

Edge Hill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124045
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	314789
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2008
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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 (total)	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carolyn Robinson
Headteacher	Michael Mander
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2005
School address	Sycamore Road Stapenhill Burton-on-Trent DE15 9NX
Telephone number	01283 239040
Fax number	01283 239048

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average junior school. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds but the proportion from minority ethnic groups is increasing slowly. A few pupils, mainly of Polish origin, are at the early stages of speaking English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is rising and is currently close to the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The school has gained several awards, including the full Dyslexia Award in 2008, Investors in People award in 2004 and 2007, International School Mark and Activemark in 2007. Before and after school clubs are organised by a private provider. As part of its extended care, the school provides the opportunity for those who arrive early in the mornings to purchase food in a well supervised dining room.

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. The senior leadership team and the governors have a clear commitment to raising standards. The quality of leadership and management overall is satisfactory and the recent impact on raising standards demonstrates a sound capacity to improve the school. However, subject leaders are not yet all sufficiently involved in the management role of raising standards. The governing body is growing in its effectiveness and fulfils all of its duties satisfactorily. Almost all of the parents are pleased with the school. One parent wrote, 'The school has a wonderful atmosphere, the children are always happy, discipline is firm but fair.' The school provides a good contribution to community cohesion with pupils gaining a good understanding of the community both local and distant.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter and leave the school with standards that are broadly average. Their progress in lessons is now often good because of improving teaching. There are no significant differences between the progress made by any group of pupils although those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress from their lower starting points in lessons because of the extra support they receive to address their specific needs.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are knowledgeable and make lessons enjoyable within a supportive and caring learning environment. Whilst work generally matches the needs of most pupils, assessment data are not used consistently to ensure that all pupils' needs are always met fully. Marking of pupils' work does not always provide sufficient guidance on how pupils can reach higher standards. The use of individual targets to help raise standards is at an early stage, although pupils are already confident to talk about them. The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements. However, not enough focus is given to subjects other than English, mathematics and science to stimulate learning and to make the curriculum relevant to pupils' interests. Provision for more able pupils is not fully developed to enable them to make the better progress of which they are capable. A good range of well supported extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum.

Pastoral care is good with good systems in place to ensure the safety and care of pupils. There are good links with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are supported well. Pupils benefit from strong links with other schools and are sensitively supported in the transfer into secondary schools. Adults provide good support for pupils' personal development. One parent noted, for example, how well the school develops pupils' moral and social skills. Relationships are very good. Pupils develop good personal qualities and feel safe and well cared for. Pupils are happy at school, and they like the good range of clubs, visits and visitors. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

Pupils willingly take on responsibilities within school. Their contribution to the community is satisfactory, with involvement in local events and supporting charities. Through projects and the school's international links, they have good experiences to prepare them fully for life in a multicultural society. Pupils have a good understanding of what they have to do to adopt healthy lifestyles. They make sensible choices of food and participation in sport. Rates of attendance are above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment. Pupils acquire the academic skills which prepare them satisfactorily for their next stage of education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers make consistent use of assessment data to meet all pupils' needs fully in all lessons and, in particular, to challenge the more able.
- Develop the use of targets for pupils and provide all pupils with clear guidance through marking to help them to improve their performance.
- Ensure that all pupils, especially the more able, benefit from a more relevant and stimulating curriculum with good coverage of all subjects.
- Involve all subject leaders in driving improvements and raising standards.

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

The school carries out a baseline assessment of pupils when they join the school in Year 3 and uses this to monitor their progress. Assessment systems are well established and used effectively to inform the leadership team of pupils' progress and standards being attained. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. These standards represent satisfactory achievement in relation to the pupils' starting points in Year 3. The evidence from lesson observations also shows that most pupils progress at a satisfactory rate. The school's assessment data show that the progress being made in each year group is now increasing. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of the support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and relationships are a strength of the school. There is clear, mutual respect between adults and pupils as well as among pupils. The limited cultural mix within the school means pupils are not experiencing what life is like in a multicultural society but project work, international links and visitors to the school compensate for this. Behaviour in lessons is good, ensuring that all pupils can learn in a safe and happy environment. Movement around the school and play are orderly. Pupils say that bullying is rare but if it occurs it is dealt with well. Pupils' enjoyment at being part of the school community is good and this is reflected by their good attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have very good subject knowledge and make lessons enjoyable. They have good relationships with the pupils, developing their confidence to participate fully. The use of assessment data to help teachers plan work to ensure pupils are sufficiently challenged is developing but variable in quality across classes. In the best lessons, planning ensures that work is pitched at the right level for pupils to achieve well, with teachers providing challenge through carefully posed questions. However, in other lessons, work is often not closely enough matched to the needs of all pupils, especially the more able ones, within the large mixed-ability classes. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by teaching assistants. The use of

targets is developing. Pupils know their targets but are not always sure how they can achieve them. Marking is often good but does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve in order to achieve higher standards. Teachers do not always follow up pupils' mistakes or misconceptions with pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and fully meets statutory requirements. There are some opportunities for cross-curricular links, as was seen during the 'Victorian Day', which took place during the inspection, when all Year 6 pupils and staff joined in the role play for the day. Pupils who need extra help, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are given support tailored to their needs. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used across the curriculum with pupils developing an understanding of its importance in collecting information and presenting their work. The personal, social and health education provision helps pupils develop their personal skills well. The school has a good range of extra-curricular activities which are very well supported by pupils. There are some creative expression opportunities through enjoyable art, music and drama activities. However, there is insufficient focus overall on subjects other than English, mathematics and science to ensure the curriculum fully matches the needs of the pupils, relates to their interests, and stimulates their learning. Opportunities to extend the more able across all subjects are not sufficiently developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There is good pastoral support, ensuring that pupils can develop their academic and personal skills whilst feeling safe and secure. Pupils appreciate that staff are caring and they know support is available. Careful attention is paid to health and safety, including minimising possible risks. Child Protection procedures are clear. The needs of vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are assessed and regularly reviewed to ensure effective support is provided, for example through the nurture group. There are good links with external agencies for specialist advice in addressing the needs of these pupils. Support for the growing number of Polish pupils is provided by a Polish speaking teaching assistant. Academic guidance is in the early stages of development and, as a result, pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve their work. The process of setting targets is not yet consistently used to encourage learning, and marking is not always as effective as it should be in providing advice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and governors have developed an enthusiastic staff team who are developing the skills to help raise standards. Their impact is already clear but there has been insufficient time to show sustained improvement in academic performance. The headteacher provides good leadership and sets a clear direction to raise standards. He has ensured teaching is at least satisfactory across the school and this is still improving with many lessons being good. The governing body fulfils all its legal requirements and the links it has established with subject leaders is beginning to have an impact on raising standards. The role of the subject leaders is still developing and they are not yet all sufficiently involved in helping the school to improve.

Accurate self-evaluation, together with the school improvement plan, demonstrates that the school is determined to move forward. However, there has been insufficient time for recent actions to impact fully on standards. Potentially good systems have been introduced for assessment and target setting but further work is required to ensure consistency. The school has developed strong links with the local, national and international communities as part of the good contribution it makes to community cohesion.

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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 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 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

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edge Hill Junior School, Stapenhill, DE15 9NX

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed being at your school, meeting with you and your teachers, as well as talking with you during the day. Yours is a satisfactory school which has some strengths:

- You make good progress in your personal development within a caring environment where you are well looked after.
- Behaviour is good and you tell us that the little bullying that occurs is dealt with well.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities available.
- You enjoy school and attend well.
- Your headteacher provides good leadership and the senior leadership team knows what needs to be done to improve the school.

In order to help the school improve, we have asked the adults to:

- Make better use of information on how well you are doing to meet your learning needs in lessons and to give you all the right level of challenge.
- Develop the use of targets and marking to tell you how you can improve your work.
- Review the curriculum to make sure that all the subjects are covered well and that the work is always hard enough for those of you who learn quickly.
- Ensure that all the teachers responsible for leading subjects are involved in making improvements and helping you to do better.

You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish each one of you every success and happiness in your future education.

John Horwood Lead inspector