

# Scotholme Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122478
<b>Local Authority</b>	CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	292414
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Hall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	322
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Steve Worthington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Kate Hall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Fisher Street Hyson Green Nottingham NG7 6FJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01159781968
<b>Fax number</b>	01159786700

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day. The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress made in reading and writing, particularly of boys, whether the school is doing all it can to promote attendance and what elements of care and guidance may need improvement. Evidence was gathered from the scrutiny of assessment information, a sample of the children's work and brief lesson observations and also through discussions with the headteacher, senior staff and several pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were also inspected. Sufficient evidence was found to indicate that the school's evaluations of its work are substantially accurate. Where appropriate these evaluations are included in this report.

## Description of the school

This larger than average sized primary and nursery school is in an area of Nottingham with pockets of deprivation. An above average proportion of children is entitled to free school meals. At least four out of five children are from minority ethnic groups and many are initially at the early stages of learning English. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The number of children entering and leaving the school at other than the expected times is higher than usual. The headteacher and deputy took up their roles in 2006.

## 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. There are outstanding features in the personal development and care, guidance and support of children, which are key strengths of school life. Parents and carers are generally very appreciative of the quality of education provided and recognise that this is a happy school and their children really enjoy their time here.

Children enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below expectations for their age. Many are initially very quiet and lack confidence and a large number speak little English. As soon as they enter school they make considerable progress and start to catch up with what children achieve nationally, although by the end of the Foundation Stage standards are below expectations for their age. In Years 1 to 6 children make good progress. National test data shows that in the two most recent years there has been considerable improvement in the standards achieved in literacy and numeracy. At the age of seven attainment is only slightly below national averages in reading and writing and close to expectations in mathematics. By the age of eleven standards in English and mathematics are above average and broadly average in science. This indicates that from a very low start children have made good progress and sometimes this is very good. The school has put a lot of effort into raising standards in literacy and numeracy and staff are keen to ensure that standards in other subjects reflect this improvement. Overall, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well, including girls and boys. While girls do a little better than boys, observations indicate there is no school-based reason for this.

Personal development is excellent. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This was shown in an excellent assembly through a complex three-part song when every single child joined in with sheer joy. The behaviour of the large majority of children is excellent. A small number of parents believe there is a problem with bullying. It is clear from discussions with the children, and in an assembly focused on anti-bullying week, that the school takes a firm stance on this. Children know how to stay safe and have total confidence that there are adults to talk to and senior staff will take action to address issues.

Children develop an excellent understanding of the choices they can make to develop a healthy lifestyle. The school allotment, 'Scotalot', is a very successful venture, which supports healthy eating and a greater awareness of where food comes from. The focus on physical education is strong. There are good opportunities for children to take on responsibilities within the school community including acting as 'Buddies' and representatives on the school council. Coupled with the growing confidence of children, this helps them to prepare well for their futures. The school does much to encourage regular attendance but a number of families take extended holidays in term time, which affects progress, and several children arrive late for the start of the school day. Attendance is average.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff expect a lot of children in both their work and behaviour. Children respond well; they concentrate on their work and try hard. Activities are usually well planned to provide a good level of challenge for groups of children who make different rates of progress. There is very effective use of the high number of classroom assistants to support teaching. However, there are still some inconsistencies in teaching and while the planning of activities is good this could be clearer at times in identifying what the children are to learn. Occasionally staff could explain more effectively things that the children find hard to understand.

The curriculum is good and with some very strong elements. There is an excellent programme of visits to places of educational interest and the effective use of visiting performers to enthuse the children. The curriculum for literacy and numeracy is good and the school is working purposefully to develop problem solving and investigative skills further. There has been a very effective focus on developing the information and communication technology skills of teachers and children, which has benefits across the curriculum.

The care, guidance and support of children are outstanding and key strengths. The school has excellent links with a very wide range of external services to support both the children and their families. The extended services provided include the breakfast club, which enables children to start the day well. High quality bi-lingual support is available from the nursery onwards and helps children to settle well. There are very well managed arrangements to give extra support to different groups, both those identified as gifted and talented and others with learning difficulties. There are also numerous activities to support the middle range of abilities to ensure pupils reach their targets. Academic guidance is a strong feature. A key reason for improved standards is the considerable improvement in how staff check and track the progress children make. This information is used well to set challenging targets, which children and parents know.

Leadership and management are good and with some outstanding features. The school has good capacity to continue to improve. Parents are very appreciative of recent improvements with one noting, 'The school has managed to raise standards while still offering pupils a balanced curriculum with opportunities to develop life skills'. Many parents rightly recognise the pivotal impact of the headteacher who provides excellent leadership. The deputy has had considerable influence through improving the management and use of assessment information to inform planning. Senior staff also have a good grasp of their roles and target setting is very effective. There is awareness that while the children make considerable progress some improvements have been relatively recent and there are still some inconsistencies. Governance is generally good and governors are rightly considering extending the number of their formal meetings and focused visits to ensure they can further challenge the staff. While the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school, including teaching and learning, are mostly good they are often descriptive and supportive rather than rigorously evaluative. This does not always help staff to prioritise exactly what else needs to be improved.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the nursery from the age of three. When they start many are new to learning English and are shy and quiet. Their skills in all areas are initially well below expectations for their age, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. Many have a limited vocabulary and little knowledge of early reading and writing. During their time in the Foundation Stage they make good overall progress and become much more confident and enthusiastic learners. Nevertheless, when they enter Year 1, their skills, knowledge and understanding are generally below expectations for their age. A key strength in the nursery is the very effective work of bi-lingual staff in supporting children, which builds their confidence and enables them to make rapid progress. While the curriculum is generally good there is scope to make both the internal and external environment more imaginative and stimulating to challenge the children even further.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the levels of attendance and punctuality.

- Extend the procedures to monitor and rigorously evaluate the quality of the work of the school in order to identify the further steps for improvement.

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## Annex A

## 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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

21 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Scotholme Primary School, Nottingham, NG7 6FJ

Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, at lunchtime and when I spoke to the school council. I think your school is really good!

These are some of the best things about your school:

- I think it's a very happy school and your parents are right to be proud of how much progress you make.
- The staff look after you and care for you very well.
- You have excellent attitudes to school and most of you behave very well.
- The staff are a really enthusiastic team who work well together.
- There are lots of activities, including visits and visitors, that make learning interesting.

This is what that I think could be improved:

- You and your parents need to work together to ensure you attend school regularly and on time.
- The staff could check what happens in school more carefully to identify what else needs to be improved.

To help your school, keep trying hard all the time.

I would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector