

Green Lane Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120007
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	313477
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Joyce Cox

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Madhu Modha
Headteacher	Kathryn Broadhurst
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Spinney Hill Road Leicester LE5 3GG
Telephone number	01162 627050
Fax number	01162 627050

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large infant school is situated in a very busy urban area. Almost all of the pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Indian. Almost all the pupils come from communities where English is an additional language in the home, and over a third of the children are at an early stage of speaking English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties. The main needs are speech and language and specific learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where staff put pupils first. One of the key reasons for the school's many successes is that the headteacher's inspiring leadership enthuses others to have the highest possible aspirations for themselves and for the pupils. The school has maintained and built upon the significant strengths of its last inspection. The rise in standards and the successful completion of an attractive outdoor play area for nursery children have been just two of the most significant steps forward. The school is accurate in its self-evaluation. There is no complacency and senior leaders strive constantly to raise standards and achievement, hence the capacity for future improvement is outstanding. The school is highly regarded in the local community and all the parents are very happy with their children's education. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'The headteacher always interacts with the parents and has a lovely friendly approach and smile. The staff are fabulous and this is one of the best schools around.'

Pupils love school and their behaviour is excellent. This is because an exceptionally well-planned, stimulating and exciting curriculum indoors and outdoors supports their learning very well. Excellent care, guidance and support have a very strong impact on pupils' outstanding personal development. Outstanding links with a wide range of agencies provide high levels of support for pupils and families. All cultures and festivals are respected and celebrated. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to eat healthily and thoroughly enjoy picking, cooking and eating fruit, vegetables and herbs from their school garden. Despite the school's efforts, pupils' attendance remains broadly average.

Children are given an excellent and very happy education in the Foundation Stage. There is a highly effective emphasis on developing children's early communication, personal and social skills, which results in outstanding achievement. From a very low entry point, especially in terms of their communication and literacy skills, children in the Foundation Stage achieve exceptionally well. They attain below average standards in all the areas of learning on entry to Year 1. Foundation Stage staff have correctly noted that children do not achieve quite so well in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world and this is the area to focus on next. Pupils make excellent progress and achievement in the rest of the school and attain average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2.

Pupils achieve outstandingly well because of the excellent quality of teaching and learning. By reinforcing language development in all activities and by pitching learning and support precisely at pupils' capabilities, staff ensure that pupils thoroughly enjoy their work and become increasingly confident and fluent in English. Senior leaders make excellent use of precise assessment information to track achievements and to identify quickly any pupils in need of additional support. Much of the school's success is due to the dedication of the headteacher, governing body and senior leaders. They provide excellent direction and have high expectations. Their rigorous and accurate evaluation leads to carefully considered and effective action. The school works very well to serve the local community and continues to make a significant difference to the lives of numerous children and families in the Green Lane area.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

In the Foundation Stage pupils enjoy the exciting and inviting displays and activities, such as a large enclosed outdoor seaside area complete with sand, buckets, spades and wave music. They make rapid progress in virtually all areas of their development. Outstanding leadership and management, together with excellent teaching and care enhance children's enjoyment and learning. Staff skilfully assess children's precise level of spoken language. This is immediately followed up with outstanding support and exciting activities planned to develop children's communication skills. This effectively raises their confidence and self-esteem. Foundation Stage staff seize every opportunity to encourage children to communicate in more than single words and gestures. Bilingual staff slip easily between English and Gujarati or Panjabi so that children feel secure and totally included in all learning experiences. Children do not achieve quite so well in their knowledge and understanding of the world and this is the next area for development. The introduction of regular, focused sessions to help nursery and Reception children learn their letters and sounds is considerably improving their progress in early reading and writing skills.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve Foundation Stage children's achievement in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' attainment and achievement have been rising steadily since the last inspection. Senior leaders have been effective in devising ways to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement. In 2008, the school celebrated its highest results ever and the current Year 1 pupils look set to attain even higher results in 2009. The excellent results were achieved because of considerably improved methods of teaching reading and writing, stable staffing which included bilingual teaching assistants providing excellent support in all areas of the school, and much increased parental support and involvement in pupils' learning. Results were above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing, representing excellent achievement for all pupils, including the large number of children who join the nursery with no spoken English. All pupils, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnicity, make outstanding progress. The school sets very challenging targets and the commitment shown by all staff to ensure they are reached, and often exceeded, is an effective combination that lies at the heart of why the school is so successful.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils love school and develop extremely positive attitudes to learning because the adults make it so very enjoyable for them. This sets them up extremely well for the future. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They happily celebrate different faiths and customs and are very friendly towards each other, happily sharing resources with no squabbling. They play a full part in school life and, as they confidently acquire spoken English, make their views known during circle times and assemblies. They recently sent a successful petition to the headteacher, asking her to keep their jungle gym which was due to be demolished. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to eat healthily and have many opportunities to grow, prepare and eat tasty food such as raspberries, blackcurrants and strawberries.

Behaviour is excellent, which ensures that the school is a very happy place. Despite the school's excellent efforts, pupils' attendance remains broadly average. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, which is vital as their school is close to extremely busy roads. They know that having fun in the excellent outdoor learning environment and being active are good for their bodies and enjoy playing early morning cricket, football and golf with their parents before school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to the challenges set for them. A particular strength of the teaching is the staff's excellent knowledge and understanding of how infant children learn best. Teachers' infectious enthusiasm and the excellent way in which they display pupils' work create interesting and highly stimulating classrooms which enhance pupils' learning and achievement. Relationships are outstanding and teachers succeed in making learning fun by carefully matching activities to pupils' interests and abilities. Tasks are explained carefully and new and specific vocabulary is discussed so pupils understand exactly what they have to do. Teaching assistants are talented and highly skilled at supporting teachers and pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The excellent curriculum is based firmly on practical experiences. This helps to ensure full engagement and enjoyment and equally good achievement by boys and girls. Planning for pupils to learn how to stay fit and healthy is successfully woven into lessons in the outside learning area. This area has been created over several years and provides an area of green woodland in the heart of the city. The diversity of pupils' cultural backgrounds is celebrated well in music, art and dance. The curriculum is skilfully adapted for pupils with learning difficulties and this ensures excellent progress towards their targets. Themed days, sports coaching, swimming lessons, visitors and visits to places of interest enrich the curriculum considerably and excite and motivate the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is a tradition of high quality care and support at Green Lane. The headteacher and her staff are dedicated to the welfare of their pupils and families. As a result, pupils are happy and secure, and they quickly gain in confidence and self-esteem, which is a key contributory factor to their outstanding progress. The school is a haven of tranquillity in the bustling city, and parents are delighted to come in and share in this experience before and after school. There are excellent procedures to track pupils' progress. This data is used outstandingly well by staff to improve pupils' achievement. Pupils themselves are very clear as to how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher is committed to providing the best possible education for her pupils. Parents recognise this and appreciate her hard work and determination over many years service at the school. One writes, 'I have never met a headteacher so caring and interested ALL the time. She is actively involved in everything the pupils do and joins in with all their projects.' Inspectors endorsed this view. Together with the senior leadership team, she is highly reflective and analytical in evaluating the school's performance. Commitment to school improvement, especially in standards and achievement, is absolute. Areas for improvement are identified quickly and acted upon and school development planning is very precise and sets clear and aspirational targets for each year group. The governing body is very effective. It is very supportive and well aware of issues for improvement.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

4 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Green Lane Infant School, Leicester LE5 3GG

It was a real treat for us to visit your school and I am writing to thank you for two very happy days. It was great to see your smiling faces and to talk to some of you, and we really enjoyed watching you working and playing in your brilliant outdoor area. We agree with all your mums and dads that you go to an excellent school.

These are the things we liked best:

- Your behaviour is excellent and you are keen and eager to learn new things.
- You are all doing well in lessons.
- You enjoy the delicious school meals and eating healthily and you are brilliant at helping the headteacher to run the school and get the outdoor equipment out in the morning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make learning exceptionally interesting and fun for you.
- You have an excellent curriculum and enjoy swimming, cricket and golf.
- Anyone who needs help with work or speaking English is always given it.
- The teachers and staff take excellent care of you while you are in school.
- Your headteacher is brilliant at leading and managing the school.

The headteacher, staff and governors have lots of good ideas to make the school even better. We agree with their ideas. We have suggested that it would be good if staff help younger children to learn even more about the world around them. We are really glad you enjoy your school, and thank you for all the very happy memories.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Joyce Cox Lead inspector