

Snarestone Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120199
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313548
Inspection date	24 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debbie Evans
Headteacher	Trevor Jones
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2004
School address	Main Street Snarestone Swadlincote DE12 7DB
Telephone number	01530 270598
Fax number	01530 270598

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school takes pupils from the local village as well as from other nearby communities. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children's attainment when they start school in the Reception Year is below the expected levels for their age. In the last two years, the school has admitted a comparatively high number of pupils at times other than the start of the academic year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school where pupils are happy, behave well and learn good values. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children get a good start in the Reception Year because teachers successfully meet differing needs. In the rest of the school, where teaching and learning are satisfactory, pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average overall, although in writing, not all pupils do well enough. Test results in writing at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were exceptionally low. A recent focus on making writing more purposeful has led to some improvement in the current year, but this is not yet consistent across the school. This is because teachers do not always expect enough of the pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants get on well with their pupils and take good care of them. Consequently, the school has a calm atmosphere. Pupils are friendly, polite and helpful and are keen to take responsibility. They greatly enjoy school and are particularly appreciative of the good range of activities that the school provides outside lessons, which include many opportunities to try out new sports. There are good links with outside agencies to help pupils who are finding school life difficult. Pupils who move to the school during the academic year are helped to settle quickly. Academic support is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of marking to help pupils to understand how to improve their work. There are detailed systems for tracking pupils' progress from year to year, but some targets lack detail, especially in Years 1 and 2. This makes it very difficult for staff to check whether all pupils have done well enough. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has an accurate picture of how well the school is doing. He is setting the right priorities for improvement but does not involve other teachers enough in this process. Both governors and subject leaders have a limited role in checking the school's provision. This makes it difficult for them to contribute effectively to development planning or to school self-evaluation. Most parents are pleased that their children come to this school. One parent summed up the views of many by writing, 'My child has an enjoyable and pleasant time at school. She has lots of friends and a genuine sense of belonging.' This comment successfully captures the essence of a school that is moving in the right direction. The school has shown in the way that it has tackled issues from the last inspection that it has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year), especially in personal development and in improving speaking and listening skills. By the time they start in Year 1, they are working within the levels expected for their age. Clear routines and sensitive teaching enable them to become confident and independent learners. Good questioning helps children to practise their speaking and listening skills well and they are keen to contribute to discussions on books read by the teacher. Members of staff lead by example and children soon learn good manners. Children enjoy the good range of interesting activities provided indoors. For example, they were very excited about the arrival of some 'live' hen's eggs and enjoyed using models to re-enact a story about a farmyard. A cramped outdoor area limits how well they can learn outside.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and progress in writing by ensuring that teachers always expect enough of all pupils.

- Increase the involvement of governors and subject leaders in school selfevaluation.
- Set more detailed targets, especially for pupils in Years 1 and 2, so that progress can be checked more accurately. 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

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress and standards are broadly average overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In English, standards are significantly weaker in writing than in reading. In writing, very few pupils reached nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6 in 2007. Recently, the school has rightly focused on improving pupils' writing skills but the impact of this has been inconsistent. There has been some improvement and in the current Year 6 more pupils are working at nationally expected levels than in the previous year. Nevertheless, there continues to be some underachievement in writing across the school. This is because teachers do not always expect enough of the pupils who continue to make errors with punctuation, grammar and presentation.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are helpful and friendly and have good relationships with each other and with adults. They listen respectfully to stories in assemblies, about children who are less fortunate than themselves, and they raise funds for various charities. Their understanding of cultures other than their own is comparatively weak. Pupils enjoy school, especially the good additional activities provided through clubs and visits. Their attendance is satisfactory because some parents take term time holidays. Pupils like their teachers and as a result most behave well. They know that they can speak to members of staff if they have any concerns and they feel that occasional instances of bullying are dealt with appropriately. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Whilst they know the difference between healthy snacks such as 'fruit' and those that are less good for them such as crisps that have 'too much salt and fat', older pupils frequently choose less healthy options. They keep fit by taking part in various sports and take heed of safety advice given during the visit of the 'Life Education Bus'. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and they contribute satisfactorily to the school and wider community. For example, the school council is involved in improving playground markings and equipment and pupils collect food waste to make compost. Activities such as these prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education, although weak writing skills are a barrier to future learning for some.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well because they develop good relationships with them and are generous in their use of praise. They teach new information clearly and involve pupils well in lessons by planning some interesting activities. For example, older pupils responded especially well when required to ask questions to the teacher who was role playing the part of 'Rudyard Kipling'. Whilst teachers are conscientious about preparing activities for different

ability groups, they do not consistently expect pupils to do hard enough work. In addition, the pace of learning is too slow at times because pupils are not always expected to work quickly enough, reducing the progress they can make, especially in their writing. Teaching assistants provide good support and ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils experience a broad curriculum, enriched by a good variety of additional activities such as visits and clubs. These greatly increase pupils' enjoyment of school and support the development of good personal skills. Good links with sports clubs and other schools enhance the curriculum well by giving pupils opportunities to learn new skills. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is limited. Whilst pupils learn new skills in the ICT suite, they do not have enough opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects, slowing the progress they could make. The school has correctly identified that pupils, particularly boys, can be reluctant writers and is working on increasing 'boy friendly' topics. These improvements in the writing curriculum have not yet had a consistent effect across the school. This limits the progress of some pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good. The school has good links with outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Most parents, particularly those of children who have joined the school part way through the year, are complimentary about the way pupils are kept safe and cared for. As one parent said, 'Every difficult situation has been addressed sympathetically and professionally.' Academic support and guidance are satisfactory. Teachers write some helpful comments on the pupils' work to show them how to improve their learning, although assessment information is not used rigorously enough to set specific targets that help all pupils to make sufficient progress, especially in writing. The school quickly identifies pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and sets them clear targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership of the headteacher is helping the school to move forward. All members of staff are keen to ensure that children fulfil their potential. There have been some helpful recent initiatives and these are beginning to have a positive effect. For example, new approaches to teaching writing are helping to improve progress, although the headteacher acknowledges that more needs to be done to ensure that all pupils do well enough. There is a clear understanding of what needs improving because there are satisfactory systems for evaluating how well the school is doing. However, there is too little involvement of subject leaders in this process. They are keen and enthusiastic but do not have enough opportunity to monitor provision. The headteacher makes sound use of data to check the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is less effective in Years 1 and 2 because the school does not set sharp enough targets for these pupils. The headteacher monitors teaching but this is too infrequent to have a significant impact on improving its quality. There have been difficulties recruiting new governors and this has

affected the effectiveness of the governing body. Governors are supportive and have rightly identified that they need to do more to hold the school to account.

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

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

- 25 September 2007 Dear Children Inspection of Snarestone CE Primary School, Swandlincote, Derbyshire. DE12 7DB Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were polite and friendly. At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving. Some of the things we found out about your school:
- You get a good start in the Reception Year and make good progress. In the rest of the school, you make steady progress, although we feel you should be doing much better in writing.
- Your behaviour is good. We are very pleased that you enjoy school so much.
- All adults in school are kind and caring and they give you suitable help when you find work difficult.
- You have a well organised school council and this helps you to take responsibility for many things.
- There are many interesting things to do outside lessons. It is great that you are able to try out so many different sports.
- Most of your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.
- The headteacher knows what needs improving and members of staff are working hard to make sure that you learn more quickly. What we have asked your school to do now:
- Help you to do better in writing by making sure that your work is more challenging.
- Make sure that governors and teachers in charge of subjects do more to check that you are all doing well enough.
- Ensure that the school sets you challenging targets so that teachers can check your progress more carefully. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by trying to ensure that you always produce your best work when writing. Yours sincerely Mr M Capper Lead inspector

Annex B

25 September 2007

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Yours sincerely

Mr M Capper
Lead inspector