

Leamington Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122467
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	327736
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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)	380
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	Mr K Barsby
Headteacher	Mr P Hardern
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2008
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Clare Road Sutton-in-ashfield Nottinghamshire NG17 5BB

Age group	3–11
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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 larger than average and serves an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately twice the national average. Attainment on entry is very low. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and have English as their first language. Attendance is below average. The school makes provision for Nursery and Reception-aged children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school has been awarded the healthy schools gold standard for its contribution to pupils' development in this area.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school no longer requires significant improvement. This is an improving school which provides a satisfactory standard of education. The headteacher and senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know what needs to be done to improve. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen since the 2007 tests, especially in English. However, they remain below average at the end of all key stages and some pupils, especially the more able, are not achieving as well as they could. Although improving, standards and progress in writing continue to be lower than other subjects in all year groups.

The school provides good pastoral support for the pupils. Pupils say that they are safe, cared for and valued, and most parents agree. Staff know the pupils well and work effectively with external agencies to support all pupils, especially the most vulnerable. Pupils say that there are few instances of bullying, and are confident that the adults would deal with them if necessary.

Personal development is good. This can be seen in pupils' good attitudes to their learning and in the very good relationships that prevail throughout the school. Pupils behave well and are respectful and kind to each other. They willingly undertake tasks set by the teachers and cooperate well when required. These positive attitudes, together with their achievement in lessons, give pupils a satisfactory grounding for their future learning. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school, but this is not reflected in their attendance, which is below average.

The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils enjoy taking part in the wide range of extracurricular activities. The school is aware that there are few opportunities for the pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Although pupils say that they enjoy the curriculum activities, these are not always matched to their needs, especially the more able. Because of the emphasis placed by the school on promoting a healthy lifestyle, pupils have a good understanding of how to eat healthily and the importance of taking regular exercise. Pupils speak proudly of their efforts raising money for charities.

Although there is some good teaching, too much is only satisfactory. Too often, the work given to pupils does not provide sufficient challenge, especially for the more able. This is because the small steps that help ensure effective learning are not planned carefully enough for the different levels of ability in each class, and teachers do not always monitor pupils' learning in lessons. Opportunities to promote children's speaking, reading and writing in the EYFS are not always taken and children's progress in these areas is not as good as it could be.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Detailed tracking systems enable teachers and leaders to monitor pupils' progress and to identify and provide support for those pupils who are not making the expected progress. Pupils' targets for improvement have been introduced and in some lessons are integrated carefully into their learning. However, this is not consistent. Pupils' work is marked well with helpful comments for improvement.

Leadership and management, including in the EYFS, are satisfactory. Systems for school self-evaluation and improvement are in place and are beginning to have an impact on raising standards and achievement. However, these processes are not implemented as rigorously as they could be because leaders are still developing their skills of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Recent improvements in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. Governance has improved and governors now have

a much better understanding of the school and of their role in holding the school to account. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery with attainment well below that expected for children of a similar age. The good links with parents and the local children's centre ensure that children settle quickly into the Nursery and are soon confident in playing and sharing with others. Good external assessment and support are provided for children with speech and language difficulties. Progress is satisfactory in the EYFS and better in Reception than in the Nursery. Progress is particularly good in children's personal and social development and in physical development. Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. The school is aware that children's progress in speaking, reading and writing is too slow. The planned activities do not always give sufficient attention to addressing these deficits and at times opportunities to promote these skills are missed in lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory and covers all required areas of learning. However, short-term planning, especially in the Nursery, does not identify carefully enough the small steps that help children to learn well. There are satisfactory arrangements to ensure children's health and safety. Resources for outdoor play are used well and contribute effectively to children's good progress in physical development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement, especially in writing, by increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching.
- Improve children's achievement in speaking, reading and writing in the EYFS.
- Provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, especially the more able, by ensuring that the small steps for learning match the different levels of ability in each class and regular checks are made on pupils' progress in lessons.
- Ensure that pupils' targets for improvement are integrated more carefully into their learning.
- Improve the rigour of school self-evaluation and develop leadership skills at all levels.

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 their very low starting points on entry into the school, the majority of pupils, including those who find learning difficult, make satisfactory progress in all key stages. The decline in standards in recent years at the end of Key Stage 2 has been halted. Although the results of tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2008 have not yet been confirmed, they show a rise in standards in English, mathematics and science. However, standards at the end of all key stages remain below average. This is because the majority of pupils enter the Nursery with very low levels of basic skills and a legacy of underachievement still exists. In all year groups, the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could and standards in writing remain too low.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the clear boundaries of the 'golden rules' of the school and appreciate the praise and rewards they receive for good behaviour and work. They have a satisfactory awareness of different religions, faiths and traditions. Pupils welcome the opportunity to take on responsibility within their class groups. The school council plays an active role in the life of the school, such as in the development of the playground equipment. Pupils raise money for a wide range of charities and support the local community through activities such as carol singing in the local residential homes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good quality relationships between pupils and teachers are evident throughout the school. Pupils say that they like their teachers and feel that all the adults in school look after them well. Most teachers have good skills in class management and take opportunities to praise the pupils for good behaviour and for work they have completed well. Because of this, in most classes, there is a calm, orderly and positive climate for learning. Although the quality of teaching is improving, there is still not enough good teaching to eliminate quickly the legacy of underachievement. In some classes, pupils' progress is good because the small learning steps are carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils and regular checks are made to ensure that pupils are learning well. However, in too many lessons the learning steps are not clear, few checks are made on pupils' learning and many pupils, especially the more able, are not challenged well enough. In most lessons, teaching assistants are deployed well and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Use of the revised schemes of work in English and mathematics is beginning to help raise standards across the school by providing greater structure to pupils' learning. A range of intervention strategies is accelerating the progress of pupils who need extra support with their work. Themes such as 'The Olympics' and 'European Languages' motivate pupils to learn. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to practise the skills of reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects. Although there are some enrichment activities for the most able pupils, most aspects of the curriculum do not provide these pupils with sufficient challenge. The variety of school visits for each year, including the Year 5 and 6 residential visits, makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and academic development. The good range of extracurricular activities adds considerable enjoyment to pupils' school experience.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The use of art as a therapy is successfully promoting the personal and social development of vulnerable pupils and those with challenging behaviour. Rewards for good attendance and effective systems for monitoring absences are improving rates of attendance. Arrangements

for child protection and safeguarding pupils meet current requirements although the school policy and training are not fully up to date. Assessment procedures are developing well and the school uses the information effectively to target support for pupils who need extra help with their work. Although all pupils have personal targets in reading, writing and in mathematics, they are not linked carefully enough with pupils' learning in lessons, and reviewing their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and other leaders have worked hard to address the areas of weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection. Systems for school self- evaluation and improvement are in place and are beginning to have an impact on raising standards and achievement. All leaders are eager to increase the rate of improvement, but their leadership and management skills are not yet developed to a high enough level to enable them to do this, and some of the systems for improvement lack rigour. The school is aware that its contribution to community cohesion is only satisfactory because, although some work is undertaken, there is no clear plan to promote pupils' understanding of the variety of communities in the United Kingdom and globally. Through their link roles, governors are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the work of the school.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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	3

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	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?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Leamington Primary and Nursery School, Sutton-in-Ashfield NG17 5BB

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 with you. We were pleased to find that you enjoy coming to school and are happy. We particularly liked how well you play together and were impressed with your attitudes to learning in lessons. Well done! The teachers are kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best.

You go to a satisfactory and improving school. Most of you are making satisfactory progress but many of you could do even better, especially in writing. The youngest pupils could make even better progress in speaking, reading and writing.

We have asked the headteacher to make sure that more of your lessons help you learn well, especially by ensuring that the work is more carefully matched to your abilities. Those of you who find much of the work too easy are not challenged well enough. The headteacher has promised to make sure that during lessons the teachers regularly check that you are all learning well.

All of you have targets which help you learn, but the teachers do not provide enough opportunities for you to achieve them.

All the adults work hard for you and some teachers take on extra responsibilities. We have asked them to become even better at making sure that the school continues to improve and that you all make even better progress.

You can help all the teachers by continuing to work hard.

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