



Richard Bonington Primary and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122512
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 292422
Inspection dates 31 January –1 February 2007
Reporting inspector John Brennan

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Calverton Road Arnold, Arnold Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG5 8FQ
School category	Community	Telephone number	0115 9560995
Age range of pupils	3–11	Fax number	0115 9560994
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair	Mrs Bev Green
Number on roll (school)	394	Headteacher	Mr Chris Moodie
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school serving the area surrounding Arnold in Nottingham. Just over one third of the pupils attend the school from outside the catchment area, making for a socially and economically mixed intake. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. The school has been awarded 'Healthy School' status and has an 'International School Award'.

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 giving good value for money. It has improved well since the last inspection. The school's track record of success gives confidence that it is well placed to continue to improve. Its rigorous approach to self-evaluation, purposeful involvement of governors, and continuing sense of ambition and innovation characterise the good quality of leadership and management.

Staff are patient and establish good relationships with pupils. As one parent said, and many echoed, 'The staff are always ready to listen and to help.' Pupils work hard, behave well and clearly enjoy school. Their attendance is satisfactory and their personal development is good. They enjoy taking responsibility for their school and for the wider community and the environment. A wide range of experiences designed to offer cultural enrichment, and particularly the school's ties with India, help pupils develop respect and understanding of other cultures. Pupils are physically active and know about healthy lifestyles.

Ambitious leadership has helped staff to acquire the skills needed to enhance pupils' learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good so that children's education gets off to a good start. The quality of teaching and learning in the rest of the school is good. Pupils consequently achieve well and standards are above average. The quality of care, support and guidance is good. Pupils needing extra help and higher attaining pupils both make good progress. Teachers have responded well to the changes asked of them. Teachers make good use of assessment information to pitch work at the right level but its use in giving pupils personal guidance on how they might improve their work is underdeveloped. In consequence too few pupils know enough about the next stages of their learning.

The introduction of 'themed' weeks and other special events have helped to enliven the curriculum and acted as a catalyst for teachers to try out new ideas. These occasions, which are the highpoint of the school's good curriculum, help make learning practical, meaningful and fun. Activities often link across subjects. However, this thematic approach to learning is not fully established in all classes across the school and the school is yet to fully exploit the potential other subjects have to promote imaginative writing. The development of pupils' computing skills, in contrast, has been skilfully linked with the teaching of other subjects and an increasing number of pupils are able to continue computer based learning at home because they have access to school based software from home. As one boy said, he was 'looking forward to reading the inspection report online.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils have enough opportunities to be creative in their writing when studying other subjects.
- Ensure pupils know more about what they are doing well and how they may improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school sets and meets ambitious targets. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average. Children begin nursery with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. However, speech represents a weaker element of their learning. An emphasis on developing the quality of children's talk helps children in the Foundation Stage to progress well. Most reach expected goals by the time they start Year 1 and a significant number go beyond them. Pupils continue to achieve well as they progress through the school. Those who have learning difficulties and or/ disabilities receive good support and progress well. Results in national tests have typically been above average, especially in the juniors. Results dipped of late because fewer pupils reached higher levels in tests than in previous years. Effective action has been taken to remedy this. Work in books and school data shows that higher attaining pupils are achieving well in reading, mathematics, science and in developing writing skills. In some classes, most notably in Year 6, pupils are given ample opportunity to be imaginative in their writing. However, practice is inconsistent and there are times, especially when studying other subjects, when pupils do not use their good level of basic writing skills well enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, work hard to get their work right and are well behaved. Pupils say that the rare incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities through the active School Council and by other means. They demonstrate responsibility towards the wider community through, for example, an environmental club. Pupils know how to keep safe and have a good understanding of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. There are many opportunities for them to take part in physical activities. However, not all pupils put principle into practice when it comes to healthy eating and are inclined to indulge in unsuitable foods. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is developed effectively through assemblies and links with a school in Goa. They demonstrate a good understanding of their own and other cultural traditions, particularly in art and music. Pupils learn good skills to help them in their future lives. These include the importance of applying for 'jobs' as they seek employment as 'playground patrollers', 'litter hitters' and the like, under the 'Serve your school scheme' campaign.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. The school's 'recipe' for successful teaching and learning, prompted by the headteacher, permeates most lessons and goes a long way to helping pupils

achieve well. Behaviour is well managed and classrooms are calm and productive places. Openings to lessons are often of good pace and efficient, maximising time for follow up work by pupils. In the main this time is well used by teachers and teaching assistants to tailor further teaching to one or more groups. Only occasionally do openings go on too long, squeezing time for group work. A push on making considered and widespread use of computers is paying dividends. Almost every lesson involves pupils using computers, often in thought provoking ways. Good use is made of assessment data to break lesson aims down into bite sized chunks of learning which provide well for pupils' differing abilities. This is increasingly guiding marking but is yet to be extensively used to enable pupils to reflect on the success of their own work or that of their peers, or to give them a good idea about how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage curriculum is well organised and, through initiatives such as the 'Forest School' project, places a strong emphasis on learning outdoors. A comprehensive programme for pupils' personal development forms a prominent part of pupils' learning. A very extensive range of clubs for all ages and trips, including several residential experiences, adds much to pupils' education. Pupils say they enjoy 'wonder weeks' and thematic projects. Such occasions provide an 'umbrella' for linking work across subjects, especially in computing, for giving pupils responsibility for shaping their work and for working together on practical projects. In Year 5, for example, pupils choose for themselves whether to present their findings through drama, in poster form or on the computer. However this practice is not yet widespread throughout the school. In particular, the potential for the curriculum to encourage pupils to write in imaginative ways is yet to be fully realised.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents strongly support the view that their children are safe and well cared for. Procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well protected are securely in place. There are good procedures to assess and track pupils' progress. These are used well and promptly to identify and provide help for pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties. These pupils are well supported and guided so that they are able to progress in their work at similar rates to others. The school has identified a number of pupils who have special gifts and talents. These pupils have opportunities to improve their skills through additional sporting and music activities offered as extra-curricular clubs. However, assessment information is not yet used sufficiently to give pupils more detailed guidance on how well they are doing and what they need to learn next.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There is effective leadership at all levels within the school. The headteacher and the governors have a clear and accurate picture of the school's development and its effectiveness. This results from the good use of performance management systems. These are linked to the school improvement process where leaders evaluate and assess what works well and what needs to be improved. This is an exciting school in which to work. There are many initiatives and developments, such as the 'recipe' for learning, which has a wide ranging impact. Excitement about learning is one factor which motivates both staff and pupils and makes sure that morale, team spirit and confidence are high. Nevertheless, the extensive list of initiatives within this 'recipe' gives leaders much to implement and evaluate and gives teachers much to learn. Some changes, such as those governing the use of computers have been implemented well and thoroughly evaluated to ensure that they are working consistently. In contrast the move to a more thematic curriculum and the benefits of it are yet to be fully identified. Financial management is good, one outcome of which can be seen in the high quality grounds and school environment.

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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?	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	2
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	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?	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	2
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	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?	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.

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	2
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

2 February 2007

Dear Children

Richard Bonington Primary and Nursery School, Calverton Road, Arnold, Nottingham, HG5 8FQ

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit and would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

You go to a good school. The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make it the best school it can be and have some good ideas about how to do this.

You too play your part in making Richard Bonington a good school. You have your own ideas for making changes and the school listens and acts on them. Many of you have jobs to help look after each other and the school. You carry these out well. There is a lot for you to do and lots of clubs to join. We were pleased to see how many younger and older children took part in clubs. You play well together and are energetic at playtimes. You try hard in your work. Some of you found it difficult to talk to us about how you are going to improve your work. We have, therefore, asked the school to help you to understand what steps you should take to make your work even better.

There are lots of exciting things going on in classrooms. We were very impressed with how often and how well you use computers. You told us how much you enjoyed 'wonder week' and other times when you had projects to do. We could see that these things make work fun and interesting. We did feel, however, that you could be given more opportunities to be creative and imaginative in your writing.

Thank you once again and good luck in the future.

John Brennan

Lead Inspector