

Spinney Hill Primary School and Community Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120084
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	327194
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	621
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Billy Bhamra
Headteacher	Matthew Stokes
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Ventnor Street Leicester LE5 5EZ
Telephone number	01162 737047
Fax number	01162 738807

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this very large primary school are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mostly Asian and Asian British with family roots in India. A small but increasing proportion of pupils are from Eastern Europe. Many pupils are from homes where English is not the first language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these relate to pupils' language development. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is above average.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage half time at the beginning of the school year when they become four. Early Years Foundation Stage provision continues, full time, from the following September when all children who become five during the school year enter one of three Reception classes. A much higher proportion of pupils than is typical join or leave the school at times other than the normal points of entry. There is a small aftercare provision and a privately run pre-school on the school site which were inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It is well led and managed. The headteacher has ensured that all staff are fully committed to continually improving the quality of provision and the pupils' achievement. Because monitoring and evaluation are thorough and effective, senior leaders have a clear and accurate view of where to focus their work to make the school better. The school has developed many aspects of its work since the previous inspection. For example, due to some determined work by staff, pupils' writing, especially that of the boys, is now much better than previously. The school has good capacity to continue to improve in the future.

When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, many have knowledge and skills well below those typical for their age. Their English language skills are especially limited. Throughout the school pupils progress well and the vast majority of pupils achieve well to attain average standards by the time they reach the end of Year 6. Care, guidance and support are good. The school regularly assesses and carefully monitors the progress of each pupil and additional support is given to those at risk of falling behind. Carefully tailored extra support by teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well. Frequent extra help enables those who enter the school with limited spoken English to quickly gain in confidence and make good progress. Opportunities are occasionally missed to provide additional challenge or guidance for more able pupils or to enable pupils to undertake independent research or carry out investigations. Consequently, fewer pupils than could be expected reach the higher levels, especially in mathematics and science.

Teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. Lessons are well planned and pupils are required to concentrate well, work hard and present their work well. From Nursery onwards, behaviour and relationships are excellent. In lessons pupils are given many opportunities to speak to one another and to hold short discussions in pairs or small groups. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is challenging and gives clear guidance on where improvement is needed. Pupils say that they appreciate the way that teachers help them improve their work.

The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion and keeps this part of its work under review. Staff ensure that pupils develop a clear understanding and sensitivity towards each other's lives and beliefs and also of those of other ways of life in modern Britain. The school has a useful link with two schools in India that helps pupils learn about living in other countries.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Staff care for pupils very well and relationships are excellent. Because staff manage pupils well, pupils enjoy their time at school, work hard, concentrate in lessons and are friendly and polite. The vast majority of both parents and pupils regard the school highly. Many parents comment on how friendly and welcoming the staff are to both them and to their children.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision in the Nursery and Reception is good. Carefully planned induction arrangements, warm relationships with adults and effective links with parents enable children to settle easily into school routines and they soon feel safe and secure and enjoy their learning. As a result, although by the end of Reception standards are below the national average, most children achieve well and make good progress in all areas of learning. The welfare of each individual is

carefully nurtured and pupils' personal development and their English language skills are fostered particularly well. Adults show great enthusiasm for the good quality activities and children talk eagerly about the broad range of experiences provided, such as the visiting police officers. They enjoy making disguises and their confidence in using language is developed when they are challenged to identify how they have done this.

Teaching is good and adults use questions well but occasionally they miss opportunities to target more difficult questions and tasks towards more able children and this slows their progress a little. There is an effective balance between activities the children choose for themselves and those led by the teacher. The provision is well led and managed and staff have a clear understanding of where improvements are needed. For example, the school is aware that lack of a covered area for Nursery children limits provision for learning outdoors. However, a plan is in hand to improve this aspect of provision. Language development and early literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well and this is having a very positive effect on the development of children's reading skills and their confidence in writing and handling numbers. The children develop good awareness of the wider world and most know that you need an aeroplane to travel to India and Africa.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels, especially in mathematics and science, by providing greater challenge, guidance and support for more able pupils.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to engage in personal research and investigation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well so that by the end of Year 6 standards are broadly in line with national averages. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress but standards by the end of Year 2 remain a little below average. National test results for 2008 indicate that Year 6 pupils attained average standards in English and mathematics but below average standards in science. Good leadership in science has resulted in the school taking appropriate action to improve science standards by placing greater emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills and standards are rising. Those pupils with limited English, including those who join the school after the normal time of entry, are carefully inducted and welcomed into the school and soon begin to progress well. Strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' oral skills and their progress and achievement in spoken English are excellent. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to hold short discussions with a partner or in a small group in many lessons and, by the time they reach the older classes, almost all pupils speak and use English confidently and articulately. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to good quality support by teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and show great sensitivity to each other. Excellent relationships and behaviour provide a firm foundation for the good progress pupils make. Pupils understand how to act safely and how to behave with consideration for the safety of others. They also know how to use the internet safely. They enjoy school and feel safe, happy and secure. Despite very effective arrangements to ensure that pupils attend regularly and arrive on time, levels of attendance are only average

because too many pupils go on extended family visits during term time. Pupils work hard and show great pride in the way they present their work and look after their books. They understand how to lead healthy lives, understand the importance of eating healthy foods and take full advantage of the sports activities and coaching sessions made available to them. They take the responsibilities given to them very seriously, for example as members of the school forum. Members of the school forum are especially proud of the contribution they made to the removal of the mobile classroom to extend the play space available. They are well involved in the local and wider communities, for example through raising money for a leper community in India. Pupils' well-developed personal and social skills and satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills provide a sound preparation for the next stage of their education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching ensures pupils progress well and enjoy their learning. Staff provide a calm, positive and supportive learning environment. Teachers hold high expectations of how pupils should behave and present their work. Pupils therefore work hard and take real pride in the way they look after their books. Teachers' confident subject knowledge and use of interactive whiteboards and the good quality resources used help make many lessons interesting and fun. Occasionally, the introduction to lessons is too long and limits the amount of time left for the planned activity or more independent work. Teachers explain to pupils exactly what learning is intended and pupils are very clear about what is expected of them. Also, in many lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work to help them see where improvement is needed. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide good support for pupils with additional learning needs or those at the early stages of learning English. Although planning takes into account the different abilities of pupils in the group, it does not always ensure sufficient challenge for the most able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' academic and personal development and enjoyment of learning. The effective personal, social and health education programme reflects the strong, caring ethos of the school. The curriculum is well organised and takes account of the differing interests and abilities of pupils well, especially of the needs of pupils with identified learning difficulties and pupils who are new to the school or who speak English as an additional language. Pupils learn through a wide range of activities, although opportunities for independent research and investigation in mathematics and science are less well developed. The use of information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy to enhance learning in other subjects is good; for example, Year 4 pupils used computers to write play scripts about Theseus and the Minotaur. The range of visits and visitors, including sports coaches, is good and enriches pupils' experiences. The school provides a satisfactory range of clubs and out-of-school activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is strong and pupils trust staff and know who to turn to if they have any concerns. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding, including those for internet safety, fully

meet current requirements. Arrangements to ensure pupils behave well are fully effective and result in excellent behaviour and relationships. Leaders and teachers use their comprehensive knowledge of the progress of each individual to direct additional guidance and support where it is needed. Marking is consistently effective and gives pupils clear guidance on where they need to concentrate to improve their work. Pupils, especially in older classes, show a clear understanding of their learning targets, except when they are expressed in language they do not understand.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are evident in pupils' good progress, their polite, confident and pleasant demeanour and excellent behaviour. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers encourage and enable other leaders to develop their leadership roles. Governors know the school well and carry out their roles effectively in challenging, supporting and helping the school improve. Subject leaders also play an important part in monitoring and improving provision in their subjects. They recognise, however, that they need further training in using national data to compare performance in their subjects with that of similar schools nationally. Clear guidance and training for staff and rigorous follow-up checks ensure that aspects of teaching, such as the way pupils are helped to improve their work, are consistently effective throughout this large school. Communication and relationships with parents are good and parents are kept well informed about events at school and how they might help their children at home.

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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?	2
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	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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**

29 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Spinney Hill Primary School and Community Centre, Leicester, LE5 5EZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We send special thanks to those of you who gave up part of your lunchtime to talk with us. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn.

Spinney Hill Primary is a good school. It is well run, giving you a good education and a good preparation for life in your next school and in the wider community. Adults teach you well so that you make good progress. I am pleased yours is such a happy school and that you and your parents are pleased with it.

You enjoy school and most of you attend regularly, although quite a few of you sometimes take quite a long time away from school during term time. You all have a clear understanding of how to act safely. You understand what is right and what is wrong. You also show consideration for others and are very friendly to each other. You should be proud of your excellent behaviour and manners. Those of you who find learning difficult make good progress because the school helps you learn. Those of you who speak other languages at home make great strides in learning to speak, read and write English.

There are many things that your headteacher, the staff and the governors want to improve because they want your school to get even better. We agree with them that there are two important things to be done first. These are to:

- help those who find learning easier to do even better in science and mathematics
- give you more opportunities to investigate and find things out for yourselves.

I send you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Roger Sadler

Lead inspector