

Albert Village Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119905
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313439
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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	178
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dean Parker
Headteacher	Ann Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	Occupation Road Albert Village Swadlincote DE11 8HA
Telephone number	01283 217880
Fax number	01283 216132

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Albert Village is a smaller-than-average primary school serving the local village. However, pupils also transfer to the school at the end of Year 3 from the infant school in the nearby village of Blackfordby. Most pupils are from White backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

An acting headteacher is current leading the school until the recently appointed headteacher commences in September. The Foundation Stage is being led on a temporary basis during the Nursery and Reception teachers' maternity leave.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Albert Village provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Parents are rightly very pleased with the way in which their children are looked after and with the good range of activities that is provided. The views of one parent are typical when commenting, 'I am more than happy with the level of care and education my child receives and this is due to the dedication of the staff.' Pupils endorse their parents' views, and those spoken to are overwhelmingly happy in school.

Pupils attain standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6 and, overall, achievement is satisfactory. From Nursery to Year 2 and in upper Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress. However, in lower Key Stage 2, too many pupils 'mark time' and do not progress as well as they should. The school has correctly identified that more-able pupils are not being challenged sufficiently throughout the school, particularly in mathematics. Pupils' writing skills have improved well because of the effective introduction of the 'Big Write' project. Good progress has been made in addressing the weakness in information and communication technology identified at the last inspection. Those pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are provided with a good level of well-targeted support.

Whilst the overall picture is of satisfactory teaching, there is evidence of good practice. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are provided with a good start so that on entry to Year 1 most children have attained standards that are broadly average for their age. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 prepares pupils well for the next stage of education. However, throughout the school, and particularly where progress is not as good, the use of day-to-day assessment to plan sufficiently challenging work for the more able pupils is not always effective. Although there is evidence of good practice, marking too often fails to identify what the pupils should do next to improve their work. Staff look after the pupils well and, consequently, they feel safe. Pupils believe that where bullying takes place, it is dealt with well by adults.

The curriculum is effective in stimulating the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. It is enriched by a wide range of clubs, visits and visitors. Pupils' attendance is good and they behave well because they find the work interesting and want to come to school. The Healthy School and Activemark awards are a recognition of the pupils' clear understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle. This is encouraged through a strong emphasis on physical activity during break times and through participation in after-school clubs. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and the school council is proud of its achievements.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Subject leaders have successfully introduced the new primary literacy and numeracy strategies, and improved tracking procedures are providing a clearer picture of pupils' progress. The leadership has also correctly identified weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work and the use of day-to-day assessment to improve the quality of teaching. However, procedures to determine how the school will address these weaknesses are unclear. The school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and its overall effectiveness is good. Behaviour is good and children enjoy the wide range of activities available. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, and standards on entry to Year 1 are broadly average. Progress in

personal, emotional and social development is a particular strength, with children rapidly acquiring confidence. Purposeful activities engage and interest the children and effectively cover all areas of learning. Children thoroughly enjoyed a project involving giant snails that successfully enhanced their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the Reception class, children are further encouraged to take responsibility, organise themselves and others, and learn new skills. For example, during the inspection four children organised a short role-play to share the story of the 'Bad Tempered Ladybird' with the whole class. Adults use questions well to develop children's thinking, language and numeracy skills. Planning, however, does not always reflect how activities are matched to children's ability.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of progress of the more able pupils in mathematics and of all pupils in lower Key Stage 2.
- Use day-to-day assessment information more effectively to accelerate the progress of pupils.
- Ensure senior leaders develop strategies to ensure improvement in the quality of teaching.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery class with skills that are below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage, so that they enter Year 1 with broadly average standards. Good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1 but slows significantly in lower Key Stage 2, with pupils not achieving their full potential. When pupils leave the school in Year 6, their standards are broadly average overall. Fewer pupils than expected are attaining at the higher level in mathematics. A concerted effort to raise standards in writing has been effective, and there is now little difference in the achievement of girls and boys. Whilst pupils generally make good progress in science, occasionally their interpretation of questions results in incorrect responses. The school is working hard to address this. Consistently good progress for those pupils with learning difficulties is the result of the additional support that is well matched to the needs of these pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, behave well and have good attitudes in lessons. This positive approach to school is in part due to the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated by their gradually improving attendance, which is now good. When they start school in the Nursery, children quickly learn to look after one another and improve in confidence. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but their understanding of cultures other than their own is no better than satisfactory. Pupils show consideration for others and make a good contribution to the community, supporting a good range of charities. There is an active school council that successfully gives the pupils a say in the life of the school. They demonstrate a mature responsibility, for example, when explaining how they had spent money buying new books for the library and preparing questions to ask candidates for the new headteacher's post. Pupils are proud of the opportunity they

have to act as 'play leaders'. Pupils' sound basic skills and good social skills prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and successfully encourage pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. They successfully develop pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills by providing opportunities to learn through a range of activities. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm is maintained through the teachers' good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards. Whilst some teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan challenging activities for pupils, the process is inconsistent. Similarly, some teachers provide pupils with a clear picture of what they need to do to improve their work, but this good practice is not yet sufficiently widespread, particularly in lower Key Stage 2. Learning support assistants play an effective role in ensuring pupils with learning difficulties make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a clear and effective emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills, enabling them to attain average standards by the end of Year 6. There are good opportunities for the pupils to practise writing skills across the curriculum. Activities are made interesting. For example, Year 2 pupils dressed up in their space suits as they carried out research on the life of the astronaut Neil Armstrong, and considered what space travellers eat. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and particularly to their understanding of how to eat healthily and be physically active. Opportunities for the pupils to perform in public, for example, as part of the choir at the Royal Albert Hall, contribute significantly to their self-esteem. A residential visit helps to enrich the curriculum. The introduction of the 'Albert Village University' has been successful in providing pupils with opportunities to experience unusual and interesting activities such as 'barge painting'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures to ensure the well-being of pupils are rigorous. Good pastoral care ensures that pupils feel safe and secure and are able to develop good personal skills. Induction procedures enable pupils new to the school to settle well, particularly those who enter the Nursery and in Year 4. Adults know the pupils very well, supporting those with learning difficulties particularly effectively to make good progress. Academic support is satisfactory. There are thorough systems for assessing pupils' progress at the end of each term, especially in English and mathematics. The use of personal targets for pupils is inconsistent and means that pupils do not always have a clear idea of how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior managers have implemented positive initiatives, which has helped to maintain the attainment of average standards at the end of Year 6. It has not been successful to date in improving the pupils' learning and teaching sufficiently in Years 3 and 4. It has identified clearly the improvement needed in the use of assessment and marking of work but action to improve these shortcomings has only just begun. The school is setting challenging targets to ensure that recent improvements are sustained. Good links with universities, other schools and providers are helping to enhance the school's provision.

Monitoring of the school's effectiveness by the senior staff and governors is not consistently rigorous enough to address the pockets of underachievement. Subject leaders have worked hard to manage their subjects but they have had limited opportunity to determine the effectiveness of the introduction of recent strategies. Consequently, although they have an understanding of the standards pupils attain at various points during the year, they are less clear as to how progress can be accelerated. Governors are supportive and have put into place effective contingency plans to ensure the school runs smoothly until the new headteacher takes up her post.

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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?	3
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
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?	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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

24 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Albert Village Community Primary School, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 8HA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. You were very polite and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and you told us a lot about your school. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education.

This is what we found out about your school

- You make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and learn many new things. You make good progress in the infant classes and in your final years at the school.
- You behave well, enjoy school and take responsibility well.
- Adults are kind and caring and they look after you well. They give those of you who find work hard lots of support, helping you to make good progress.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be. The school is good at teaching you about the importance of staying safe and healthy and we are pleased you enjoy taking part in the sporting activities and that you try to eat healthily.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Help those of you who find work easy to make better progress, especially in mathematics.
- Look closely at how your work is marked, and how staff use information that tells them how well you are doing.
- Ensure those in charge of the school check that the new things that have been introduced are helping you all to learn more quickly.

We enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We want you to help your teachers by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mr Paul Edwards Lead inspector