

Killisick Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 122519 |
| Local Authority | Nottinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 327747 |
| Inspection dates | 18–19 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Keith Sadler |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 176 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Dr Mike Lyon |
| Headteacher | Sarah Page |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11–12 July 2006 |
| School address | Killisick Road Arnold Nottingham NG5 8BY |
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and reviewed pupils' past work. They looked at data about pupils' progress in all year groups, minutes of governors' meetings, the school's improvement plan and monitoring information. In addition, the responses from 18 parent questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the learning and progress of pupils, particularly in English, and that of higher attaining pupils
- how well teachers plan their lessons for the most able, whether sufficient challenge is provided and how well assessments are used
- how well the school monitors and evaluates its work.

Information about the school

Killisick is smaller than most junior schools and it shares a site with a partner infant school. Most pupils come from the immediate vicinity. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, mostly of pupils that find learning hard or who have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, is average. The school has gained a number of awards including Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Eco-School, Sports Activemark and the ICT mark for information and communication technology. There is a privately run after-school club which is subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Killisick Junior's good capacity for further improvement is demonstrated by the improvement in pupils' learning and its good progress since the previous inspection. Close checking of all aspects of the school's work, involving all members of staff, has led to a range of improvements that have boosted learning and enhanced provision. It is good school that sets challenging, though achievable, targets.

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies each year, though that of the current Year 6 was below average. Standards have risen since the 2008 national test results, which showed too few pupils gaining the higher than expected Level 5, particularly in English. Current Year 6 pupils have made good progress and achieved well. In consequence, the number on course to gain the higher level in English is much improved. Progress for all other year groups is also good and a significant minority of Year 5 pupils are already attaining standards more typical of those seen by the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress is accelerating because of the thoroughness of teachers' planning and their excellent management of the pupils. When combined with the enthusiasm and drive of the pupils themselves, this creates purposeful classrooms that are happy places to learn. The school's leadership is keenly aware that it must continue the rigour of its systems to ensure that standards continue to rise.

The school provides excellent pastoral support for pupils and the ensuing positive ethos leads to pupils' good behaviour, highly positive attitudes and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality of the support given to pupils from more vulnerable families and those with additional needs is very good. In addition, these pupils benefit well from the close partnerships with external agencies.

The improvements have been brought about by the concerted effort of staff under the strong leadership of the headteacher. This has stemmed from across-the-board improvements in provision since the previous inspection. Governors are committed to the school and support it well. However, governance is satisfactory because there are too many vacancies for parent governors and also attendance at meetings is limited. This reduces governors' capacity to fulfil their role in questioning the school about provision and standards. Teaching is consistently good with most teachers making good use of assessments to ensure that future work is pitched at a challenging level. However, this is not always the case and although the school has good plans in place to extend assessment arrangements, these have yet to bed down

across all the classes. The curriculum has also improved with teachers preparing interesting themes and topics that capture the pupils' enthusiasm and ensure that subjects are linked together well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise standards particularly for higher attaining pupils by:
 - making sure that the pace of learning is consistently maintained in lessons
 - ensuring that planning provides detailed information about activities for higher ability pupils
 - ensure the assessment arrangements for English are built on and embedded in all classrooms.

- Strengthen the role of governors by:
 - renewing efforts to appoint more parent governors
 - increasing attendance at all governing body meetings
 - reducing their reliance on the headteacher to provide information through developing their own systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Pupils in all year groups make good progress because learning is tracked very carefully. Those in danger of not meeting their targets are quickly identified and given additional support. Following careful analysis of why too few pupils gained the higher levels in 2008, the provision for these pupils has improved and the school-wide focus on strengthening their learning has paid dividends. As a result, additional challenge is now provided, particularly in writing. Historically there had been a big gap between pupils' attainment in reading and their writing, which was much lower. This is not now the case, and current Year 5 and 6 pupils attain equally well in reading and writing. Learning in lessons is good with pupils making strong progress in all year groups. Evidence from the school's tracking data as well as that from inspection evidence demonstrates a strengthening of pupils' progress since the previous inspection.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Their enjoyment and levels of participation in sport are a striking feature of their enthusiasm for school. This includes the regular 'wake and shake' sessions led by the school's 'Young Leaders'. Pupils feel safe in school and know that teachers will help and support them with any concerns or worries. The school council is influential and makes a strong contribution to school life. In addition, pupils enjoy the many opportunities for them to take extra responsibility, including playtime peacemakers and games monitors. The pupils' eco-council has heightened everyone's awareness of environmental issues and pupils are proud of their plans for the new allotment.

Pupils enjoy learning because teachers work hard to make it interesting and relevant, which results in good achievement. As one parent commented, 'My daughter is very happy in her class with her group of good learners around her.' The good focus on developing pupils' life skills is rightly considered important by staff. Their skills are not only seen in their improved written work and improving progress in core skills but also in the wider curriculum. Art displays, for example, are of high quality. Pupils develop good information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in their improved attendance. They also say that one thing that they like about the school is that they experience success so frequently. These successes are celebrated very well as demonstrated in an assembly during the inspection during which many parents enjoyed watching their children gain awards for their sporting achievements.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning? | 2 |
| To what extent do pupils feel safe? | 2 |
| How well do pupils behave? | 2 |
| To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles? | 1 |
| To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community? | 2 |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 2 |
| What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development? | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and engages and motivates pupils. Teachers' relationships with pupils are good and they have consistent and high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Planning is generally effective because it is based on a good knowledge of each pupil's needs, although sometimes planning for higher attaining pupils is not as thorough as for middle and lower attaining groups. Nonetheless, teachers usually design activities that meet pupils' different abilities and there are few occasions when all pupils are asked to complete the same task. Pupils' understanding of their targets and what they have to do to improve is a particularly strong feature of teaching. They know their next steps in learning as the result of effective marking and good quality oral feedback from teachers. One characteristic of the outstanding teaching seen is teachers' constant reference to the success criteria during lessons. This enables pupils to keep focussed on the learning necessary to meet the clearly outlined lesson objectives. Teachers work in close partnership with skilled teaching

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

assistants who provide good quality support for individuals and groups in lessons. In addition, teaching assistants also lead extra-curricular activities, such as the high quality school choir.

The curriculum is of good quality. A school-wide project to link subjects together is benefitting pupils because learning is personalised. There is now a need to ensure that that is bedded down across all year groups. A wide range of educational visits stimulates learning, such as Year 3 and 4 pupils visiting a Hindu temple and having a Hindi speaking parent into school to explain aspects of the religion. This resulted in very good learning. In Year 6, pupils' learning across most subjects is based on a book about a Japanese child who travels the world. This has made learning real for the pupils and, because teachers have captured their enthusiasm and built an interest and context for the work, progress is good. The curriculum for supporting the pupils' personal, social, and emotional development is outstanding and when linked to the many opportunities for pupils to work in groups, aids pupils' enjoyment and learning. The curriculum is enhanced well by a wide range of additional activities particularly focusing on sports and the arts. For example, over 50 pupils, around a third of the school, take up the opportunity available to all to learn an instrument.

The recently appointed parent support adviser provides a valuable resource to strengthen links with parents. The aim to help increase parental engagement, develop parenting skills and confidence and promote regular attendance is beginning to be met.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has developed excellent systems that enable them to gain a thorough knowledge of all aspects of the school's work. This is complemented by detailed monitoring and evaluation by subject leaders. The acceleration in pupils' progress comes about as a result of frequent, detailed and accurate tracking of attainment. This is used in meetings with teachers, particularly when drawing up plans to address any underachievement identified. This is an important element in the rise in attainment seen. However, senior staff are keenly aware that the commitment to providing equal opportunities for all groups of learners cannot be realised until the needs of the higher attaining pupils are fully met. Resources are managed well and staffing levels are appropriate and staff are deployed well.

Community cohesion is good. The school has developed a good range of links both within and beyond the community that raises pupils' religious, ethnic and social awareness. Pupils perform in the local carnival and are involved with Arka (Killisick community group). Additionally, the inclusion of global and anti-racist perspectives into all topic themes supports pupils' international understanding.

The school's good performance management and professional development processes are recognised in the 'Investors in People' award. Teamwork is strong and staff morale high because all adults know that their views are valued and sought in securing further improvement. Safeguarding procedures are of good quality and are complemented by good procedures to ensure the suitability of all employees and volunteers.

A small core of governors, including the chair, provides strong support for the school. Although they have a positive impact on the work of the school, because their membership is reduced it presents those governors in post with an increased workload in comparison with most governing bodies.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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| The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

There were far fewer parental responses that would be expected for a school of this size. Almost all those parents who responded to the questionnaire are satisfied with the school. Half the parents wrote positive comments which are summarised by the parent who wrote: 'I have seen the school transform from average to what it is today. Mrs Page and her staff are a truly committed team with the children's best interests at heart, both academically and socially'. Other parents agree, regarding the school as caring and supportive and say the staff are approachable.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Killisick Junior to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 18 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 142 parents and carers registered at the school.

| | Always | Most of the time | Occasionally | Never |
|---|--------|------------------|--------------|-------|
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 14 | 3 | 1 | 0 |

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
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| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate. |

Common terminology used by inspectors

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| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |

22 June 2009

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Killisick Junior School, Arnold, NG5 8BY

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for helping us so well and making us welcome. We really enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. We enjoyed hearing about your new allotment. When I was a boy of your age, I lived very close to your school in Wilbert Road and I used to play in the fields where your new allotment is! We also enjoyed listening to the choir practice for the Arnot Hill Park Carnival. I am sure it went very well! We understand why you enjoy school and are so proud of your school because yours is a good school and it is getting even better.

These are the things that are best about your school.

- You enjoy school and you all get on very well together. Your behaviour is good and you help and support each other really well.
- You make good progress in your learning and want to do your best. Well done for this.
- You have an excellent understanding of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The staff take excellent care of you and make sure that you are safe and very well looked after.
- Your teachers do a good job. Teaching is good and you thoroughly enjoy learning.
- Your headteacher leads and manages the school well. She is supported well by all the other adults in the school.

We have asked the school to continue to focus on two things:

- making sure that you make even better progress, particularly for those of you who find learning easier.
- for the school's governors to try to get more of your parents to become governors so that they can spread their workload more evenly.

You can help by making sure you work as hard as possible to meet your targets and you might even be able to persuade your parents to be a governor of the school!

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully

Keith Sadler
Lead inspector

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