

Langley Mill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112558
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337966
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Carnell
Headteacher	Linda Burgess
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons and saw seven teachers teach. They also met with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, assessment, monitoring and evaluation records, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and safeguarding policies. The responses from the pupil and staff questionnaires were analysed, as were the responses from the 61 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- pupils' progress, especially in mathematics, to determine whether teaching is sufficiently robust to sustain the recent improvements
- behaviour, especially whether the challenging behaviours identified in the school's self-evaluation form disrupt learning, and how effectively the school is tackling these
- leadership and management at all levels to determine whether what is now in place is robust enough to improve teaching and learning even more
- the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.

Information about the school

This average sized school has very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities is more than twice the national average. The range of needs includes moderate learning difficulties through to, for a sizeable proportion of pupils, different degrees of behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The school also has a unit for hearing impaired pupils. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught in three mixed age classes, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught in single age classes. The school has recently received National Healthy Schools Status. There have been several changes of staff since the previous inspection.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Langley Mill provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Given pupils' average attainment on entry to Year 3, their overall achievement is satisfactory by Year 6. However, assessment data and work seen in pupils' books and in lessons show that a legacy of past underachievement in the school is fast disappearing and all groups of pupils are now making good progress. Progress since last September is particularly impressive, especially in Year 6. It is the result of a determined effort to help pupils catch up after disruptions to their learning caused by several changes of staff in earlier years. Although too late to raise attainment above national averages for pupils currently in Year 6, the improvements in teaching, learning and progress since the previous inspection mean that younger pupils are now moving up the school with better skills and knowledge than in the past. This bodes well for the future. The headteacher's firm but inspirational leadership is the driving force behind all of this. She has built a strong team around her, embedding ambition and driving improvement at all levels.

Inspired by the headteacher's example, the senior leadership team check and track teaching, learning and personal development well, guiding and supporting staff and quickly tackling any areas of weakness. As a result, the vast majority of teaching is now good or better and none is inadequate. Subject leaders understand their roles within the new curriculum, ensuring that basic skills and skills in different subjects are taught progressively within topic work. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the priorities arising from it provide a secure platform for further improvement. Taken together, all of the above demonstrates that the school has good capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

Teachers usually plan well to meet the needs of different ability groups, including within the sets for mathematics, but occasionally, the work given to more able pupils is not demanding enough. This means that, albeit in a small number of lessons, more able pupils do not always make the faster progress of which they are capable. Nevertheless, the practical approach to learning adopted throughout the school is accelerating progress for all pupils. It has inspired pupils, excited their enthusiasm for learning and improved their attendance so that this is now satisfactory. They say 'maths is so much fun now' because of it and they tackle mathematical problems with enjoyment and perseverance, thinking logically through the steps needed to solve them. However, their lack of ability to recall number facts quickly enough sometimes slows them down.

The school cares deeply for every pupil, from the least to the most vulnerable, and it guides and supports them exceptionally well. As a result, the vast majority of pupils behave well and care for each other. Pupils with behaviour and emotional difficulties are exceptionally well managed so that learning is rarely disrupted. Hearing impaired pupils

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are taught alongside others in mainstream classes and this greatly benefits their learning and personal development. The school's excellent partnerships with other schools and external agencies contribute very effectively to all of this.

Pupils are kept safe in school and they know how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of why it is important to follow a healthy lifestyle and they make a good contribution to the school and local community. They are also developing a good awareness of different communities across the world but their understanding of the richness and diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom is less well developed. With their sound basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and good personal skills, pupils leave the school adequately prepared for their future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the speed and accuracy of pupils' recall and use of number skills to help them make even faster progress in mathematics.
- Ensure more able pupils have suitably challenging work to do in all lessons.
- Improve pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of cultures represented in the United Kingdom.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils use and develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills well in topic work. This leads, for example, to high quality writing, sometimes word processed, in which they present their work well, using a good range of language imaginatively to engage the reader. While pupils do not always distinguish well enough between formal and informal language as they write for different audiences and purposes, they do understand how to convey feelings and atmosphere in their writing. Their accounts of the aftermath of the blitz, and their writing in role as the characters from a book are good examples of this. Pupils' writing skills are not as good when they have to write from 'cold', for example, in formal tests, because they lack confidence when they do not have a secure scaffold on which to build.

Practical investigative work and real life application of mathematical skills are improving pupils' progress in mathematics and firing their enthusiasm for that subject. For example, as they investigate shape, space and measure they quickly learn that not measuring accurately and not drawing plans to scale could make a huge difference to a company's profit and loss account. Pupils used ICT well in mathematics, for example, to research and cost playground equipment and work out what they could afford within their budget. All of this brings mathematics alive for them, gives it a purpose they understand, and encourages them to persevere even when they think a task is too challenging. This sometimes happens when they cannot recall or use number facts

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quickly enough to move on to the next stage. For example, some pupils repeatedly add numbers instead of multiplying them because they do not know their multiplication tables well enough, and this slows their work down.

Pupils are very proud of their school and they recognise that they are doing much better now than in the past. This is because they know the levels they are working at and what they need to do to improve. They thoroughly enjoy the headteacher's homework challenges, often producing high quality work which they readily share with others. The good support that hearing impaired pupils receive, for example, through the use of hearing loops and signing, and their inclusion in mainstream classes, means learning is made fully accessible to them. Therefore, they too make good progress, as do all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils gain good levels of confidence in themselves and their ability to learn. They know their views are valued and they readily put forward ideas to improve the school and the community, for example, through the school council, and through their recent visit to the parish council. They know right from wrong and readily accept the different responsibilities that help to create an orderly community. They trust the staff to help them with any concerns, and report that any untoward behaviour, including bullying, is dealt with promptly and effectively, as do their parents.

Pupils make healthy eating choices at lunchtime, and large numbers participate wholeheartedly in the many sporting and exercise opportunities available to them. They thoroughly enjoy, for example, the weekly Tai Chi sessions aimed at enhancing their physical and spiritual well-being. Links with schools, for example, in Thailand, India and South Africa extend pupils' understanding of the wider, global community, but their understanding and first-hand experience of different cultures within the United Kingdom are more limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2

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

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The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is planned well to make learning meaningful for the pupils, personally and academically. Carefully considered topic work gives a purpose to learning, makes it enjoyable and ensures basic skills are promoted as much as possible. Pupils like the new approach saying it provides 'good opportunities to find out stuff ourselves'. As a result, they work hard and want to do well, and relatively large numbers participate in the good range of opportunities provided in and beyond the normal school day. These help to extend pupils' learning and personal development well.

Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Staff care deeply for the pupils and they know them well as individuals. Pupils care for, respect and get on well with each other and with staff, whom they describe as 'kind', and have every confidence that any adult will help them should they have any concerns. Teachers assess and track pupils' learning well and usually use the information effectively in their planning although, occasionally, more able pupils are not given hard enough work. Support staff are deployed well to help different ability groups at different times, depending on need.

Assessment procedures, including marking are good, and marking almost always shows pupils how to improve their work. Staff are adept at managing pupils' behaviour and keeping their learning on track. Behaviour management techniques are applied consistently throughout the school. Pupils understand and appreciate them and the range of rewards they receive, for example, for behaviour, attendance, effort, helpfulness and good work, all of which raise their self-esteem. Efforts to improve attendance and behaviour have been particularly successful in the past year. As a result, attendance is now average, behaviour is good and the number of exclusions is rapidly declining.

The school ensures that all pupils are exceptionally well cared for, guided and supported. Flexibility within the curriculum enables staff to develop different life skills as the need arises. For example, the school funds its own nurture group so that pupils who are particularly vulnerable can develop the social skills needed to function in a larger group.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has successfully empowered staff to carry out their responsibilities and she has raised their expectations of themselves and of what their pupils can do. The checks she and other senior leaders make on teaching and learning are robust and areas for development are followed up with support in school or through well-targeted professional development. Joint planning between teachers and meetings with staff to look at pupils' progress have ensured that all staff understand their contribution to what happens in Year 6. Challenging targets are set for pupils and staff, and pupils' targets are shared with parents and carers, with guidance on how they can help. The school's partnerships with parents are good. In its drive to accelerate progress further, the school has developed excellent partnerships with other schools and external agencies that are successfully improving teaching and learning alongside pupils' personal development.

The school pays good attention to equality of opportunity. The successful integration of hearing impaired pupils into mainstream classes bears testimony to this, as does the excellent provision for vulnerable pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which ensures they have equal access to all that the school offers. Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are effective. The school is vigilant in ensuring all staff are properly checked for their suitability for working with children, and in promoting pupils' physical and emotional health as well as their safety and well-being.

Governance is satisfactory. In governors' own words, they 'have to catch up with the school now'. They tend to rely on the headteacher for information although they now visit classrooms and meet with staff to see the school's work at first hand. Their role in challenging the school to do better is underdeveloped. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. The policy and action plan have helped the school to promote community cohesion well within the school and the local community, and is successfully developing pupils' understanding of different cultures around the world. However, they have not been as effective in raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

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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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers are pleased with what the school does for their children. Typically, parents say that this is a 'well run, happy school', where children are always 'helped and supported', and enabled to become more confident. A few voiced some concerns about behaviour, although several said staff dealt well with any issues brought to their attention, and they were 'impressed' with how the school dealt with any incidents of bullying. Inspectors found that the school manages pupils' behaviour very effectively so that learning is not disrupted.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Langley Mill Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 229 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	54	26	43	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	46	31	51	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	49	25	41	5	8	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	46	30	49	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	49	28	46	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	33	36	59	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	28	38	62	6	10	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	36	31	51	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	38	33	54	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	33	32	52	4	7	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	31	38	62	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	22	36	36	59	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	43	33	54	1	2	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langley Mill Junior School, Bailey Brook Crecent, NG16 4FZ

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You clearly enjoy school and are very proud of it and what you achieve there. The school guides and supports you exceptionally well. We were pleased to hear that you feel safe in school and would trust any adult to help you, and noted that you understand well the importance of following a healthy lifestyle. It was good, too, to hear that you now find mathematics 'fun'. We could see that those of you in Year 6 were certainly enjoying re-designing the school playground and deciding on the new equipment for it. Your work shows you are now making good progress in mathematics and in literacy.

At this point in time your school is satisfactory, but it is improving rapidly because the staff are very keen for each one of you to do well, and are working very hard to help you all make faster progress. The headteacher is providing them with a very strong lead in this, and they are following her example well. Your good behaviour and the enthusiastic way you set about your tasks are also helping, as is the good and sometimes excellent teaching you receive. You told us that you like the new curriculum and the new way of working it has brought. It is clear from your work that you are making good progress because of it, and that you understand the importance of using your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills at every opportunity.

We have asked the school to do three things to accelerate your progress even further. They are to:

- improve your mental mathematics skills so that you can solve problems quicker
- ensure that those of you capable of it are always given harder work to do
- improve your knowledge of the different cultures in the United Kingdom today.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy learning in the future as much as you do now and we wish you well. Thank you once again for giving us your views.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector

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