

# Berry Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132242
<b>Local Authority</b>	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	315986
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roy Bowers HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Gail Osborne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Susan Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	Black Scotch Lane Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG18 4JW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 478477
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 478499

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The school is slightly larger than average and serves pupils from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Children enter with standards that are broadly in line with what is normally expected for those of this age. The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage. A very small number of pupils do not have English as a first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average.

## 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 which provides a good standard of pastoral care. 'Berry Hill is a super school with staff who are friendly, approachable and professional', said one parent. This is typical of many comments received. Following a period of staffing instability, resulting in a fall in standards and achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007, the governors appointed several new teachers. Standards are now rising and achievement in all year groups is at least satisfactory. Behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

Because of the good teaching and stimulating activities in the Foundation Stage, children are given a good start to their education. At the end of Year 2, standards are above average and pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics. The 2007 end of Key Stage 2 test results showed that standards were below average. Very few pupils reached the higher levels, especially in writing. The appointment of the new teachers brought stability of staffing and consistency of teaching. Consequently, some of the initiatives implemented by the senior leadership are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Although in some classes the more able pupils do not always make the progress they could, overall the more able pupils are now making satisfactory progress, and many are achieving well in writing.

Because pupils are cared for well, they feel valued and safe. Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is shown in their good attendance and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are confident, willingly discuss their learning and are developing a good level of independence. They know the value of taking exercise and eating healthily.

Although the school reports that there have been instances of inadequate teaching in recent years, teaching is now at least satisfactory in all classes, and in some classes it is good. Pupils behave well and come to the lessons wanting to learn because they feel treated fairly and kindly by their teachers. Some teachers know precisely what they want the pupils to learn and plan activities which are well matched to the needs of all the different groups. However, this does not occur in all classes. Consequently, some pupils, especially the most able, do not make as much progress as they could.

The curriculum is enriched well by a good range of extra curricular activities and visits outside the school. The recent introduction of targets in all subjects to cater for the needs of pupils of all levels of ability is starting to have a positive impact on raising achievement. This is especially true of the more able in writing.

The school's procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils meet requirements. Pupils' books are marked well and good guidance is given for improvement. The information collected by the school on pupils' progress is used to set targets for improvement, but these do not always provide the correct degree of challenge, especially for the more able. Consequently, overall care guidance and support are satisfactory rather than good.

All leaders are committed, hard-working and want to improve upon standards and achievement. They have implemented several initiatives to improve upon standards. Some of these have been successful, but many are too recent to allow an accurate evaluation. Some of the subject co-ordinators are recently appointed and do not yet have the skills of effectively monitoring, evaluating and improving the school. The headteacher and deputy have instigated a thorough system for tracking pupils' achievement. However, the information is not analysed well enough and the leadership does not have a thorough knowledge of the progress made by classes and

different groups of pupils. Many of the governors, including the Chair, are new to their roles and are still developing their skills of holding the school to account.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. This is because the standard of teaching is consistently good and the curriculum provides a suitable range of activities which cover all areas of learning. There is a good balance between teacher-led and child-directed activities. By the time children leave Reception, most have met their learning goals and some have exceeded them. All adults are clear of their roles and work well together. Team work is a strength. Relationships between adults and children are good. This helps create a relaxed, purposeful atmosphere where children feel valued and safe. Pupils' independence and communication are developed well, which is reflected in the way they work sensibly together to complete tasks. Parents praise the care given to their children and value the contribution that the school makes to their progress.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards and achievement, especially of the more able pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Provide sufficient challenge by ensuring that teachers understand what pupils of all levels of attainment are required to learn during each lesson.
- Develop the leadership and management skills of the subject leaders.
- Using the available data, more rigorously evaluate the achievement of all groups of pupils throughout 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**

From the good start in the Foundation Stage, pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. By the time they leave Year 2, standards are above the national average. Standards in mathematics are consistently higher than in reading and writing. This is because work in mathematics is matched more effectively to the needs of the more able pupils and the achievement of these pupils is greater. Although the standards reached in 2007 by boys in reading were lower than those reached by girls, this was because a greater proportion of boys than girls had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In other cohorts, the attainment of boys was higher than girls.

As a result of a period of staffing instability, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 fell from slightly above average in 2005 and 2006, to below average in 2007. The more able pupils, especially in writing, did not make enough progress. No boys achieved the higher level 5. Staffing is now stable and initiatives to improve the achievement of all pupils are beginning to have an impact. The more able pupils in Year 6, both boys and girls, are achieving well, especially in writing. Pupils who find learning difficult are also making satisfactory progress. However, there are still some classes where the initiatives have not yet had sufficient impact and some pupils, especially the more able, are not making as much progress as they could.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school because they feel safe and secure. Relationships are good, increasing pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils are well-behaved and attend school regularly. The school council speaks proudly of contributions made to improvements to the playground, support for charities and entertainment at the local home for the elderly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through school assemblies and a well-planned programme for personal and social education, pupils are developing a good understanding of moral and social issues, and a growing awareness of a variety of cultural traditions. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are developing a good level of independence and work well with each other. This is good preparation for their future learning. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to maintain a healthy life style and are very knowledgeable about the benefits of physical education and the wide range of after school sports.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Although there is some good teaching in all key stages, overall, teaching is satisfactory. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. This creates a pleasant and productive climate which promotes good behaviour and stimulates learning. Initiatives to improve the achievement of pupils, especially the more able, are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning in some classes. The introduction of specified targets which help teachers focus on the next stages of learning is helping pupils learn more effectively. This is not yet sufficiently embedded and the impact is limited. Where learning is only satisfactory, teachers are not clear enough about what they want all pupils to learn during each lesson. Consequently, work in some classes is not always matched well enough to the abilities of the pupils and some, especially the more able, are given work which provides little challenge.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics, and a good range of programmes to support those pupils who need additional help. The school has recently introduced a number of strategies to address weaknesses in writing, especially for boys. Staged learning targets are becoming an important part of teachers' curriculum planning and, where used well, are beginning to raise achievement. However, in some classes the targets are not always matched well enough to all pupils and there is lack of challenge for some. Other initiatives such as greater use of computers, writing for a real purpose and theme days linked to books have been recently introduced but the impact of these, especially on boys' writing, cannot yet be evaluated. The curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of visits and visitors. There is a good range of out of school activities. Pupils have the opportunity to learn French and to play musical instruments, such as the piano.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The school provides good pastoral care for the pupils. The majority of parents strongly support the view that their children enjoy school, feel safe, are happy and well cared for. 'One day my child was ill; she cried all day; not because she was feeling unwell, but because she wanted to be at school', said one parent. This typifies the views of many parents. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and risk assessments are secure. Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and pupils feel confident to talk about their problems when they arise. Books are marked regularly and inform pupils how to improve. The school liaises well with outside agencies which provide additional support where necessary, especially for those pupils who find learning difficult. The school has developed thorough procedures to collect information about pupils' academic progress. These are used to set targets for pupils, but do not always provide sufficient challenge, especially for the more able. Because of this care, guidance and support are only satisfactory overall.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The wide range of systems for school self evaluation has enabled the senior leadership to evaluate accurately the school's effectiveness and identify the areas for improvement. Following the recent decline in standards and achievement, decisive action was taken, resulting in several new teachers being appointed. As a result, pupils are benefiting from stable staffing and consistency of teaching.

Due to the hard work and commitment of the headteacher and deputy, staff have a clear sense of direction and purpose. The appointment of new subject co-ordinators has extended the leadership of the school and some are beginning to make improvements. However, not all co-ordinators possess the skills needed to monitor, evaluate and improve standards and achievement.

The school has a comprehensive system for tracking pupils' progress which enables the leadership to identify individual pupils who are underachieving and set targets for all pupils. However, the information is not used well enough to analyse the progress made by all year groups, classes and groups of pupils. Governors are committed and wholeheartedly support the school. They are keen to develop their skills of monitoring and evaluating standards and achievement, so that they become even more effective at holding the school to account. Because of the steady rise in standards until 2007 and the improvements made since September 2007, the school shows that it has satisfactory capacity to improve. It provides satisfactory value for money.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	3
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

31 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Berry Hill Primary School, Mansfield NG18 4JW

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a pleasant experience. We enjoyed visiting your lessons, looking at your books and talking to you. We were pleased to find that you enjoy coming to school and work hard while you are there. We were very impressed with your behaviour and attitudes. You are polite and well-mannered. The teachers and other adults look after you well. They are kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best.

You are making satisfactory progress, but some of you, especially those who are already doing well, could achieve more. We have asked the headteacher to ensure that the work you are given is matched very carefully to your abilities in all lessons. The school keeps very detailed information about the progress you are making. However, the senior teachers could use the information even better to find out how well you are all doing as you move from the nursery right through to Year 6.

All the adults work hard for you, but some teachers have taken on more responsibilities. We have asked some of them to become even better at making sure that you all make good progress. You can help all the teachers by continuing to work hard at school.

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