



Albany Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122547
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 292433
Inspection dates 21–22 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	Infant	School address	Grenville Drive
School category	Community		Stapleford, Stapleford
Age range of pupils	3–7		Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG9 8PD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9179212
Number on roll (school)	165	Fax number	0115 9179237
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Worrall
		Headteacher	Mrs S Bates
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–7	21–22 November 2006	292433

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Albany Infant and Nursery School serves an urban area on the outskirts of the city of Nottingham. The great majority of pupils are of White British background. The percentage claiming free schools meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, including those with statements, is lower than the national average. Attendance is close to the national average. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools Awards for personal, social and health education and healthy lifestyles. It has also achieved Investors in People status.

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 that has some outstanding features. One of the school's aims is to create a happy, safe, secure and stimulating environment in which effective learning will take place. Inspectors judge that this aim is met in full.

Children start school with skills that are slightly below average. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes (Foundation Stage) to reach the expected levels for their age. The very effective teaching of phonics means that they make particularly good progress in linking sounds to letters. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 so that standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils achieve well because of high quality teaching and a curriculum that is outstanding. The curriculum is shaped by the school's values. It covers the requirements of the National Curriculum thoroughly but it has been designed so that it promotes creativity in all areas and cross-curricular links are exploited. It prepares the pupils extremely well for life in the wider, diverse community.

Teaching is good throughout the school because all staff are constantly looking for ways to help all pupils learn better. As a consequence, teaching methods are well selected and teaching assistants support learning effectively. Time is generally used productively but in some lessons pupils spend too long listening to their teachers. Teachers keep good records of pupils' attainment for reading, writing and mathematics. These are used to ensure that planning takes into account the needs of all pupils and to show the progress pupils make over a year. In other areas, pupils' progress is not formally assessed. For example, although high priority is given to speaking and listening records, of achievement are not kept. As a result, pupils' attainment and progress in both aspects are unclear.

Pupils' personal development, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils love coming to school and really enjoy themselves when they are there. They are keen to work hard and their behaviour is exemplary. Their excellent attitudes are illustrated at lunchtimes where they eat healthily, take responsibility for serving out the food and show a real concern that everyone has a fair share. They know all about staying safe and keeping fit.

Adults throughout the school work as a team to provide an outstanding level of care, guidance and support. The school's belief that every pupil, whatever their ability, can achieve well underpins every aspect of its work. Child protection, staff vetting and health and safety procedures are thoroughly implemented.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and a strong sense of direction. She has inspired her colleagues and, as a result, the school is always seeking to be better. Leaders are committed to removing any barriers that may prevent the pupils achieving well. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses but the school development plan needs to be clearer. The plan is not sufficiently explicit about how outcomes will be measured, particularly with regard to their impact on pupils' performance. The school's

capacity to improve further is good, and this is demonstrated by the sustained good standards and improvements it is making in its curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the school development plan to ensure it is a working document against which school improvement can be monitored and evaluated.
- Track the progress pupils are making in information and communication technology (ICT), speaking and listening and the foundation subjects to evaluate progress and use the information to plan future learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils achieve well and meet the challenging targets set for them. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In 2006, nearly all pupils attained the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics and a significant proportion did even better than this. For example, in reading and mathematics almost a third of pupils achieved the highest level. Pupils with learning difficulties make particularly good progress in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

'Since joining the school,' one parent commented, 'my child has been very happy and (the child's) behaviour has improved dramatically'. This example illustrates how the attention staff give to the needs of every pupil results in outstanding personal development. Pupils enjoy working independently and collaboratively. They express their feelings confidently and know how to seek adult help if they are worried about anything. All pupils are consulted about how the school can be improved. The school council has recently agreed ways of developing the outside play area and is awaiting the finance to put their plans into action. The pupils respond very well to the 'enterprise weeks', which help them to gain economic awareness. For example, Year 2 pupils have just completed calendars to try to 'sell' to secondary students for a profit. The link with older students through a learning network is an excellent preparation for the later stages of their education. Pupils demonstrate an exceptionally good understanding of cultural diversity through themes such as 'Around the World' and know about religious festivals from a range of faiths.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together in classrooms, so that all pupils have good quality support and make good progress. In one lesson in the Foundation Stage, based around 'Little Wolf', the quality of teaching was outstanding. Here, the pupils were captivated by the enthusiasm of the adults, and the exciting activities, including role play, helped them make outstanding progress in reading and writing. Most teachers use good questioning techniques to ensure all of the pupils have to think hard during lessons. Pupils' understanding is also developed in most lessons when they share ideas and explain their thinking to each other. In a few lessons learning is just satisfactory because the pace of learning is too slow and the work is not challenging enough. Teachers keep good records of pupils' attainment for reading, writing and numeracy, which help them to plan effectively for future work and show the progress pupils make over the year. Attainment in ICT, foundation subjects and speaking and listening is not yet tracked rigorously enough to ensure that sufficient progress is made.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum enables all pupils to make good progress in their basic skills and excellent progress in their moral, social and cultural development. The school has successfully integrated literacy and numeracy learning into thematic units encompassing all National Curriculum subjects. This has enriched the curriculum and established successful links between subjects. Examples of this include the story boxes where pupils have applied design and technology skills and ICT skills to support learning in literacy. The school has secured the support of the largely all-white community it serves for its curriculum which celebrates the cultural diversity in Britain. The school continues to innovate. For example, 'expert' writing groups have been established to develop the skills and confidence of identified Year 2 pupils. These have resulted in good progress by pupils who find writing difficult.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support are greatly appreciated by pupils and parents alike. Whether it is in lessons, small groups or one to one, pupils receive all the help they need to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils know that their teachers want the best for them. They respond well to the marking of their work where praise and encouragement are linked to targets for improvement. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are exemplary.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide good strategic leadership. The inspectors agree with the school's own judgement that the headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The senior management team are not frightened to take risks and welcome innovation. The school is outward looking and enterprising. It has entered into a number of outstanding partnerships which have increased the level of available expertise to further raise standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The governing body is very supportive and keeps a watchful eye on the school's performance. The school development plan is not detailed enough, however, to enable the senior leadership team and the governors to fulfil their monitoring role with the rigour which characterises the rest of their work.

The school gives good value for money and deservedly enjoys the confidence of parents, who hold it in high regard.

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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?	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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	1
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	1

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?	1
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.

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

22 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Albany Infant and Nursery School, Grenville Drive, Stapleford, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG9 8PD

Hello, I am one of the inspectors that visited your school. I am writing you a letter to tell you what we found out. Thank you for talking to us and for being so friendly and open. I know your mums and dads think the school is good and the inspectors agree.

These are the things we liked most.

- Everybody works hard to ensure you enjoy yourself and get a good education. I can see why your parents are so pleased with the school and why they send you there.
- You are good at reading, writing and mathematics.
- Your behaviour is excellent both inside and outside the classroom.
- You are really kind to each other.
- The school makes sure that you are always safe and well cared for.
- We were pleased to see that you were eating healthy foods at lunch and snack time.

We have asked the teachers to do some things to make the school even better.

- We have asked the teachers and governors to get even better at checking how well the school is doing and planning better for the future.
- Teachers are going to record how well you are doing in all areas including ICT and speaking and listening.

Best wishes

Anthony O'Malley Lead Inspector