

Sherwood Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122501
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
Inspection number	314310
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ralph Tongue
Headteacher	Mr Michael Follen
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2003
School address	Sherwood Street Warsop Mansfield NG20 0JT
Telephone number	01623 842545
Fax number	01623 845180

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is of an average size and serves an area of higher than average social and economic deprivation. Nearly all pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those eligible for free school meals is above average.

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 cares for the pupils well. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and secure because they know that they will be treated with kindness and consideration. Most parents regard the school highly and value the support given to their children. Pastoral care is good. One parent said, 'The school provides a caring environment where every child matters. My daughter is growing in confidence daily.' Purposeful leadership, good teaching and dedicated staff enable pupils to achieve well.

Effective links with the infant feeder school help pupils settle in well. From a start where pupils have below average skills in literacy and numeracy, they make good progress, especially in English, and reach average standards. Standards in mathematics are below average. The school's information shows that pupils are currently achieving well in all subjects and some are making outstanding progress in literacy. A close check is kept on pupils who find learning difficult. Regular assessments are made and work is carefully matched to their needs. As a result, they achieve well. Parents of pupils who require special help speak highly of the support their children receive.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. This is evident in their good behaviour and positive attitudes. Nearly all pupils act sensibly around school. They are respectful towards each other and cooperate well. However, a small number of pupils do not behave as well as they should when they are playing at lunchtime. The school is aware of this and has taken action. Behaviour at lunchtime is improving. Pupils know how to keep safe and lead healthy lifestyles because of the emphasis placed in the curriculum on all aspects of personal development. Most pupils are enthusiastic to participate in the range of playground games and many take part in the after-school sports clubs. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities and are proud of their work raising money for local and national charities. Some older pupils are trained to play with younger ones and ensure that they are happy and content. Their good level of social responsibility and good academic achievement prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Consequently, pupils come to lessons wanting to learn and engage well in the activities provided. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils and provide a good level of challenge to all pupils through good use of targets. However, the quality of teaching differs from class to class and ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. The teaching assistants are highly skilled and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. The curriculum is good and meets all requirements. It is enhanced well through a range of visits and visitors, including residential experiences and workshops with theatre groups and artists.

The leadership team, led well by a strong and committed headteacher, provides a drive and impetus which has established many recent initiatives to improve pupils' achievement. Pupils' individual academic progress is tracked well. This enables most teachers to set challenging targets for pupils and provide extra support to those who are having difficulties with their learning. However, the systems are not yet used well enough by senior leaders to provide information about the progress made by all classes and groups of pupils. Consequently, the governors are not given sufficient information to enable them to hold the school to account for all aspects of achievement and standards. The school knows itself well, has good capacity to improve and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, by ensuring that teaching is consistently good in all classes.
- Use the tracking information more rigorously to monitor the progress made by classes and groups of pupils.
- Ensure that governors use the assessment information to hold the school to account for achievement and standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils enter the school, their attainment is below average. Over the past three years, pupils' achievement as they move through the school has steadily improved. Pupils now make good progress, especially in English. All groups of pupils, including those who find learning difficult, achieve well. The end of Year 6 test results in 2007 show that standards were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. In 2006 the school recognised that boys were not making as much progress as they should in English and implemented several new initiatives. In 2007, boys achieved well in English and the test results were slightly higher than the average for boys nationally. The school's assessment information shows that boys and girls are currently making good progress overall, and sometimes outstanding progress in reading and writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Through assemblies and a good programme for personal and social education, the pupils are developing a good understanding and awareness of moral and social issues. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Although pupils have a good sense of their own cultural traditions, their awareness of cultural diversity is weaker. Pupils have a good understanding of social responsibilities and make an effective contribution to the community. The school council is proud that suggestions for rewarding good behaviour has helped the school improve. Pupils have several opportunities to link with the local and wider community, such as taking part in the Warsop Carnival and visiting the local residential homes to sing carols. Attendance is satisfactory. Rewards are given for those pupils who attend regularly and the school works well with the welfare service to monitor the attendance of pupils who are causing concern.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Positive relationships between adults and pupils help ensure that lessons are orderly and pupils work hard. Most teachers plan well. They know what they want pupils to learn, ensure a good degree of challenge and have high expectations of behaviour. Detailed targets to encourage better progress, especially in writing, are in place. Where pupils know their targets and teachers refer to them in lessons, pupils make good progress. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent and too much is only satisfactory. New initiatives to accelerate pupils' learning have been implemented. The school's information shows that some pupils are now making outstanding progress, especially in literacy. However, the initiatives are not fully embedded in all classes

and have not yet had an impact on test results. Most teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work, but the quality of presentation varies from class to class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum places strong emphasis on promoting pupils' moral and social skills which contribute well to pupils' personal development. Good attention is given to extending basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Although there are outline schemes of work in place, the school is aware that staged learning targets showing a progression of skills and knowledge have not yet been developed for all subjects. Those pupils who need additional help are supported by a good range of programmes. Pupils learn French in Years 3 and 4. The school has identified some pupils who have special gifts and talents and provides additional opportunities for them to improve their skills through a range of activities including good links with the local secondary school. Recent initiatives with particular emphasis on raising standards in literacy, especially for boys, are proving to be very successful.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and pupils feel confident to talk about their problems when they arise. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessments and child protection are secure. Pupils who experience difficulties with their learning are guided effectively towards their challenging targets by skilled teaching assistants. There are good links with outside agencies who provide additional support where necessary. Although marking of pupils' work is often good and shows pupils how to improve, the quality varies from class to class. In most classes, pupils know their targets. Consequently, they have a better understanding of how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, with strong support from the deputy head and curriculum leaders, provides clear direction for improvement. Many initiatives have been put into place and are beginning to have a significant impact on achievement. The rigorous systems for school evaluation ensure that leaders know the school well. Detailed tracking of individual pupils' progress allows challenging targets to be set and support to be given for pupils who are falling behind. Although the information on pupils' progress is detailed and analysed, it is not used effectively enough to inform the leadership of progress made by different classes or groups of pupils. Consequently, although the governors are committed, they do not have sufficient information to enable them to hold the school to account 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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	2
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

13 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Sherwood Junior School, Mansfield NG20 0JT

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such an enjoyable experience. We were very pleased to find that you are making good progress with your work. We enjoyed visiting your lessons, looking at your books and talking to you. We were very pleased to see how happy you are and to hear how much you enjoy coming to school. Your teachers and other adults are kind and helpful and want you all to do your best. It was good to see how well the adults and children get on well together.

We could see that you try hard to do your best and were very impressed with your behaviour and attitudes during your lessons. Nearly all of you behave very well at lunchtimes, but it is a pity that a few do not always behave as well as they should. We hope that behaviour continues to improve.

Although the teaching is good, it could be even better. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that all teachers make lessons exciting and challenging for you and make sure that you use your targets well. The school keeps very detailed information about the progress you are making. However, the senior teachers and governors could use the information even better to find out how well you are all doing as you move from Year 3 right through to Year 6.

You can help by continuing to work hard at school, doing what your teachers say and trying your best to meet your targets.

We shall take away many good memories of your school and have very much enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers Her Majesty's Inspector