

Lovers' Lane Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122595
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
Inspection number	314340
Inspection dates	5–6 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Best

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Brenda Allard
Headteacher	Mr Richard Cronshaw
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003
School address	Warburton Street Newark Nottinghamshire NG24 1LT
Telephone number	01636 683353
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is similar in size to the average primary school. It serves a mixture of privately owned and rented homes in the town. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The number of pupils joining the school other than at the usual time is well above average.

When they start in the Nursery, children's skills and experiences are well below those expected for their age. The proportion of pupils who need extra support with their learning is above average. The number of pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is lower than the national average. The school holds the Healthy Schools Gold award.

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 an improving school that correctly evaluates its overall effectiveness as satisfactory. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and behave well in lessons and around the school. They and their parents value the school's welcoming and caring atmosphere, particularly the way in which new arrivals quickly settle and make friends.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Leadership, which was unsatisfactory, has improved and the school now has clear sense of direction. A key factor in this is the implementation of robust systems for regularly checking pupils' progress. Achievement is satisfactory. Most pupils, including those who need extra support with their learning, are making headway because the school's tracking is making staff are more aware of their capabilities. However, their progress is satisfactory because it is not yet consistent from year to year. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average and pupils make good progress from when they started in Year 3. However, this practice has only recently been extended into the Foundation Stage and to Years 1 and 2 and, although improving, is not yet securely established. Last year's improvement in reading standards at the end of Year 2 has yet to be matched in mathematics and writing.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, lessons well managed and interactive whiteboards used effectively to support pupils' learning. However, teachers do not always make the best use of the information they have about what pupils know and can do to build on their previous skills and knowledge. The school's curriculum is satisfactory. Links between subjects are starting to be developed. A good range of sporting and other activities is available, supporting pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils work well together and develop a satisfactory range of skills in preparation for the next stage of their education. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory. The school has good arrangements for safeguarding pupils and effective partnerships with outside agencies promote their well-being. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of what they need to do to improve. They have a good appreciation of keeping safe and make a satisfactory contribution to the community. Pupils' attendance is broadly average and absences are carefully monitored.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is satisfactory. The deputy plays a prominent and valued role in supporting the headteacher's drive to raise achievement. Senior staff and subject leaders monitor teaching and learning regularly. The professional development for staff balances individual and whole-school needs. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and are aware of the school's strengths and shortcomings. However, although the school evaluates the information it has available, this process is not rigorous enough and goals for improvement are too general. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. When they start in the Nursery, many children have limited skills and experiences, particularly in communication and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make satisfactory progress, with many making good gains in their personal and social skills. However, new systems for tracking children's progress

have highlighted that a small but significant proportion of children are not making the expected progress, particularly in early reading and writing skills. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The match of work to children's needs is improving but is not yet consistent. Children respond well to challenging activities, such as retelling the story of 'This and That' in their own words, but lose interest when the pace of teaching slows. Leadership is satisfactory and staff take good care of the children. The curriculum is satisfactory, but the outdoor area is not used to its full potential in supporting children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Improve teachers' use of information about what pupils know and can do in planning and providing for pupils' individual needs.
- Improve the rigour with which the school analyses and uses the information it collects about its performance in planning for improvement.

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

Standards at the end of Year 2 have remained well below average in writing since the last inspection. They are slightly better in mathematics but have still remained consistently below average. In reading, standards in the 2007 assessments were broadly average, representing a significant improvement from the well below average results of previous years. Over time, too few pupils have reached or exceeded the expected levels. There is evidence of a recent improvement in pupils' progress. For example, pupils in Year 2 have made good gains in writing from low starting points at the start of the school year.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved since the last inspection, although they fluctuate from year to year due to the above average proportion of pupils who join the school from Year 3 onwards. In 2007, pupils at the end of Year 6 made exceptionally good progress from very low starting points at the end of Year 2. This year group had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and nearly three times as many boys as girls. Pupils currently in Year 6 are making good progress in lessons and are on track to meet their suitably challenging targets. There are no significant differences in progress between boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They value their positive relationships with staff and each other and this contributes to their good behaviour. The members of the School Council feel that they are listened to and able to influence developments, such as promoting walking to school. This reflects a positive contribution to the school community, although links with the wider local community are less developed. The school has been awarded the Healthy School Gold Award for pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles. Pupils' emotional health is effectively promoted through effective links with outside agencies.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Most pupils have a clear understanding of what are they are learning and know what they need to do to improve their work. They are proud of the progress they have made since the start of the school year and thrive on praise and encouragement. Pupils are keen to answer questions and contribute their ideas in lessons. They settle down to work quickly and follow instructions carefully. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils, particularly those who need extra help. Improved tracking systems have helped teachers set more challenging work, which is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, teachers do not always use this information to plan work for individuals. They do not consistently ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunity to use and apply their new and previously acquired skills in a range of different situations, for example, by using alternative methods to check their calculations in numeracy. At times, the pace of learning slows when lesson introductions are too long or pupils have completed their independent work earlier than planned.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school meets statutory requirements, and allocates sufficient time to all subjects. Occasional themed days on topics such as Ancient Egypt, enthuse pupils and add variety to their learning through the use and application of a wide range of skills. Occasionally, pupils withdrawn for extra help with reading miss out on whole class activities. Visits, visitors and trips, together with after-school activities, broaden the provision. The school successfully helps pupils learning English as an additional language to take a full part in lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pastoral care and support the school provides is good. Pupils know how to stay safe and are confident to turn to an adult for help, where needed. Parents are pleased that any concerns are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Academic guidance is satisfactory. With more effective tracking of pupils' progress, the school is improving the quality of its provision. For example, the school awards certificates for good progress in writing and these explain what pupils have to do to achieve the next step. However, this is not yet been offered for mathematics or science. The school has an effective policy for marking of pupils' work, and teachers' written comments often include a target for improvement, particularly in English. The arrangements for identifying pupils who need extra support with their learning are good; those for the more able, gifted and talented are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher continues to give high priority to the pastoral care and support of pupils. New systems for tracking pupils' progress are at the heart of the school's drive to improve achievement. Staff know where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie, and this information is openly shared with governors. However, the school's development plan does not include

specific milestones against which success can be measured and the school held to account by the governing body. This is because the school is not yet rigorous enough in evaluating the impact of different aspects of its work on pupils' achievement and standards.

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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	3
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?	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lovers' Lane Primary and Nursery School, Newark, NG24 1LT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school last week. You told us about your work and all the things that you do in school. We enjoyed the Ancient Egypt day in Year 3, particularly your letters describing the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb. You all behave well in lessons and around the school and get on well with the staff and with each other. We congratulate on your Healthy School Gold Award and the School Council's lead in encouraging everyone to walk to school.

The staff take good care of you and you told us you enjoy coming to school. Your teachers share with you what you are going to learn in lessons and you listen carefully to them, answering questions and following instructions. You are keen to learn and want to do your best - well done!

Your teachers are now keeping a much more regular check on how well you are doing. This is particularly important as you might be falling behind or able to do harder work. They are using this information to plan more challenging work for you to do, but there is still some way to go because the progress you make is uneven from year to year. You told us you like a challenge and many of you proudly showed us how much your work has improved since last September - and you are right.

We have asked the school to make sure that these improvements continue and you have an important part to play in this. We want them to help those of you in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 make faster progress in reading, writing and numeracy. We think it is important that, in planning their lessons, all of your teachers use of all the information about what you know and can do to help you do as well as they can. We are also asking the school to improve the way in checks on how well it is doing, so that it decide on what are the important things to do next.

Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Yours truly

Mike Best

Lead inspector