

Lake View Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122674
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number	292474
Inspection dates	24–25 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Patricia Cox

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	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Jackie Moulton
Headteacher	Mr Dennis Houlton
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2002
School address	Rainworth Water Road Rainworth Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG21 0DU
Telephone number	01623 401404
Fax number	01623 401406

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves an ex-mining community. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and of those identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to the national average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and all have English as their first language. Attainment on entry to the Nursery varies from year to year but is generally below that expected nationally and well below in the children's communication, language and literacy skills.

The school has achieved the Investors in People award.

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 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and achievement in English, and to aspects of leadership and management.

The school is not sufficiently effective because pupils' achievement in English is inadequate. While their achievement in mathematics and science is satisfactory, poor skills in reading and exceptionally low standards in writing are affecting their progress in many other subjects. As a result the school provides unsatisfactory value for money. The children in the Foundation Stage now make satisfactory progress but this is only more recently so in their communication, language and literacy skills. Standards at the end of Reception remain below those expected for their age in most areas of learning and particularly low in language skills. This pattern has continued through the school, so while standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are close to the national average in mathematics and science, they are exceptionally low in English. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory overall with the exception of English, and, in particular, in writing. The school's leadership has put in place several initiatives to improve achievement in English and there is some evidence of this having an impact. However, this has not been rapid enough to eliminate the legacy of underachievement.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory and the school enjoys the support of the parents. The school has made adequate improvement since the previous inspection and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. The headteacher provides sound educational direction and there are suitable systems to check the school's effectiveness. The key areas where improvement is needed have been identified and some effective measures have been taken to raise standards, for example, in mathematics and the quality of teaching. However, because there is a lack of consistency in the way that senior staff and subject coordinators lead and manage their responsibilities their evaluations are not always sufficiently rigorous despite some good practice. Consequently, the school is over-optimistic about its performance in some areas. Teaching is satisfactory. Classrooms are calm environments and teachers plan appropriately to build on pupils' skills. However, their assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are not always accurate enough to match the tasks to the full range of ability.

The pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They behave well and are enthusiastic about school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and they have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. The curriculum is adequate and pupils particularly enjoy the good range of activities outside the school day. However, overall teaching time is shorter than that recommended and some subjects, for example religious education and design and technology, receive inadequate time. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school is a warm and caring place where pupils feel safe and have good relationships with each other and adults. There is a satisfactory system for measuring pupils' progress but the assessments made are not always reliably accurate. Pupils do not have enough knowledge of what they need to do to improve and are not involved sufficiently in measuring their own progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Eliminate underachievement and improve progress in English throughout the school by ensuring that tasks are closely matched to pupils' needs.
- Improve the leadership and management of subjects through more rigorous monitoring and evaluation and taking urgent action on major areas that need improvement.
- Ensure that assessment is accurate and used more effectively to measure pupils' attainment and progress, and to involve them more in knowing what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that sufficient teaching time is available and that the curriculum is sufficiently balanced throughout the school to enable all areas to have adequate coverage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Recent assessments at the end of Year 2 show that while standards have been consistently average in mathematics they have been steadily falling in English. At the end of Year 6, the results have been similar to the national average in science but lower in mathematics and English. The test results in 2006 were exceptionally low in English for both Years 2 and 6, particularly in writing, and this reflects the present picture. The results showed that those Year 6 pupils had made satisfactory progress in science since Year 2 but barely adequate progress in mathematics and unsatisfactory progress in English. The school did not meet its targets in either English or mathematics, although it did exceed them for the proportion attaining at the higher level in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities had made less progress than others. Having identified the reasons for this, the school's special needs coordinator put in new arrangements for their support. As a result they are now achieving satisfactorily. Overall, pupils are now making adequate progress and it is improving in mathematics because of the effective strategies put in place by senior management. Progress in English, however, is still not rapid enough to remedy the legacy of underachievement. While the Year 6 targets for mathematics are attainable, given current standards, those for English are much less realistic.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and the right foods to maintain a healthy life style. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of living in a community. Through the school council they are encouraged to give their views and are making a sound contribution towards improving facilities, for example, by suggesting improvements to the school's playground equipment. Work with the local cleanup and planting projects contributes to and develops pupils' understanding of life in the wider community. Although attendance is below average, the school is doing all it can to improve it. Through school assemblies and lessons the pupils are developing a good understanding of moral and social issues and are developing a growing understanding of spiritual and cultural traditions. The pupils' preparation for future life is satisfactory; they are cooperative and thoughtful but restricted by their low standards in writing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Particular strengths in the teaching lie in the good relationships between adults and pupils and the emphasis placed on the promotion of pupils' personal and social development. Teachers are developing their questioning techniques so that pupils are given the opportunity to explain their ideas and speak at length, but this is not seen consistently in all classes. In most lessons pupils are managed well so that there is little disruption to the flow. Work by the headteacher in addressing weaknesses in teaching has raised it to an overall satisfactory level. However, some lessons still lack vibrancy and pace and pupils comment that 'lessons could be more adventurous'. Teachers know what they want their pupils to learn but are not always sufficiently sure about how to achieve this in English. While assessments are reasonably accurate in other subjects, they are inconsistent in writing and therefore the work set for pupils is not always at a suitable level for all groups in the class. Support staff give effective help to pupils with learning difficulties so that they now make similar progress to others, although their time is not always used well enough at the beginnings and ends of lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The Foundation Stage curriculum is adequate and caters soundly for all areas of learning. However, the attractive outside environment is not used well enough as a key part of the children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. The school rightly places an emphasis on English and a high proportion of lesson time is devoted to the subject. However, as overall teaching time is below that recommended, this results in time for some other subjects being somewhat limited. The curriculum has recently been reorganised to focus more closely on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills and to make better links to these across subjects. This is at an early stage of implementation and there is not enough evidence to show the impact of this yet, in particular, in developing pupils' language skills. The school does not promote reading and the love of books sufficiently well and the school and class libraries are cramped and uninviting. The curriculum is enlivened by a good range of visits and visitors and by good provision for activities outside the school day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents support the view that their children are safe and well cared for at the school. Pupils know that adults will listen to their concerns and that any incidents of bullying or misbehaviour are dealt with effectively. Procedures for child protection are secure and health and safety procedures are effective. However, although all staff have been checked according to statutory requirements, the school does not maintain a single central record of these checks.

Arrangements for tracking progress are satisfactory. The information is used most successfully to identify and support pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties as early as possible and to set group targets. However, this target-setting does not involve pupils sufficiently or enable them to understand how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve. Marking is inconsistent; not enough shows pupils how well they have met the aim of the lesson or gives points for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The senior staff have an adequate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas where improvement is needed. Where appropriate action is taken – for example, improving the quality of teaching, this has been effective. Some subject leaders, for example, the mathematics coordinator, have an accurate view of standards and achievement in their subjects and know what needs to be done to tackle weakness. Leadership is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. However, this is not the same for all subjects and, as a result action is more effective in some than others. Planning for school improvement is adequate and while actions are largely appropriate, measures for monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes are sometimes not rigorous enough. Governance is satisfactory; governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but do not always challenge the school's leadership sufficiently, for example, about standards in English.

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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3

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	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	3
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?	3
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?	3

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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 April 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Lake View Primary School, Rainworth, NG21 0DU

Thank you very much for the way you looked after us and helped us when we visited your school this week. We enjoyed meeting you and thought you behaved well. You told us that you enjoyed school and we know that your teachers take good care of you when you're sad or have had an accident. We liked the way that you kept yourselves and other children safe and knew so much about staying healthy. You have a lot of interesting clubs to attend, especially in sport, where you do well in competitions.

Many of you reach your targets in English and mathematics but some of you don't. There are some things that the school needs to do to help you get better and we think that you can also help in this.

- Your work in English should be better than it is, so we've asked your teachers to make sure you get on well and you can help by trying really hard, especially with your writing.
- We want your headteacher and staff to check more carefully to see whether things are as good as they could be.
- We want your teachers to set you really good targets to help you to improve your work, to mark all your work to show how well you're doing, and to involve you in deciding how well you've reached your targets.
- We've asked the school to make sure you spend enough time doing subjects like history, music, design and technology and art, and we think you ought to do more reading and writing in those subjects. You can help by using books more and making a big effort to write as much as you can.

Our best wishes for the future - we're sure you'll do well because you have a good attitude to your work.

Mrs Pat Cox

Lead inspector.