

# Eastlands Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122497
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327743
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martyn Skinner

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	119
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Rodney Hogg
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Netherfield Lane Meden Vale Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG20 9PA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623842257
<b>Fax number</b>	01623847381

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school serving the mining village of Meden Vale. The number of pupils eligible to claim free school meals is slightly above average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. All pupils have English as their first language apart from a very small proportion. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, although no pupils currently have statements of special educational need. The school has a number of recent awards, including Healthy Schools, International Schools (foundation level) and Activemark.

The deputy headteacher has been absent due to sickness since January 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Exemplary care, guidance and support, combined with outstanding teaching and an exciting curriculum, has resulted in pupils' excellent enjoyment and achievement. Outstanding leadership and management at all levels has been the driving force behind the rapid progress made since the last inspection. As one child commented, the school is now 'an excellent place to be.'

As a result of high level care, pupils love school, value their teachers and get on well with each other. Behaviour is generally good at lunchtimes and is often excellent during lessons. Isolated examples of poor behaviour are effectively addressed, so that pupils feel safe at school and demonstrate high levels of confidence in their relationships with each other and with adults. The school works extremely well in partnership with parents and outside agencies to promote learners' wellbeing. Vulnerable pupils are exceptionally well cared for.

Teaching and learning is outstanding overall. Pupils learn at an impressive pace in lessons that challenge and motivate them to make good, and often outstanding, progress. When asked about their school's greatest strengths, pupils reply by describing very interesting lessons and helpful, caring teachers. As one pupil explained, 'Teachers are great and lessons are fun!'

The curriculum is well-organised to provide lively and relevant learning experiences for pupils. Visits and visitors are used extremely well to enrich the curriculum, adding new layers to pupils' learning, helping them to make connections between their lessons and life outside of the classroom. Pupils eagerly embrace the wide range of out of school opportunities, such as sporting and special interest clubs.

Under the determined leadership of a highly committed headteacher and effective senior leaders, the school has moved forward significantly since the last inspection. From broadly average starting points, pupils now reach well above average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Standards in English are exceptionally high. Rigorous monitoring contributes to very effective self-evaluation and has led to this dramatic rise in standards and outstanding pupil progress.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that behaviour at lunchtimes is as exemplary as behaviour in lessons in order to improve behaviour from good to outstanding

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

End of Key Stage 1 assessments show that pupils arrive at the school with broadly average levels of attainment, although this fluctuates slightly from year to year. Since the previous inspection in 2006, rates of pupil progress have improved from satisfactory to outstanding. End of Key Stage 2 national test results for 2008 show outstanding achievement for that cohort of Year 6 pupils, reaching well above average standards in mathematics and science and exceptionally high standards in English. The school's own assessment data, supported by the quality of pupils' work, indicates that these levels are being maintained in the current Year 6. Furthermore, levels being attained in the current Year 5 are also well above average in English and mathematics. Rates of progress are not entirely even across the school, with the most rapid progress being made in Years 5 and 6. There are no significant differences between the progress

of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress in line with their peers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils show outstanding enjoyment in their learning and their positive attitudes are reflected in their good behaviour. Their understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy is excellent and there is a high level of participation in the wide range of extra-curricular sports. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to school life, for example, through their roles as members of the school council, peer mediators and 'young leaders'. In the dining hall, they demonstrate good manners and maturity as they enjoy the responsibility of serving food to one another. Pupils' sense of social responsibility extends to an excellent awareness of the wider community. There are established links with other local organisations and pupils successfully organise fundraising for various charities. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and school leaders are rightly concerned to keep a strong focus on broadening pupils' horizons. Pupils take responsibility for their own actions and have a clear view on right and wrong. Their behaviour around school and at lunchtime is generally good, with very few examples of poor behaviour. As a result, pupils feel safe throughout the school day. In lessons, behaviour is often outstanding. School leaders are beginning to work closely with midday supervision staff to raise lunchtime behaviour from good to outstanding. Pupils' excellent literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, along with their good interpersonal skills, are providing an excellent basis for the next steps in their education. Engaging enterprise projects, such as Year 6 pupils planning the summer fair, make a strong contribution to developing the pupils' capacity for future economic wellbeing. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average, but the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils over the last 3 years remains a concern for school leaders.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' achievement is outstanding because teaching is outstanding overall. Lessons are well structured and teachers manage pupils exceptionally well so that very positive relationships are developed. Consequently, children are keen to learn and to do their best. Pupils' good attitudes to work contribute effectively to the quality of learning. They sustain their concentration and interest for lengthy periods, working very well independently and in collaboration with others. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They make extensive use of questioning and discussion to check progress, giving pupils the opportunity to hear each other's ideas. The excellent pace of learning is a common theme across all year groups, but particularly evident in the very rapid progress made by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to capture the interest of children and plan lots of variety into the presentation of lessons. For example, Year 4 pupils greatly enjoyed a film trailer starting point to a literacy lesson and Year 6 pupils developed a rich, descriptive vocabulary in response to 'storm at sea' sound effects. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support the work of class teachers, providing clear and positive input to help children make progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is excellent, providing a wide range of opportunities which make learning exciting and help pupils reach high standards in their work. Teachers are committed to making good use of meaningful cross-curricular links to enhance learning. This is a constantly evolving area of the school's work. Excellent provision for information and communication technology enables pupils to maximise their learning in other subject areas, for instance in geography, history and art. Enrichment activities, including large-scale drama productions, are very much enjoyed, with pupils eager to stay after school to rehearse 'The Lion King'. Residential and day visits, such as the recent Year 5 visit to the Galleries of Justice, make an important contribution to excellent achievement and enjoyment. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very well-structured and consistently delivered, enabling these pupils to make outstanding progress in line with their peers. The school provides an impressive range of extra-curricular activities, including many sports clubs for boys and girls, which are very well attended. More unusual activities, such as the 'Quiet' club and the 'What?' club, meet the needs of pupils whose interests lie in directions other than sport. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is good with identified pupils from all age groups given regular opportunities to explore higher levels of learning. The timetable is well managed to ensure sufficient coverage of all subjects and the curriculum fully meets all statutory requirements.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a very caring environment so that all pupils can flourish. The excellent ethos of nurture is reflected in pupils' obvious enjoyment of school life. Teachers know pupils and their families very well. This means that staff are highly tuned to the needs of every child and are extremely caring and vigilant in their response to each individual. Outstanding links with external agencies ensure that vulnerable pupils promptly receive the attention they need. Pupils receive excellent support and guidance in their class work. Marking is generally of the very highest quality across the school, providing very helpful and motivating developmental feedback. Pupils speak very positively and appreciatively of the way teachers are so committed to helping them in their work. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly and records are used very effectively to plan future learning and any additional support required. Most pupils have a clear understanding of how their work is evaluated and whether they are making as much progress as they should. They are involved in setting their own targets and assessing their own success. There are rigorous procedures for child protection and ensuring safety in school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher, very ably supported by senior leaders, effectively communicates a clear vision for the school in which each child is highly valued. His outstanding leadership and determination to keep moving the school forward has resulted in a sharp rise in standards. This is despite the challenging circumstances arising from the long term absence of his deputy headteacher.

Judgements the school reaches about itself, although slightly modest, are carefully considered. They are the result of a systematic programme of monitoring and the ongoing review of the

quality of teaching and learning. Areas for development are correctly identified and the school makes excellent use of performance data to set very challenging targets.

Especially effective partnerships with other schools, outside agencies and community groups help ensure that pupils' needs are fully met. Leaders have a clear understanding of the views of parents and pupils and are responsive to both. The very large majority of parents express confidence in the leadership of the school. One parent summed up the views of many with the comment, 'I think Eastlands is a very well run school.' Another commented, 'This school is one of the best!'

Whilst the school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion at all levels, it is aiming for outstanding provision in this key area. Consequently it accepts that even more could be done to provide opportunities for pupils to meet and work with children from different cultural backgrounds.

Governors are very well informed and fully involved in establishing the strategic direction of the school, working in close partnership with the headteacher to raise the achievement of all pupils. They are highly effective in offering both strong support and rigorous challenge to the school.

Considering the advances made since its last inspection, the school is extremely well placed to improve further. Staff and resources are very well deployed and the school gives excellent 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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

10 June 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Eastlands Junior School, Meden Vale, NG20 9PA

Thank you very much for the way you helped me with the inspection of your school. You were very friendly and told me lots of interesting things about how you learn and what you most like about school. I was very impressed by how much you enjoy being at school and I noticed that you are extremely well behaved in lessons - keep it up!

I agree with you that you are at an outstanding school where you are being extremely well cared for. Your headteacher is an inspiring leader who helps you all to keep heading in the right direction. All members of staff are doing a great job in helping you make excellent progress in your work and in introducing some new ideas to make your learning even more enjoyable. Many of you told me about how much you enjoy lessons, trips and after school clubs. All of these activities help you to get the most out of your time at Eastlands. I think you should be really proud of how much you are achieving in all these different areas of school life. Well done!

Even outstanding schools have room for improvement! Some of you do not behave as brilliantly at lunchtimes as you do in lessons and I'm sure this is something you can improve, with some help from staff.

So that your school can carry on getting better, I have asked your headteacher to:

- Help you behave even better at lunchtimes.

I wish you all a very happy future as you continue to behave well and work hard.

Yours sincerely,

Martyn Skinner

Lead Inspector