

Hucknall National CE VA Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 128075 |
| Local Authority | NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA |
| Inspection number | 315593 |
| Inspection dates | 15–16 January 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Martin Newell |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 455 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Keith Whiting |
| Headteacher | Mrs Liz Youngman |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Montague Road Hucknall Nottingham NG15 7DU |
| Telephone number | 0115 9632678 |
| Fax number | 0115 9640668 |

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
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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. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need are both below the average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Of the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, none is at an early stage of acquiring English. The school is an amalgamated infant and junior school, which opened as a full primary school in September 2006. When children start at the school, attainment is close to the expected level for this age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school, which provides satisfactory value for money. Inspection findings endorse the school's view of its own effectiveness. Many parents expressed positive views and a comment echoed by others was, 'A friendly and approachable school where my child thoroughly enjoys coming.' The good leadership of the headteacher has enabled the amalgamation to go ahead smoothly while at the same time bringing about improvements in aspects of the school's work and building a stronger sense of team spirit. There is still work to be done. However, the success of initiatives already in place bodes well for the continued improvement of the school.

The recent amalgamation of the school means that little national test data is available to illustrate pupils' standards and progress over time. By the end of Year 6, standards are currently above average. They are better in reading but closer to average in mathematics because there is not enough challenge for some pupils, particularly the more able. The picture that emerges is that, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. When teaching is challenging and vibrant and keeps pupils on their toes, progress accelerates. Although there are examples of this in school, they are not in abundance. The headteacher has brought a more 'cutting edge' to assessment by the introduction of more rigorous procedures. However, it remains work in progress in ensuring the information is used in the most effective way to establish good achievement for all pupils.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are well behaved and their enjoyment of school is reflected in the high attendance rates. Pupils know well how to keep fit, healthy and safe. They leave school with skills that adequately prepare them for their future lives. The curriculum on offer is satisfactory with enrichment, through after school clubs, visits and visitors, being good. The care and guidance on offer for pupils is satisfactory with good features. The pastoral care is a strength and staff go the extra-mile in recognising and meeting the social and emotional needs of pupils. Although improving, academic guidance is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory with that of the headteacher being good. She has set an accurate agenda for school improvement which is geared towards ensuring good achievement for all pupils. Many staff and governors share this commitment to 'raising the bar' and moving the school on to the next level. With the exception of the headteacher, governors and others with leadership roles are not yet robust enough in their monitoring and evaluation. This limits their impact on improvements to standards, achievement and the work of the school generally.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Reception classes with skills that broadly match those expected for their age. They make suitable progress and achieve satisfactorily. They settle quickly with the help of caring adults who guide them sensitively and make sure that they are safe. Children enjoy learning because the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and members of staff work well together as a team. The management of provision is satisfactory. The quality of planning and the use of assessment are not fully developed to reflect the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum but staff are undertaking training to increase their skills and knowledge prior to the implementation of a new curriculum in September 2008. The school has rightly identified

that the outdoor play area requires improvement and has drawn up suitable plans for better facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for the higher attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Increase the incidence of good and better teaching
- Ensure assessment information is used to best effect to set regular challenging targets and to guide and inform planning and teaching.
- Ensure managers at all levels, including governors, play an effective and influential role in monitoring and evaluating the work and performance of the school.

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

Attainment at the end of Year 2 is average and above average overall by the end of Year 6. This reflects the standards attained for this group of pupils at Year 2. Reading standards are securely above average, helped in no small measure by the accelerated reading programme older pupils follow. Standards in mathematics however, are closer to the national average because the more able pupils do not reach the levels of which they are capable. Inspection evidence clearly indicates that progress and achievement across the school is satisfactory. At present there is not enough high quality teaching to ensure that good progress is the norm for all pupils, particularly the higher attainers. Assessment data is not yet used in the best way to play a more influential role in how well pupils achieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are reflective, show concern for each other and demonstrate a mature awareness of what is right and wrong. Their enthusiasm and enjoyment for school is reflected in the attendance rates, which are well above the national average. Relationships are good and pupils behave well in class and around the school. Pupils have a good awareness of what is needed to keep fit and healthy and manage risks in their lives well. They feel safe in school and discussions with pupils indicate that bullying is not an issue at this school. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through projects such as the 'healthy tuck shop', where they take a lead role. The school council enables pupils to make a difference, such as the introduction of a 'friendship stop' and improving facilities. Pupils' development of workplace skills is satisfactory because of their progress in literacy, numeracy and computer work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and on occasions good. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to ensure that lessons are enjoyable and interesting. Teaching assistants are often well deployed to teach pupils in small groups and this benefits their learning.

Relationships and classroom management are generally good across the school. The best teaching is challenging, lively and animated and extends pupils' skills effectively by using incisive questioning during well-organised activities. For example, pupils responded eagerly to exciting opportunities for practical investigations in Year 6 when learning how to conduct scientific experiments involving reversible and irreversible changes. Most pupils learn at a steady pace but teachers' expectations are sometimes too low. Inconsistent approaches to planning and the use of assessment to guide and inform teaching prevents pupils' learning from being better. Assessment procedures are being refined but do not yet include regular enough setting of challenging interim targets to help pupils reach their assigned end of year goals.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a suitable range of activities to help pupils learn but opportunities to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills across different subjects are not always capitalised on. In addition, the school day is a little short of the recommended minimum time for both Key Stage 1 and 2. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have good opportunities to learn a modern foreign language by participating in weekly French lessons. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with sound support to help them join in with all the activities provided. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is promoted through a satisfactory programme of activities. A particular strength in the school's curricular provision is the wide array of enrichment activities. These including a good number of sporting activities both within and outside the school day, and opportunities for pupils to learn a musical instrument, such as the recorder, guitar and violin. Special events such as 'Arts Week', 'Health Week' and multi-cultural days are greatly enjoyed by pupils and staff alike and help pupils to extend their learning through practical experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff know the children well and work hard to ensure they are well cared for pastorally. Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and there are effective systems to look after pupils' health and welfare. Pupils state that they feel cared for and respected in school and that they are given a voice that is listened to. Learners at risk are well supported and the school is developing practice to ensure pupils with learning difficulties achieve well. This is work in progress. Effective procedures are in place to enable pupils to make a smooth transfer to their next school. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Although work is regularly marked and pupils have targets, they are not always personalised enough to help them improve at a faster rate. This is also reflected in the broad, rather than more specific targets for improvement that the pupils set for themselves.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher leads and manages the school well and has played a significant role in the successful amalgamation. She has been successful in creating a cohesive team, many of whom share her vision and commitment to move the school on to the next level. The agenda for improvement she has set is precisely what is needed to help this vision become a reality. Key to this is the role played by members of the senior leadership team and other subject leaders.

Although these roles are developing well they are not robust enough in monitoring teaching and analysing data to have the best possible impact on how well pupils achieve. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school has a good track record of moving forward because of improvements in behaviour, curriculum, assessment and teaching. There is still work to be done to ensure good progress and achievement is expected for all pupils. Governors, particularly the chair, are supportive and aware of the challenges the school still faces. However, governors do not yet play a proactive enough role in questioning and evaluating the work and performance of the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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|---|----|
| 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 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| 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 | 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 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

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| 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 | 2 |
| 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

17 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Hucknall National Primary School, Hucknall, Nottingham, NG15 7DU

You will probably remember that we visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would first like to say a big thank you for making us feel so welcome. I have told your teachers how you were all so polite and helpful and that you said many positive things about your school. We managed to talk to lots of you, it was good to hear how much you enjoy school, and that bullying is not an issue.

We found that staff care for you well and make learning enjoyable through the after-school clubs and the visits and visitors to school. The school is good in helping you to keep fit, safe and healthy. You have a good headteacher and it was good to hear how you feel the school has changed for the better since her arrival. There is a particular strength of the school that I have not talked about yet and that is you! We were impressed with your behaviour, your enthusiasm very good attendance rates and your knowledge of how to keep fit, healthy and safe. Well done!

We have talked to your teachers about how they can help make the school a more exciting place for you to learn. They are going to help you reach higher standards in mathematics and make teaching even more exciting, challenging and fun. They are also going to help you make good progress by always setting you challenging targets and by all teachers and governors checking more closely on how well you and the school are doing.

Your headteacher, the staff and governors want the school to improve. I know you will want to play your part by continuing to work as hard and behave well. We wish you every success in the future. It was a pleasure to meet you.

Martin Newell

Additional Inspector