

Ladywood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112681
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	385016
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Dorothy Bathgate HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	291
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Cox
Headteacher	Melanie Lawson
Date of previous school inspection	30 November–1 December 2010
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Dorothy Bathgate

Her Majesty's Inspector

Christine Bray

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 teachers and visited 22 lessons. They held meetings with members of the governing body, the headteacher and senior management team, staff and two groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, the school and local authority monitoring information, data on pupils' attainment and progress, assessment information, lesson plans and school safety procedures.

Information about the school

Since the previous inspection, the school has been subject to special measures. Ladywood Primary is larger than the average primary school. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic heritages and pupils who speak English as an additional language are well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including the proportion with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The school meets the current government floor standard. The school has achieved National Healthy School Status. It has also gained the Activemark.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- 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. Ladywood Primary is a good school, and well placed for further improvement. It is not yet outstanding because the many improvements since the last inspection have not resulted in sustained high attainment in English and mathematics.
- Achievement is good. By the time pupils leave Year 6, their attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because of the consistently good progress that nearly all of them make and the good curriculum. Pupils’ information and communication technology skills are particularly strong, although they do not have enough opportunities in topic work to fine-tune their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teaching is good in most lessons and often outstanding. All teachers make effective use of assessment. As a result, they have a good understanding of pupils’ needs and usually challenge them to do as well as they can. Marking is of the highest quality and makes an outstanding contribution to pupils’ progress. Pupils are not yet taught clearly enough how to develop their key skills through what they know about the links between reading and writing.
- Strong and trusting relationships at all levels underpin pupils’ outstanding behaviour. Procedures to keep pupils safe are robust. Consequently, pupils enjoy school immensely and attendance levels are rapidly improving. A determined approach to the strengthening of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has resulted in all of them now making good progress because their needs are identified and met well.
- The headteacher’s successfully communicated high expectations have ensured that pupils’ attitudes to learning are outstanding and morale amongst staff is high. Focused leadership at all levels has secured rapid improvements in the

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school's performance. The rigorous procedures to check the work of teachers have been instrumental in embedding consistently good teaching and achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift the quality of teaching to outstanding and improve attainment further by:
 - planning explicitly to stress the link between reading and writing in literacy, especially through high-quality guided reading
 - ensuring that lessons contain good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in all topics.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The rise in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics since the previous inspection has been rapid and considerable. In 2010, attainment was well below average. From starting points that are well below the levels expected nationally for their age, almost all pupils now reach expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. The proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in national tests has also risen considerably and is above average in English. Attainment in reading at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is in line with national averages. The good progress that almost all pupils make is ensuring that attainment gaps for groups identified as potentially vulnerable are narrowing. This is particularly the case for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, boys and the few from minority ethnic heritages. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are extremely well provided for through small group work where they are withdrawn from the class and one-to-one support. As a result, they make good progress in their learning.

Nearly all of the parents and carers rightly believe that their children make good progress. Most children begin school with knowledge and skills well below those typical for their age. They make a strong start in the nursery and make good progress because of the exciting, high-quality provision and outstanding teaching. Children are frequently seen to be having so much fun playing together that they do not realise how hard they are working. From this very early age, the school successfully motivates children into becoming enthusiastic 'Ladywood Learners', who are excited to come to school and experience each new day. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities that excite and motivate children.

Pupils demonstrate that they can apply their basic skills confidently across a range of subjects. However, there are some missed opportunities to develop basic skills in all

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topic work. A significant strength is pupils' ability to use information and communication technology, including outstanding use of the school's virtual learning platform. Pupils take an active part in leading the development of its content, and it is being used successfully as a means of promoting shared family learning. High-quality work in the visual arts creates a stimulating and vibrant learning environment throughout the school.

Quality of teaching

Teaching has many consistently strong features. Inadequate teaching has now been eradicated and the small amount of satisfactory teaching is rapidly improving. The highly effective use of assessment information, precise target setting and exceptionally high-quality marking ensure that work is well pitched and challenging. Pupils have excellent opportunities to review teachers' marking and are enthusiastic to read their comments and see what they need to do to achieve the next level. Pupils know their individual targets, including their 'nag' targets, and talk knowledgably about the National Curriculum levels they are working towards because these are discussed routinely in lessons. Lively, interactive and well-paced lessons engage pupils effectively in purposeful learning. For example, in a Year 6 literacy session pupils were challenged to write an article for a gardening magazine, in role as botanists. The high expectations, as well as the very precise, carefully structured learning steps, enabled all pupils to make outstanding progress. Expectations are consistently high and are made clear to all pupils. Pupils demonstrate a high level of independence in their learning from a very young age and have high expectations of themselves. The regular opportunities they have to be involved in peer-assessment and self-assessment provide strong motivation to meet them.

Pupils' good progress is underpinned by an effective curriculum. Pupils benefit from being taught in small ability groups in many lessons. The high priority given to the systematic teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) ensures that pupils are provided with the necessary skills to become confident readers. However, pupils do not always understand the links between reading and writing and, as a result, do not make effective use of them to improve their work. This is because teachers do not consistently plan for these opportunities in literacy or in guided reading sessions.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers are confident that their children feel safe at school, and the pupils confirm this. Pupils are emphatic that there is hardly any bullying and are confident that adults take any reported incidents very seriously. Records and discussions with leaders and the governing body confirm that this is the case. The school has established a safe environment for learning. Pupils are highly motivated by the consistently applied reward system and clear about sanctions which might be imposed, although they say that these are rarely necessary. The curriculum and extra-curricular activities support pupils effectively in keeping themselves safe from dangers such as drugs, fire and roads. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with all adults in school. They are adamant that should they have any worries or concerns,

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there is always someone available to listen and give them advice, help and support.

Behaviour in and around school is exemplary and this contributes strongly to highly effective learning over time. Scrutiny of behaviour records, as well as discussions with pupils, staff, parents and carers, provides compelling evidence that outstanding behaviour is typical. The behaviour seen in the playground and around school during the inspection was consistently outstanding. There is a calm, orderly and purposeful atmosphere in all classes, as well as around the school. Pupils are extremely polite, friendly and respectful to adults and each other.

Pupils say they are very happy to come to school and demonstrate this by their average and rapidly improving attendance. Punctuality is good and pupils are quick to settle down and engage in learning each day. Pupils and parents appreciate the warm welcome they receive each morning from senior staff.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has successfully raised the expectations of staff and pupils since the previous inspection. Senior leaders, working with the governing body, pupils, and parents and carers, have ensured that the issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed swiftly and successfully. A realistic school improvement plan identifies the correct priorities for improvement, and is backed up by focused training for staff. Procedures for checking the work of the school and for tracking the progress pupils are making have been strengthened. The impact of these procedures on provision and outcomes is a greater consistency in the quality of teaching, raised attainment and the good progress made by nearly all the pupils. This demonstrates that the capacity for further improvement is good. The school's commitment to equality is evident, for example in the action taken to improve attendance and reduce the achievement gap for potentially vulnerable groups.

The school is successfully developing effective partnerships with parents and carers. Discussion with parents and senior staff confirm that the school makes every effort to engage with parents and carers through family learning opportunities, workshops and attendance at assemblies. They receive regular, informative newsletters, including a specific safety awareness newsletter.

The successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, evidenced through a strong, inclusive school culture, is woven through an exciting curriculum. The school enriches the curriculum through outings, visitors and workshops. These are generally well matched to each topic to give pupils high-quality cultural experiences that enhance learning, but do not always provide pupils with good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the wider curriculum.

The governing body is extremely knowledgeable about the school's work. Governors are regular visitors in school and have determined ambition for the school's continued success. They offer both practical support and a high degree of challenge

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to school leaders. They ensure that statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding and child protection, are robustly met.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ladywood Primary School, Ilkeston, DE7 4NH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently with my colleague, Christine Bray. I would like to particularly thank those of you who shared your work and spoke with us about what you think about your school. We found you to be very knowledgeable about the work of your school and were impressed by your ability to reflect on how changes are helping you to make better progress. Your school has improved a lot since the previous inspection and I am pleased to report that it is now a good and improving school.

Your teachers work hard. They regularly check how well you are doing, and set you realistic but challenging targets. We were very impressed by how well you know your own targets and the levels you are working at. This motivates you to work hard and reach the next level. As a result, you make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Your behaviour is outstanding. You display extremely good manners and show polite respect for adults and each other. You told us that Ladywood is a very happy place and that you are proud to be 'Ladywood Learners'.

In order to help you reach even higher standards in English and mathematics we have asked your teachers to do two things.

- Help you to understand and use links between reading and writing.
- Provide you with as many opportunities as possible to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in topic work.

I know you will continue to work hard and do your very best. Thank you for such an enjoyable and memorable visit to your school. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

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