

Orchard Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119982
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313467
Inspection dates	11–12 March 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	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carl Brookes
Headteacher	Anne Sherwood
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2003
School address	Grange Drive Castle Donington Derby DE74 2QU
Telephone number	01332 810078
Fax number	01332 810078

Age group	4–10
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2008
Inspection number	313467

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils who attend this average-sized primary school are from White British backgrounds. There are only a small number of pupils from other ethnic groups and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Orchard Community Primary is a good school, the result of the good leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff. Together, they have focused effectively on improving the school's provision, ensuring it remains popular with parents. The views of one parent was typical of many when commenting, 'There has not been one day when my daughter, aged 6, has not wanted to attend, even when ill, which speaks volumes for her school experience so far.' The pupils' excellent behaviour and enthusiasm is reflected in the above-average attendance.

Pupils' attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 5 in the key areas of English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement from their starting points. Children make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their acquisition of communication, language and literacy skills. This good progress continues throughout the rest of the school. However, the school rightly recognises that the pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics and their investigative skills in science progress at a slower rate.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who respond well, both in their behaviour and in the quality of their work. Teachers make good use of the improving assessment information to pitch work at the right level. Teachers' questioning skills are very good, resulting in well-thought-out responses from the pupils. Work is marked regularly and systematically and pupils appreciate the new 'marking ladder' that helps them to understand better how well they are doing. However, whilst the marking regularly identifies what the pupils are doing well, it rarely highlights what they need to do to improve their work. Consequently, there are missed opportunities to accelerate learning even more rapidly.

There is a wide range of enrichment activities to support the otherwise satisfactory curriculum. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to take charge of their own learning, particularly in science and mathematics. Parents are rightly pleased with the good quality of care, guidance and support their children receive. Those pupils who struggle with their reading and writing are provided with effective additional support, enabling them to make good progress. Similarly, additional activities, such as the regular workshops for parents and their children after school, help to improve progress in mathematics. Staff have been successful in creating a caring environment where pupils are happy, a feature of the school noted by many parents. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are confident and enthusiastic learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The leadership has correctly identified its strengths and weakness and has focused on the most important issues. The new literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively and this is providing staff with the confidence to explore how they can use these strengths to improve learning in other subjects. There has been a high number of unavoidable changes to the governing body recently and governors recognise the need to provide those new members with training to help them hold the school to account more effectively. The school has successfully addressed issues from the previous inspection and there has been a steady improvement in standards. This, together with the clear and incisive school improvement plan, demonstrates good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provision is well managed, ensuring a good learning environment. Children do well because of the consistently good teaching and wide range of interesting activities, so that when they enter Year 1 their attainment is above average. The regular teaching of phonics provides children with a particularly effective introduction to recognising and writing letters and words. As a result, they make very good progress in this aspect. The children's personal development is good, the result of a carefully structured programme of activities, although there are too few activities that are initiated by the children themselves. Children really enjoy the opportunities for role play. For example, they really got involved in the post office work, wrapping parcels and serving customers. The well-planned curriculum encourages good use of the outdoor facilities, providing well for the physical development of the children. Assessment procedures are good. Additional support is provided for those children with learning difficulties, enabling them to take a full part in lessons.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' skills in science and mathematics further by providing them with more opportunities to carry out problem-solving and investigative activities.
- Help pupils to improve their work by ensuring teachers' marking clearly identifies what they need to do to get better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are appropriate for their age. Children make good progress which ensures they are prepared well for entry to Year 1. This good progress is maintained throughout the school so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils are attaining standards above the national average. This picture of good attainment has been evident over the past four years. However, for pupils of all abilities, their skills in carrying out their own investigations in science, and to undertake problem-solving activities in mathematics, are weaker than other areas. This holds them back from attaining even higher standards. Pupils' information and communication technology skills are secure and used well. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, the result of a good diagnosis of their needs and effective support. More-able pupils are supported well through the introduction of sessions whereby parents can work alongside their children on specific areas of the curriculum after school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The 'open-plan' nature of the school makes it essential that pupils show consideration to others. They do this well. Their behaviour in lessons is exceptionally good, listening attentively to teachers and showing considerable enthusiasm for work. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and are keen to participate in physical activities because, in the words of one pupil, 'it helps to keep us fit.' They are well informed about staying safe and have a good knowledge of the dangers of drugs, alcohol and smoking.

The pupils have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures and are able to recall the differences and similarities between religions. Pupils are proud of their roles as 'Peer Supporters' helping those pupils who feel lonely or vulnerable at breaktimes. The school council is beginning

to have a greater impact on the life of the school, although its membership is too restricted to have a fully school-wide influence. The pupils' contribution to the wider community is well embedded and the pupils talked enthusiastically about the forthcoming 'Sports Relief' fund-raising activity.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are enhanced by the strong relationships that exist between staff and pupils. This helps to create an atmosphere where pupils are confident and not afraid to ask questions or to 'have a go.' High quality questioning is a common feature of teaching and really helps to develop the pupils' language skills. Teachers make very effective use of the interactive whiteboards to make lessons more interesting and stimulating. Pupils make good progress because teachers make effective use of the assessment information to plan work that is challenging. Because teachers have high expectations of pupils, lessons are rarely disrupted. The school has a well-embedded scheme that ensures pupils' work is marked regularly and identifies what pupils are doing well. However, pupils are occasionally unclear what they have to do next to achieve their personal targets because areas for improvement are not clearly identified or followed up. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need extra help and guidance with the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is planned satisfactorily to help pupils build steadily on previous learning. Teachers have become more confident with the literacy and numeracy strategies and are providing pupils with opportunities to use their skills in other subjects. There are many opportunities for pupils to study poetry and this is reflected in the quality of their own writing. There is an effective personal, social and health programme that has a good impact on pupils' academic and social skills. There are missed opportunities to improve the pupils' independent skills in mathematics and science. Most activities are too directed by the teacher and pupils' investigative and problem-solving skills are weaker as a result. The school provides pupils with a satisfactory range of experiences outside lessons. Pupils particularly enjoy the 'theme days' such as the Greek day. After-school clubs are popular with pupils and a small number of pupils benefit from musical instrument tuition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care ensures that pupils are happy, feel secure and are ready to learn. It makes a significant impact on their personal development. The concern shown for each individual means that those pupils who are potentially vulnerable are very well supported. Parents of pupils with learning difficulties acknowledge the effective support given to their children and to themselves. Child protection and health and safety procedures are rigorous and help to ensure the well-being of pupils. Good assessment procedures are in place and these help to provide clear academic guidance for the pupils. Pupils have clear targets for improvement in English and mathematics but there are some missed opportunities to involve the pupils in setting their own targets and in encouraging them to be involved in assessing their own work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong leadership of the headteacher, with the good support of senior staff, has ensured the steady improvement of the school since the previous inspection. Self-evaluation is thorough and rigorous and is one of the main reasons for the continued improvement. Good systems have also been introduced for setting challenging end-of-year targets for all pupils and carefully monitoring their progress towards them. Those pupils at risk of underachieving are quickly identified and intervention strategies and support put in place. Whilst the monitoring of teaching is undertaken systematically and identifies what is working well, it does not always highlight what might be improved. The introduction of regular workshops for parents and pupils is helping to cement relationships with parents, although the school is rightly seeking ways through which it can reach all parents. The governors are regular visitors to the school and those who have been in place for some time hold the school to account well.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	2
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 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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?	3
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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	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	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

12 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Orchard Community Primary School, Castle Donington, Derbyshire DE74 2QU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently and for talking to us about your work. Your parents are right to be pleased that you come to Orchard Community because it is a good school.

These are some of the things we found.

- Your behaviour is very good.
- Most of you make good progress in your work.
- The adults look after you well.
- Teachers make lessons interesting so that you really enjoy your work.
- You know how to live healthily by eating the right sorts of food and taking part in physical activities.
- The work that has been planned for you to do is nearly always at the right level, so it is not too easy and not too hard.
- Those in charge of the school are good at working out what needs to be done to help the school become even better.

This is what we have asked the school to do now.

- Give you more opportunities to carry out investigations for yourself in science and given you more problem-solving activities in mathematics.
- Ensure that when teachers mark your work they tell you what you need to do to get even better.

You can help your teachers by working hard and doing your best. I hope you continue to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards Lead inspector