

Claremont Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122702
Local Authority	CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LA
Inspection number	314368
Inspection dates	8–9 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Linford
Headteacher	Mrs Elise Tiplady
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
School address	Claremont Road Off Hucknall Road Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG5 1BH
Telephone number	0115 9156870
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Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Many of its pupils live in areas that are socially or economically disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Pupils represent a wide range of ethnic groups. The greatest proportion of pupils is of Pakistani background. A small minority are White British. A few pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The families of a small number of pupils are seeking asylum in this country. When they join the Foundation Stage, children's skills are often well below the national expectations for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Gold award, Investors in People accreditation, and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Claremont's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. One of its strongest elements is pupils' good personal development. They enjoy their time in school. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work and play happily together. They are taught to appreciate and respect each others' faiths, and racist incidents are very unusual. The Healthy Schools Award at gold level reflects pupils' acute awareness of the importance of a good diet and plenty of exercise. For example, they take part enthusiastically in the short periods of physical activity at the start of each day. 'We do it to wake up our body and mind.' Many pupils are well motivated by the good quality experiences that enrich the satisfactory curriculum. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are keen members of lunchtime mini-hockey clubs, led by students from a secondary school. Pupils' good behaviour gives the school confidence to offer opportunities such as this. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The good quality pastoral care and support provided help to ensure that pupils feel safe. The learning mentor, for example, is always on hand with help and advice, especially for pupils facing challenges in their personal circumstances. However, academic guidance is not in the same league. There is no consistent approach and pupils' work is not always marked well enough. This means that they are not sufficiently clear how they can improve their work.

Although pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in school, their standards in English and mathematics are below average by the end of Year 6. This places them at a disadvantage when they move on to secondary school. The school has noticed that the boys and pupils of Pakistani background often make slower progress and reach lower levels than girls and those from other ethnic backgrounds. The quality of teaching varies between classes but is satisfactory overall. While there is some good teaching there is not enough to enable pupils to achieve more than satisfactorily, or to reach standards on a par with those in many other schools.

Leadership and management are satisfactory although the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher provide good leadership. The headteacher demonstrates very clearly her determination to provide as well as possible for every pupil. Over the past few years however, significant staff changes and absences have hampered her efforts to raise standards. An expanded leadership team and a more representative governing body have recently been established. The school has benefited from joining a programme run by the local authority to provide additional support for improvement. These actions are helping to move the school forward at a faster pace. For example, the acting deputy headteacher has successfully led the introduction of a new system to track pupils' progress. This is enabling the headteacher to check the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously. It also indicates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage gets children's education off to a good start. From starting points that are often very low, children make good progress. However, by the end of the Reception year, their skills are still mostly below the expectations for their age. Boys tend to achieve less well than girls do. Progress is especially good in the area of communication, language and literacy. A project organised by the local authority is proving highly effective. Children enjoy taking a toy mouse home and then talking and writing about his adventures. Teaching is good and children benefit from a mixture of activities led by adults and opportunities to learn through

play and exploration. The environment in the Nursery is organised particularly well, with clearly defined areas to stimulate children to be independent learners. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed leader is not yet making the most of all the assessments of children's learning, in order to identify where improvements are needed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics, especially with regard to boys and pupils of Pakistani background.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better.
- Make sure that pupils know how they can improve their work.

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

Given their starting points, pupils make sound progress. Standards pupils reach by the end of Year 2 have risen since the previous inspection. However, national test results remain below average, with writing the weakest element. Pupils do better in reading. In 2007, the national test results in Year 6 were below average overall. However, pupils made better progress in science. Consequently, test results were close to national averages. In contrast, standards were particularly low in mathematics, with very few pupils reaching the higher level 5. Girls generally do better than boys. Pupils of Pakistani background, in the main, attain standards that are well below those of similar pupils nationally. Pupils who find learning most difficult generally make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Attendance rates remain just below average despite the school's considerable efforts. This is partly due to the number of families who take holidays during term time. Although pupils enjoy school, too many are brought to school late, so they miss the start of morning lessons. Their interest in learning is evident by the very high number of those in Year 6 who attend an after-school revision club. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn to take responsibility and to care for others. They say that bullying is not a problem. The school council represents pupils well and is currently investigating alternative kit for physical education. A group of pupils has successfully applied for training as 'playground buddies' and they are eager to start work and help sort out any problems. Pupils regularly raise money for good causes. For example, they ran laps of the playground to support Sport Relief.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Systems to assess the levels at which pupils are working are satisfactory. Teachers often use this information well to match work accurately to what groups of pupils need to learn next. Occasionally, expectations are not high enough. For example, careless or untidy work is accepted by a few teachers. Most lessons involve varied activities to cater for pupils who learn best in

different ways, for instance, by taking part in practical activities. In a small number of lessons pupils spend too long sitting together, listening to the teacher and occasionally answering questions. In these circumstances, the pace of learning slows and pupils can become somewhat restless and inattentive. However, teachers manage any instances of unruly behaviour well so that lessons proceed without disruption. The skills of teaching assistants are used effectively to support individual pupils or small groups who find learning especially difficult, or who are in the early stages of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is a clear and relevant focus on literacy and numeracy. New national guidance is already being implemented and this is starting to make work more challenging. Teachers increasingly make links between subjects in order to help pupils to consolidate their learning. The school has identified the shortcomings in boys' achievement and is seeking ways to make the curriculum more relevant to them, for example, by introducing more practical activities. At any one time, the number of clubs is quite limited. However, they change frequently, are paid for by the school, and are scheduled for lunchtime and after school, so more pupils have opportunities to attend. Good examples of enriching experiences include the visit by an Arabic speaker who helped to bring alive a story for Year 5 pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school meets government requirements for safeguarding pupils. Child protection procedures are secure. The governors conduct regular checks to ensure that the building is safe. Pastoral care is good and the school is encouraging pupils to attend more regularly. For instance, the learning mentor is introducing a 'walking bus' to improve attendance and punctuality. Pupils know what to do if they have any concerns and are confident that adults will help them. Those who are new to the school say that they settled in very quickly. A range of agencies supports the school in its work, for example, in meeting the needs of especially vulnerable pupils. There is scope to improve the academic guidance given to pupils. When teachers mark pupils' books, their comments are often too general to help pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Monitoring by the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher provides an accurate picture of strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, guidance has been given to each teacher to help them to improve their marking techniques. Most have acted on this advice and indications are that this is helping pupils to make better progress. New senior leaders have only just taken up their posts. While they are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, they have not had time to make an impact on the areas for which they are responsible. Governors are led well by a very experienced chair. A number of new governors have recently been recruited, adding to the range of expertise and better representing the school's diverse ethnic population. Parents' views are largely positive, although a few parents feel that their views are not taken sufficiently into account. Inspection findings indicate that the school tries hard to meet the varying

expectations of different groups of parents. For example, governors are currently considering how the school should celebrate the festivals of different faith groups.

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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?	3
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?	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	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 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Claremont Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham, NG5 1BH

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed our short time with you and now I need to tell you what we found out about your school.

Claremont is a satisfactory school. There are some things it does well. For example, you told us that you enjoy school and feel safe. We were pleased to see you behaving so well and helping the staff and each other and were impressed with how you try to stay healthy. You learn some interesting things, such as how to play steel drums, and can join clubs to do activities like juggling. The staff take good care of you and we know that you appreciate the work of your learning mentor. We were disappointed to see that not all of you get to school on time.

Most of you make sound progress in your learning, although some of you could do better. We have asked the school to help you reach higher standards in English and mathematics and to make sure that you learn well in every lesson. There could sometimes be more advice written in your books when they are marked, so you are quite clear about how you can improve. We know that you will play your part, by trying as hard as you can.

Your headteacher, the staff and governors want the school to be as good as possible, so you can all get off to a really quick start when you move on to secondary school. We want to send each of you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton

Lead Inspector