

# Herrick Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120100
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicester City
<b>Inspection number</b>	313518
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Eadie

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	339
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gill Smart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patricia Goffin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Lockerbie Avenue Leicester LE4 7NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2665656
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2665656

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This larger-than-average school serves a mainly Asian community in the outer suburbs of the city. A very large majority of pupils do not speak English as their first language and almost half of these are at an early stage of learning English. There are areas of significant deprivation in the locality. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than average. There is a playgroup, wrap-around care, after-school club and holiday club in new premises on the school site. A higher-than-usual number of pupils join or leave the school at times other than normal, many coming directly from abroad.

## 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 which is popular with parents and where pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. Many say such things as, 'There are lots of fun things at this school.' It serves the local community well, with one of its particular strengths being the way in which pupils' English language skills are developed. The school has made this a priority and many successful initiatives ensure that, by the time they leave, pupils are able to speak accurately, fluently and at length in what is, for most of them, their second language. Their written English is not as strong and the school recognises this as an area for development, particularly in Years 1 to 4.

Much of the success of the school is down to good leadership and management. The experienced leadership and management group has led an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has been achieved through thorough monitoring of all aspects. Governance is outstanding. Governors are fully involved and carry out their own checks on many areas of the school. One innovative aspect of their work is their own evaluation of their effectiveness as governors, which they have been carrying out for some years. Leaders' awareness of the needs of pupils, shared by all staff, has led to the very successful work done to raise standards, for instance, of pupils' reading.

Pupils are achieving well. When children start at the school their levels of skills and knowledge are very much lower than one would expect for children of that age, particularly in their language and social skills. Developing these skills is a priority in the Nursery and Reception classes (FS 1 and 2) and good provision ensures that these children make good progress. Pupils make good progress through the school and, by the time they leave, reach average standards compared to pupils nationally. This good progress is due to good teaching. Teachers make especially good use of a range of strategies for encouraging pupils to develop their spoken English. For example, there are lots of paired discussions and question-and-answer sessions in lessons. However, the curriculum has not yet been adapted enough to develop pupils' written English in other subjects and it is only satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are very polite and well behaved and when given jobs they carry these out very responsibly. They are particularly well prepared for their future. They have many opportunities to learn valuable skills, such as when they help to run the bank in school. Good links with the secondary schools to which most of them go, help them to view the next step positively. This good personal development is the result of good care, guidance and support. A notable feature of this is the academic support and guidance provided. Pupils are fully involved in this process through their 'My targets' books which help them see what they need to learn next. A few parents say that there is some bullying. However, pupils spoken to say that they feel safe in school and all said that they would approach an adult if this happened to them. They are confident that any incidences are quickly and effectively dealt with.

Good progress has been made since the previous inspection, for example, in ensuring stability of learning for pupils. Bearing this good progress in mind, along with the accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the clear drive to raise standards, the school is well placed to continue on its upward path.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of pupils' writing, particularly in Years 1 to 4.

- Make clear links between subjects in Years 1 to 6 so that pupils can practise their skills of written English in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well through the school and reach average standards, compared to pupils nationally, by the time they leave in Year 6.

Children's low levels of skills and knowledge when they start in FS1 are largely due to their lack of spoken English, a very large majority not having English as their home language. Developing spoken English is a high priority through the school, but particularly in FS1 and FS2, so that children can take part in all aspects of school life. This is successful but, by the time they start in Year 1, pupils are still some way behind expected levels. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and in most years reach average standards, compared to pupils nationally, by the end of Year 2. This year, progress is particularly good in reading, which has been a focus for the school. Progress is now also good in Years 3 to 6, especially in spoken English, reading and mathematics, which were areas that the school identified for improvement. However, progress in writing is not as good in Years 1 to 4. The school recognises this and plans are in place to improve this from September. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities have their needs assessed early and are supported well so that they, too, make good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils work and play well together, and playtimes are happy events as most play safely, with due regard for others. There are instances of rough behaviour or name-calling. However, most pupils are very comfortable to approach an adult to report when this happens and these instances are dealt with well when they do. Pupils make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school, when organising equipment for lessons or the playground, for instance. They also play a good role in charity fund raising, in many cases initiating the events or choosing the causes to be supported.

Pupils are well aware of what they should do to keep fit and healthy and a large number take part in the wide variety of after-school sports clubs. However, although only fruit is allowed at playtime and pupils enjoy the healthy lunches provided, too many packed lunches contain crisps or sweet snacks. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in improving attendance figures, which are above average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

One of the major strengths of teaching is the range of strategies that teachers use to develop pupils' command of English. For example, right from the earliest days in FS1 and FS2, there is much use of objects and pictures so that pupils know exactly what teachers are talking about. Teachers are also very good at using English correctly themselves so pupils have good models to follow. There are good relationships in classes and pupils respond to this well by concentrating and working hard. Teaching assistants, particularly those who speak pupils' mother tongues, support pupils effectively and help them to take a full part in lessons.

Teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards well and usually take account of pupils' different learning styles when they are planning their lessons. Teachers' marking is helpful and positive but is not sufficiently linked to the very good targets set for pupils so that they do not always see how best to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

There are some good aspects of the curriculum. For example, pupils go on a wide range of visits, which they enjoy and which make their learning more interesting and relevant. There is also a wide range of after-school activities, particularly very well-attended sports clubs. Because of the school's involvement in a national project, all pupils in Year 5 have learnt a musical instrument this year. This has been very successful and pupils spoken to were enthusiastic about this very worthwhile opportunity.

The school recognises that there is work to be done to improve the curriculum. Most important is the need to make links between subjects. This is particularly so in making sure that pupils can practise their literacy skills in other subjects to improve their written English. There is also some inequality of provision for the youngest children. FS1 has a secure outside area, which children can use for learning. Although FS2 has access to an outdoor area, it is not secure and children are not able to use it as one of their learning spaces when they are making their own choices.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care for pupils is good and all adults look after them well. Child protection procedures are thorough and pupils say they feel safe and secure. Close links with the on-site playgroup ensure that children know the environment and settle quickly when they start school. Good links with the two secondary schools to which most of the pupils go, mean that they find the transfer to the next stage of their education easy.

Very thorough systems to keep check on pupils' progress are well used to make sure that none fall behind. A notable feature of these systems is the pupils' 'My targets' books. These are extremely helpful for pupils, who can see how well they are progressing and what they need to learn next. This is aided by time being set aside regularly for teachers to discuss targets with pupils, which involves them in the process and gives added impetus to their learning. However, the targets are not always phrased in language that is easy for pupils to understand, particularly the younger ones.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The processes of checking on the school's effectiveness are very thorough. They involve a wide range of activities, such as checking on the effectiveness of teaching and learning through lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work, and very careful analysis of pupils' progress. Although all staff and governors are involved in this process, the school recognises that subject leaders do not play a sufficiently full part. This monitoring has led to an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and clear plans have been put in place to address the latter. These have been successful, for example, in raising standards in reading and mathematics.

The headteacher is the driving force behind these improvements and she is ably supported by other senior leaders and particularly governors. A novel feature of governance is that once a year all subject leaders are invited to do a presentation to governors about the successes and areas for development in their subjects. Governors also keep themselves very well in touch with parental views by attending parents' evenings and sounding out opinions. All this ensures that governors are very well informed and are best able to support leaders.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

8 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Herrick Primary School, Leicester LE4 7NJ

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school yesterday. I really enjoyed talking to so many of you and hearing that you think that there are lots of fun things at school. It is easy to see why you enjoy school so much as it is a good school.

What I liked most about your school.

- You are making good progress and do well to reach average standards compared to pupils nationally. This is because teaching is good.
- You are developing well into responsible and sensible young people.
- All adults take very good care of you so you feel safe and are sure that they will sort problems out for you.
- You go out on lots of interesting visits, which help your learning, and there are lots of after-school clubs that many of you attend.
- Your headteacher and staff have very clear ideas on how they can make your school even better. The governors are excellent in helping them do this.

What I have asked your school to do now.

- Help you to improve the standard of your writing. Your reading has improved very much, so your writing is now not as good as your reading.
- Ensure that the work provided in other subjects, such as history and religious education gives you lots of opportunities to practise your writing. Because they are not doing this enough, the curriculum is only satisfactory at present.

You are fortunate to go to such a good school and I'm sure you will continue to work hard and help to make the school even better.

Yours sincerely

John D Eadie Lead inspector