

Netherfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134930
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	329678
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2008
Reporting inspector	David Martin HMI

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

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)	374
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	Mrs Susan Phythian
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Fitzpatrick
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chandos Street Netherfield Nottingham NG4 2LR
Telephone number	0115 961 0580
Fax number	0115 961 0585

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2008
Inspection number	329678

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Netherfield Primary School serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. A larger proportion of pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are White British although a significant and rising minority of pupils have a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils are well below national expectations in all areas of experience.

The school has the Healthy School Gold Standard and accreditation for after school clubs and out-of-school learning experiences, and as a Dyslexia Friendly School. It also has the Football Association Charter Standard.

The school moved into new, purpose built accommodation in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Nevertheless, in accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and progress in writing, particularly that of boys, and in safeguarding training.

The school has improved steadily over the last two years after a slow initial response to going into special measures. As a result, standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, although they remain well below average. From a low starting point, pupils make good progress as they move through the EYFS. They start Year 1 below expected levels overall, but well below in literacy skills. By the end of Year 2 attainment remains well below national averages, meaning that progress overall is no better than satisfactory and is poor in writing. By the end of Year 6 standards in science are just below the national average and have improved in mathematics, although below average. In English standards are still too low, and are inadequate in writing. As a result, although progress in other subjects is satisfactory and sometimes good, it is inadequate in writing. The school sets appropriate targets and increasingly meets them.

Pupils make improved progress overall because teaching and learning, although uneven in quality, are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall and their marking increasingly helps pupils to improve. They have better information about pupils' progress but, their inconsistent use of such information, to guide their teaching, is one key reason, why its quality varies. In some classrooms the pace and challenge is particularly good and pupils thrive. In others, the tasks set do not always challenge the more able or the boys; however, support for those who find learning more difficult is good, helping them to make satisfactory progress. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. The school is developing a broader and more creative curriculum developing from the younger classes. This is increasing pupils' enjoyment and love of learning.

Pupils are well cared for by all adults, attendance has improved and behaviour in classrooms and around school is good. Pupils feel safe, but the headteacher has not accessed recent training to update his knowledge in this area, so arrangements do not fully meet all government requirements. Pupils understand how to lead healthy lives, eat healthily and stay fit. They also contribute well to the school and local community and gain a good understanding of wider issues facing the world.

The vision and strategic planning for the future development of the school is now secure, although only recently established. Monitoring takes place regularly so that managers now have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subject leaders have been influential in improving classroom practice with the help of the local authority (LA). The direction and pace of change at a senior level has not always been fast enough. Governors are now suitably trained and receive good information

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children arrive in Nursery with skills and knowledge considerably below those typical of this age group and with particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy. All adults give children a warm welcome so that they feel safe and secure and get off to a good start. Because of the good relationships forged, children settle happily and explore and enjoy a wide range of learning activities where they make good progress. The quality of the welfare, health and safety of children is good and parents are welcomed into school. Leadership and management are good, although the coordinator recognises the need to have a greater oversight through more regular monitoring. There is a smooth transition into Reception classes, where children continue to learn and develop well. Personal development and well-being are good and most children respond well to the expectations of how they should behave. Despite this, because of their low levels of attainment on entry, most children do not reach the expected standards.

Children learn and develop well because teaching is good. The purpose built environment, both indoors and outdoors, is very well resourced and staff provide interesting and creative tasks where there is a good balance of activities led by adults and those selected by children. While good links are made across different areas of learning, staff also deliver daily sessions where numeracy, literacy and phonics are taught separately. Adults observe the children and carefully note the progress they make. This information is then used well to inform the planning of their next steps in learning. On occasions, opportunities are missed to promote children's speaking skills, which limits the progress they make in increasing their vocabulary. By the end of Reception, despite their good progress, most children do not reach the levels typical for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by focussing planning, teaching and learning and intervention strategies more urgently on this aspect of the school's work.
- Ensure that those with responsibility for safeguarding children update their own qualifications and lead training for school staff on national requirements.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that more is consistently good or better, in order to raise standards.
- Improve the understanding and use of tracking data so that teachers can monitor the progress that pupils make and intervene effectively where they fall behind.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

By the end of Year 2, attainment is well below average overall. It is below average in mathematics, well below average in reading and exceptionally low in writing, where progress is inadequate. By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment were well below average in 2007 and 2008. Mathematics results have risen for the last three years but remain below average. Science results are just below the national average. Only half of all pupils reached nationally expected levels in English and only just over a quarter of pupils in writing in 2008. This represents inadequate progress, particularly for boys. In addition, only two year groups made significant gains in writing skills in the last school year, whilst progress made in mathematics and science, although variable, was satisfactory overall. The school sets appropriate targets and increasingly

meets them. However, the school fell well short of its 2008 target in English due to the inadequate writing results at Key Stage 2. Pupils who find learning more difficult make satisfactory progress due to the good classroom support that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Attendance is good and pupils enjoy being at school. Relationships are good and staff manage pupils' behaviour well so that there are few interruptions to learning. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives. They take part in a wide range of physical activities and know how to stay fit through participation in a range of sporting activities. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe from harm. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also satisfactory. Representatives on the school council have a suitable understanding of how they can help the school improve. They show concern for more vulnerable members of their own community and, through charitable works, in the wider community. Their weak basic skills in literacy, especially writing, means that they are not adequately prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school and there is some good, enterprising teaching. All staff have good rapport with pupils and provide a positive atmosphere for learning. Teachers' planning and preparation are generally satisfactory; initial explanations of work are clear so that pupils know exactly what they should learn. However, some activities lack excitement and challenge, upon which, the more able pupils particularly thrive. Furthermore, opportunities to enhance the acquisition of literacy skills are not fully exploited across all subjects often enough. Teaching assistants use skilful means to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, helping them to make satisfactory progress. Teachers make regular assessments to find out what pupils can do. They do not always use this information to plan and provide work and support that is tightly matched to pupils' individual learning needs. This slows learning down, especially for the majority of boys and for the more capable pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements. The new building provides an excellent learning environment; it is well resourced and staff use it effectively. The school is devising a broader, more creative curriculum accompanied by planning that is more consistent. It also acknowledges the need to challenge the learning of all pupils, particularly the most able. At present, provision lacks complete cohesion, although it is more effective in Key Stage 1. Adequate information and communication technology facilities are available which are starting to help develop effective links between subjects. The school provides good extra-curricular opportunities, mainly in sport and through the performing arts. The school understands that visits and provision for learning outside the classroom is important. Additionally, a large number of visiting speakers from the community, covering a wide variety of topics, enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Staff know pupils well and are aware of their pastoral needs. The school works closely with the local community and is diligent in ensuring all absences are followed up and those who have been excluded are successfully reintegrated. This has led to improved attendance. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare and are dealt with swiftly. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection do not meet all the current government requirements due to a lack of recent training. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Early identification of pupils who find learning difficult ensures good support. Marking usually helps pupils to understand how well they are doing and how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has an appropriate vision for its future and strategic planning has improved. Monitoring of classroom practice is now regular and thorough, although insufficiently focussed on the progress that pupils are making. Classroom practice has improved considerably. This is due to subject leaders being empowered to lead, monitor and track progress in their subjects and to the impact of the LA's intensifying support programme. However, the use of assessment data by senior managers has only recently become reliable in tracking pupil progress. Intervention strategies are in place and some have made a noticeable difference. However, the identification of weaknesses in writing have been addressed too slowly and strategies to date have had limited impact. Targets at school level are appropriate, but other targets for improvement are insufficiently sharp or specific. School self-evaluation, progress since the last inspection and the capacity to make further improvement is satisfactory. Resources are adequately targetted to meet identified school priorities. The governors have had training in monitoring and evaluation and the use of school data. They are not only supportive, but also increasingly able to hold the school to account. Even so, closer checks are needed to ensure that all statutory obligations are in place. The school has a strong community dimension, with a community room used for a range of activities. There is good outreach work in the local community through a community teacher and linked governor.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
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?	3
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?	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?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	4

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?	4

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?	2
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	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Netherfield School, Nottingham, NG4 2LR

You will remember that inspectors visited your school recently. I am writing to tell you what we found. Firstly, though, I would like to thank you all for being so friendly and polite. Watching you at work and play was very helpful. Many of you told us how much you enjoy school and your lovely new building.

Inspectors have visited your school often, because many things needed to improve. Here are the things that have improved:

- your teachers prepare lessons that you find interesting
- many of you are making better progress with your work in English, Mathematics and science
- you enjoy a wider range of other subjects and activities
- most pupils attend regularly and enjoy school
- you eat healthy food and stay fit
- you work well together and with your teachers
- you do a lot of work in the community and for charities
- you enjoy welcoming visitors and going out on trips
- the children in the Nursery and Foundation Stage make a good start to their learning
- adults who manage the school want to improve the opportunities that you have in the classroom and beyond.

Because things have improved so much, we will not be visiting so often in the future. Inspectors will come back in the summer, to see whether your work continues to improve. We have asked Mr Fitzpatrick and your teachers to make sure that you now make as much progress with your writing as you do in science, mathematics and reading. If you continue to work hard and enjoy your lessons, we are sure that you can all do very well. We look forward to reading your stories and looking at your books when we return.

Yours sincerely

David Martin

Her Majesty's Inspector