range of outside support agencies to get extra help for pupils for example, those who have social and behavioural difficulties. Systems for ensuring the health, safety and protection of pupils are satisfactory. The targets set for pupils who find learning difficult are not specific enough about what needs to be done to improve their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

In recent years, the leadership team has not focused sufficiently on raising standards and achievement in the school. The school has begun to tackle some of its weaknesses with support from the local authority and partner schools. However, there are

inadequate systems for evaluating its performance and it does not have a realistic view of its weaknesses. This explains why leaders view achievement, personal development, academic guidance and teaching to be better than they are. Expectations of the pupils' achievement are too low and there is a tendency for the school to suggest that the difficulties it has in improving progress are a consequence of external factors beyond its control. Governors are inadequately informed and are not aware of many of the school's weaknesses. The leadership and management do not provide the school with the capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	4

Personal development and well-being

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	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
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?	4
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?	4

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?	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

2 November 2006

Dear Children

Leas Park Junior School, Ley Lane, Mansfield Wodhouse, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8LD

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and helping us with the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work.

These are the things we liked most.

- You told us you feel safe at school and that there was no bullying.
- You are really friendly, well behaved and know all about how to keep healthy.
- We enjoyed talking to the school council and were pleased to hear you had raised funds for playground equipment and many charities.
- You said that you really enjoy the activities you do after school, and look forward to the residential trips. You are right to be proud of your sporting successes.

However, after collecting lots of different sorts of information we have decided that your school is not providing all of you with a good enough standard of education.

- We think that the girls could do much better. We have asked the teachers to check this is happening.
- We think teachers could do more to stretch those of you who are good at writing and mathematics.
- We want the teachers and governors to keep an even better check on how the school is doing.

Best wishes

Anthony O'Malley

Her Majesty's Inspector