

Leamington Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122467
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
Inspection number	314302
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2007
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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	
School	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kier Barsby
Headteacher	Mr Paul Aspinall
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2005
School address	Clare Road Sutton-in-ashfield Nottinghamshire NG17 5BB
Telephone number	01623 455951
Fax number	01623 455952

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school serves an area with a high level of social and economic difficulty. Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage and all have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who take free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties or disabilities is close to the national average. The attainment of pupils starting Nursery is well below that typical for children of this age. The school has the Gold Standard Healthy School Award and is accredited as a healthy eating school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards at the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2.

This school is not sufficiently effective. The judgement differs from the school's own view that it is satisfactory. Achievement at Key Stage 2 has been inadequate for the past two years and standards have slipped. Year 6 national test results in 2007 were very low in comparison to the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are still low, but not as low as indicated by the poor test results in 2007. Recent analysis of standards at the end of each year group in Key Stage 2, conducted by the senior leadership team, provides a more promising picture. Although progress is now better, it is still not sufficient to eliminate past underachievement. In order to raise standards, the headteacher and governors devised a programme of realistic and carefully prioritised actions to help improve leadership and management of the school. There is now a new senior leadership team, with specific skills. The focus of their work is to make sure that achievement and standards at Key Stage 2 improve. Because of focused attention on provision in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, standards have already improved at the end of Year 2 and have been rising steadily since 2005.

There is still much to do to achieve the goals the school has set for itself. Although leaders and managers, including governors, know what the weaknesses are in standards and that they are too low, they are not sufficiently aware of what is taking place in the classroom. Teaching is not monitored well enough at Key Stage 2 to support teachers in improving what they do. This means that school self-evaluation has weaknesses because it is based on limited evidence. More effective monitoring in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has led to improving standards and achievement. The school has put in place appropriate assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 regularly, which provide an accurate picture of standards and achievement. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

There is still some inadequate teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, and important aspects, such as using assessment to set challenging tasks, is weak. The curriculum is strong in supporting pupils' personal development. There are limited opportunities to support the improvement of core language and numeracy skills in other subjects as the school does not link together subjects to make learning more relevant and enjoyable.

Pupils respond well to the good care and support the school shows for them. The school works well with others to promote pupils' well-being and particularly their personal development. Care for pupils' welfare has developed well under the leadership of the headteacher. Most pupils enjoy school, like being there and feel safe. They have a good knowledge of healthy eating and know about the importance of physical exercise. Pupils make a good contribution to school life and to the wider community. Limited skills in literacy and numeracy means that they are not prepared sufficiently to move on to the next stages.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There has been a significant improvement in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection and provision is now good. Teachers and teaching assistants work together successfully and know children well, using this knowledge effectively to plan for next steps in learning. There is a strong feeling of care in the Nursery and in Reception classes. Pupils feel secure and enjoy the good range of learning activities taking place both inside and outdoors. Parents are pleased at how well their children settle into the nursery. The curriculum is planned well and meets the needs of pupils to ensure they make good progress. Staff monitor each child's progress carefully and adults know at any time how well each one is doing.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the focused work that was effective in Key Stage 1 to raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that it enables pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Make sure teachers use assessment information to match work to all pupils' capability and challenge them effectively.
- Use curriculum planning more creatively to support the development of core skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, especially in personal and social development. However, standards remain below the nationally expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. Pupils' achievement is improving and standards are rising at Key Stage 1. The latest teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards are below average in reading and mathematics, but broadly average in writing. Standards at Key Stage 2 are improving but are still too low. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress, but not enough to eliminate previous underachievement. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve satisfactorily.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Pupils mature well and show good attitudes. They have good manners and are respectful and helpful towards others. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and are generally able to manage their own behaviour. They have a sound awareness of different beliefs, traditions and customs. There is a healthy spirit of competition for certificates and rewards for good behaviour and work. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils develop good awareness towards healthy living in terms of diet, lifestyle and the importance of physical exercise. They adopt safe practices in school and generally feel secure and free from bullying. Through the school council's ideas for school improvement and the positive work that all pupils do in fundraising, pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching is inadequate, especially in Key Stage 2 and in literacy and numeracy, where pupils do not achieve well enough. It is better in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where assessment information is used better in planning and standards are rising. Behaviour is managed well throughout the school and lessons progress smoothly and without interruption. Teachers do not use assessment information effectively enough to make sure work is matched well to pupils' needs. Consequently pupils do not progress as well as they should. Teachers use a range of teaching and learning methods but too frequently these are not appropriate to pupils' ages and abilities. Some lessons are too teacher led and do not provide pupils with enough opportunities for independent work or to develop speaking, listening and writing skills. Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a positive contribution to learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets requirements. Religious education is not allowed sufficient time to follow the full recommendations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. However, key concepts are developed within personal, social and health education (PSHE), which makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) enhances learning with some exciting developments in digital photography and film-making. A new approach to the teaching of letter sounds in Key Stage 1 is effective in raising standards. While priorities for mathematics have been identified, limited progress has been made in translating these into action. There is some evidence of promoting literacy skills in other subjects, but this is not written into whole-school curriculum planning. The curriculum is enriched well. There is a good range of visits and visitors and links with a city school has helped to raise pupils' awareness of different cultures. Pupils enjoy themed days and weeks but these are isolated events rather than being embedded across the whole school approach to curriculum planning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, although the pastoral and day-to-day care is good. The school works well with outside agencies to support pupils. For instance, work with the educational welfare service is increasingly successful in improving attendance and punctuality. The school's promotion of art as therapy is having a significant and positive effect on pupils with learning or emotional difficulties. In the art room the calm and positive ethos enables pupils to benefit from the therapeutic benefits of art in raising self confidence and improving attitudes towards learning. Arrangements for health, safety and child protection are in place and regularly reviewed. Although there is a growing awareness of the need to improve their work, there is still too little guidance to inform pupils how to do so. This is because targets are not being communicated clearly and pupils receive insufficient guidance through marking, which often focuses on praise without indicating clearly what pupils need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, working closely with the new senior leadership team, has quickly established clear priorities for school improvement. The school has set challenging targets and has clear plans on how to achieve the goals. There has already been effective work on raising standards at Key Stage 1 and improving provision in the Foundation Stage, demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve the school's effectiveness. Governors support the school satisfactorily and are now challenging the school more on its performance. The school does not provide satisfactory value for money because pupils do not achieve well enough.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
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?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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?	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	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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
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	4
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	4
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leamington Primary and Nursery School, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 5BB

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you showed us when we came to look at your school a short while ago. We spent a long time in classes, talking to staff and pupils. Although some improvement is needed, there are some good things happening in your school. We feel confident the staff will be able to improve things.

We were pleased by how well you behave in school and we think that this is good. The adults working in Leamington School show good levels of care for you. You and your parents appreciate this and in turn, you show care and consideration for each other and feel safe whilst there. You enjoy many things about school. Some of you mentioned the special curriculum weeks that take place from time to time.

Some important things are not done well enough and need to be improved. We have therefore asked the school to:

- help you make better progress in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Key Stage 2
- look carefully at how well teachers teach and how well you learn in lessons so that you can achieve your best
- make sure teachers use the information they have on how well you are doing to match work to your ability and challenge you more
- use curriculum plans in all subjects, as well as English and mathematics, to support you in developing your speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy.

I hope you will continue to help your teachers by behaving well and continuing to try hard so that they can achieve what they need to in the coming years.

David Speakman

Lead inspector