

Leen Mills Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122589
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	327761
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	296
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	Ms Janet Arslan
Headteacher	Mr John White
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Leen Mills Lane Hucknall Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG15 8BZ
Telephone number	0115 9536688
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Leen Mills Primary School is larger than most primary schools. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday. Attainment on entry is typical for children of this age. The number identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement, is lower than found in most other schools. Most of these pupils have behavioural issues or autism. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage although there are a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. None are at the early stages of learning English. The school has the Gold Healthy Schools Award and has achieved Bronze Eco School status.

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 which enables pupils to achieve well and attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Key Stage 2 test results fell in 2008, due to staffing difficulties beyond the school's control, but effective leadership and management ensured that the impact of these difficulties was only temporary and standards are once again at their former above average levels. This is a caring school that has established a warm ethos in which pupils feel safe and comfortable. As a result pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils develop into polite and sociable young people who are enthusiastic ambassadors for the school. They are thoughtful and considerate individuals who show a genuine concern for the well-being of others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Parents share the inspectors' views of the school. One wrote 'I am really happy with the emotional, intellectual and social development here. My children are all enjoying the process of learning.' This comment sums up the supportive response of the parent questionnaires.

The quality of education provided is good. Although there is some variation in the quality of teaching, it is good overall. During the inspection satisfactory, good and outstanding teaching was observed. This means that the rates of progress pupils make as they move through the school also varies. This is often best in upper Key Stage 2, where teaching is consistently strong. The curriculum is good. The curriculum has been reviewed since the last inspection in order to strengthen links between subjects and introduce the updated frameworks for literacy and numeracy. The school constantly reviews whole school curriculum planning so that all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn. Special attention is paid to ensuring this for pupils in the mixed age classes. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have good opportunities to learn indoors and so they make good progress. The outdoor area use is not developed effectively and so children's learning is not always extended fully.

Pupils receive good academic guidance. The assessment coordinator has gathered a wealth of valuable information based on teachers' assessments of each individual pupil's academic progress. This is used generally effectively to make sure that pupils build skills, knowledge and understanding progressively and achieve well. However, this data is not used as well as it could be to monitor the impact of teaching in different classes or to compare the progress of different groups of pupils, such as those of the same age in different classes.

Leadership and management have developed well since the previous inspection. Because the senior leadership team have had to take on extra responsibilities over the last two years, they have emerged with a greater understanding of leadership issues and have become a stronger leadership team. Similarly the governors, many of who are new, have assessed their roles and impact on school development. Together, the leadership team and governors have shown they are capable of moving the school forwards. Now that leadership is more settled, and has demonstrated a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, the school has a good capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills. This is because the Foundation Unit is well led and managed. The leadership team has made a priority of strengthening the links

between the school, home and feeder playgroups. This has enabled children to settle quickly into routines and to feel secure. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Furthermore, the good number of adults in the unit ensures that children benefit from timely individual attention. Learning is fun. The imaginatively developed indoor accommodation provides an exciting and stimulating environment that enables children to develop their ideas and learn through a range of worthwhile experiences. Although children have ready access to the outdoor area, it has not been developed enough to provide the same breadth of learning experience across all areas of children's learning. The school places great emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills and promotes a love of books to encourage reading and writing. Children learn about number and shape through a range of practical activities, particularly when counting down to take-off in their own rocket during their current theme of journeys. Opportunities for children to develop their early skills in information and communication technology are limited. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a good balance between directed activities and activities chosen by children. Systems for recording attainment and tracking progress are effective. Information is used accurately to ensure children engage in activities that are matched well to their abilities and needs. Consequently they make good progress towards meeting the nationally expected targets for their age and are prepared well for the next stages.

What the school should do to improve further

Further develop systems for monitoring and evaluating school performance by using assessment data and other information available in order to:

- make sure pupils experience a consistent quality of teaching and learning, which is at least good, so that they make steady, good progress at all stages
- compare the progress of different groups of pupils
- hold teachers to account for the achievement of pupils in their classes
- Develop the outdoor area so that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have the opportunity to learn out of doors in an 'outside classroom' that supports outdoor learning that is of a quality comparable to that provided inside.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well overall and standards are above average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. For some years now teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 have shown attainment in reading and writing to be above average whilst in mathematics it has been broadly average. Teachers have acknowledged this and have been effective in raising attainment in mathematics. Current standards in reading and mathematics are above average and in writing, well above. A good proportion has achieved the higher level. Test results at the end of Year 6 show attainment to be above average. Specialist teachers for physical education and music are used to cover classes during class teachers planning time. Standards in these two subjects also exceed national expectations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils, including those who attend the breakfast club, enjoy school a great deal and speak very highly of their experiences and say they like to attend. The overwhelming majority are very

keen to learn and participate fully during lessons. Working relationships are strong and these, along with the school's positive and constructive atmosphere, help pupils to make good progress and grow in self-confidence. Attendance is consistently above average. Behaviour during the school day is good. Although pupils say bullying occasionally occurs, they add that teachers are effective in resolving any such incidents. Pupils feel well looked after and say they know where to seek support if they need to. All pupils, including the few from minority ethnic groups, get along very well. Pupils have an extremely clear understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Many older pupils participate in the wide range of clubs and sports teams which successfully compete in community activities such as football tournaments. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to school life through initiating and organising talent competitions and activities such as lunchtime litter picks. The school council is a very effective forum for change and pupils feel the school is interested in their views. They have, for example, recently raised funds for basketball nets and helped to design the outdoor trim trail. Pupils' good basic skills and willingness to work independently and with others equip them well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Variation in the quality of teaching comes from different levels of pace, challenge and expectation, but there is much exceptional practice that is worthy of sharing across the school. Lesson planning is thorough. It takes account of assessment data so that tasks planned match attainment well in order to move pupils' learning on at a brisk pace. However, organisation in a few lessons means that the expectations of what pupils can do, particularly those capable of doing harder work, are not high enough, resulting in a slower pace of learning. Teachers use information and communication technology well to make meaningful and interesting presentations at appropriate points in lessons, which successfully engage pupils' interest and promote enjoyment. They also make good links between subjects, for example writing and historical enquiry. Because they are given opportunities to put their skills into practice and use them purposefully, pupils see a real point to learning. Where teaching assistant support is available, it is effective, particularly in helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with specific personal and social needs. However, the amount of this support available is limited. The quality of marking occasionally varies, even within the same key stage. At its best, it highlights what pupils have done well and explains, in language that pupils can easily understand, what they can do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teachers adapt the school's curriculum well to meet pupils' needs. Provision for pupils who find learning difficult is good and a wide range of additional support programmes ensure that pupils who are at risk of underachieving make the same good progress as others. The curriculum includes a wide range of enrichment activities that involve pupils very actively in their learning. For example, a series of whole school themes, such as 'Arts Week' and 'International Week', provide opportunities for pupils to learn about diverse activities such as how to make a stained glass window, 'Fair Trade' initiatives and Aboriginal art. Pupils also undertake a wide range of visits to local places of interest to support their learning. The curriculum is further enhanced by the provision of French in Years 3 and 4 and specialist teaching for music and physical

education. Specialist expertise helps to ensure that the curriculum provides challenge for the most able pupils in these subjects. Those with particular skills in mathematics can also attend weekly lessons at the nearby secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This school looks after its pupils well during the school day and during the breakfast club. Procedures for safeguarding, including child protection, are in place and the school effectively promotes pupils' health and safety. Good links with outside support agencies, supplemented well by the school's own systems, mean that help is swiftly on hand for any pupils who experience difficulties with learning. Links with specialist community agencies are good and this high standard of care and guidance underpins pupils' outstanding personal development and creates a calm and happy environment for learning. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are thorough and all unexplained absences are rigorously followed up. The school's procedures to track pupils' progress are good and their academic development is closely monitored. Assessment information is used to identify pupils who are doing particularly well, as well as those at risk of not doing their best; in both cases, teachers provide good support. Pupils find the target setting system useful and understand how to use their learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics to help them progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are effective in ensuring the school continues to provide a good quality of education. The senior leadership team and governing body have both developed well since the previous inspection. Their work is effective and they have very clear ideas about what they need to do to improve even further. Even though self-evaluation is effective and outcomes have meant that weaknesses are soon dealt with, both governors and senior leaders want to make their procedures for monitoring school performance even more rigorous. Similarly governors have reviewed their own impact on school development and, although good, share the leadership aim to be even more effective. Targets set for pupils' progress could be more challenging; they are currently satisfactory and similar to the nationally expected rate of progress. The school's leadership works effectively to unite the community and has clear plans to extend provision in the future.

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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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

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	3
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**

12 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leen Mills Primary School, Hucknall, NG15 8BZ

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and visiting lessons. We particularly valued the chances we had to speak to you to find out what you think about your school.

You go to a good school. Teaching, the curriculum and the quality of care shown for you are all good. You make good progress in lessons and by the end of Year 6, reach standards in your work that are above those expected for your age. You are well prepared to go on to the next stages of your education.

You help a great deal by behaving well, taking responsibility seriously and trying hard to do your best. We were impressed by how you are all willing to have a go, even when tasks are difficult. We were very pleased by the sensible way in which you learn, make friends and care about each other. We appreciated the courtesy shown to us by all pupils. You help to make others feel safe in school and enjoy being there. Those of you we spoke to enjoy school very much and find it interesting.

Adults in your school are always looking for ways to improve the school. We have asked staff and governors to look at:

- developing the Foundation Unit's outdoor area so that young children are able to learn just as well out of doors as well as they do inside.
- improving systems for teachers and governors to check how effective the school is in helping you learn.

We wish you all the best in the future.

David Speakman

Lead inspector