

Lea Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112536
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378507
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2012
Lead 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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marcus Bell
Headteacher	Simon Gostick
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Doris Bell

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine members of staff during 12 lessons, covering approximately 4.5 hours of teaching. As well as observing full or part lessons, she sampled a session where pupils were learning letters and sounds. She, also, heard pupils read, watched them being taught in small groups and individually, analysed their work, and discussed their learning and school life with them. Meetings were held with senior and middle managers, and representatives of the governing body. The inspector, also, observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including information relating to the attainment and achievement of all groups of pupils, the school improvement plan, governing body minutes, and evidence of monitoring and evaluation. She spoke to parents and carers and analysed 81 parental questionnaire responses, together with the responses to the questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

In this smaller than average-sized primary school, the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs is average.

The school meets the government's current floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It has achieved the Activemark, Healthy School status, an ECO silver award, the intermediate International Schools award, and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The headteacher took up post in January 2009, which was after the previous inspection. A privately run after-school club, which is inspected separately, operates on the school site.

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

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. It is outstanding because pupils' achievement is excellent, the quality of teaching is outstanding, leadership and management are first-rate, and pupils develop an exceptionally wide range of personal and academic skills that prepare them very well for their futures.
- In most years, children start Reception Year with the skills levels expected for their age, although writing and calculation skills are often below expected levels. They leave Reception Year well prepared for their work in Year 1. Attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 is above average in reading, writing, and mathematics and has been in almost every year since the previous inspection.
- Teaching uses the many excellent opportunities within the exceptionally well-planned curriculum to make learning exciting and memorable for the pupils. However, the excellent marking of writing done in literacy lessons does not always extend to writing elsewhere and, when pupils mark their own work, the 'wish' for further improvement is not always clear enough.
- Pupils are adept at managing their own behaviour and at helping others to manage theirs. They are very safe in school, thoroughly enjoy learning, and want very much to do well. Pupils say 'school is like a big family', where 'no one ever gets left out' and 'every part of your work has improved hugely by the time you leave'. Their parents and carers, rightly, agree with all of that.
- The management of performance is excellent and the teamwork within the school and between the school, the governing body, parents, carers, and pupils is exceptional. All recognise how much the school has improved since the previous inspection and staff summed it up by saying that 'it is good to see what we have achieved together over the last few years'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Extend the excellent marking in literacy to writing when it occurs elsewhere, for example, in topic work.
- Help pupils, when they are assessing their own work, to pinpoint more accurately in the 'wish' what it is they need to improve.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Literacy, numeracy and personal skills are developed well in Reception Year. Children learn successfully to read, write and spell, to count and use money. They take turns, help each other and become independent. All parents and carers say their children make good progress. Inspection findings are that progress is excellent, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The well-targeted support those pupils receive narrows the gaps in their learning, enabling the vast majority to reach nationally expected levels in reading and mathematics by Year 6, and catch up in writing.

Attainment in reading is above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils read widely and have a good understanding of what they read and what lies behind the written word. Even in Year 1, pupils can summarise what they read, use picture clues to describe characters' moods and confidently predict what might happen next. By Year 6, pupils use their reading and writing skills exceptionally well across a range of subjects. They develop an excellent range of vocabulary, which they use skilfully and manipulate to engage the reader, for example, through persuasive writing, formal and informal reports and letters, and creative writing and poetry. They do so with flair. For example, Year 6 pupils used extended metaphors exceptionally well to convey, through poetry, the idea of growing up and moving on. Year 5 pupils, inspired by work in the woods, created atmospheric tales about imaginary little people, building up tension through writing, for example, 'I woke to the gentle whisper of the trees ... hot air pounded ... heart thumped clumsily ...'.

Pupils enjoy mathematics very much because their learning is almost always allied to real-life contexts. The contexts range from shopping for holiday gifts in Reception Year and Year 1, to learning how to use bus and train timetables in Years 3 and 4, and planning a walk in the Lake District in Year 6. In their work, Year 6 pupils drew heavily on their geographical knowledge, including how to measure distances using different scales on a map. Pupils use the skills they learn in one subject very effectively to help their learning in another. Promoting that is a key feature of the excellent curriculum.

Quality of teaching

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The teachers' consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour are reflected in activities that build exceptionally well on what pupils know and can be trusted to do already. Teachers adjust learning skilfully to suit pupils' different needs, over time, in lessons, and from day-to-day. That was evident in Year 2, for example, when pupils were writing a factual report on dolphins and needed different kinds of help to organise their writing in paragraphs. Open-ended, well-targeted questioning ensures that all pupils can participate fully in each part of a lesson. That and the successful way in which well-briefed support staff follow guidance on breaking learning down ensures that the teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also excellent.

All parents and carers say their children are taught well. Teaching is, in fact, outstanding. It is underpinned by excellent subject knowledge, as seen, for example, in the modelling of how to use extended metaphors in poetry in Year 6. It was evident too in the imaginative approach to teaching ratio in Years 5 and 6, as pupils mixed colours and recorded the ratio of one to another in the different shades and tones that resulted. The relentless focus on developing basic skills ensures that the teaching of reading is excellent, that pupils use their reading, writing, and mathematical skills well in all of their work, and that computers become an effective tool for learning across the curriculum.

Pupils are encouraged strongly to be reflective and to learn for themselves, including, for example, through open-ended homework tasks. They are fully involved in assessing their own learning and very knowledgeable about their targets, the levels they are at and how to reach the next level. Consistently good marking helps them in literacy and numeracy and often extends to advice on improving skills in other subjects. Sometimes, however, writing skills are not marked as well, when used in topic work. Pupils are taught how to mark their own work and they follow their teachers' example of 'two stars and a wish'. However, the pupils' 'wish' is often just 'more', or 'more work', rather than a specific area for improvement.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say they feel very safe in school, the school keeps them safe and behaviour is always good. They have a highly developed sense of how to keep themselves safe and how to manage risks. All parents and carers agree with the pupils on safety and virtually all agree on behaviour. Inspection findings are that behaviour and safety are excellent. Pupils report that there is never any bullying or harassment, but that the school still reminds them regularly what to do should they experience or know of any, be it persistent name-calling, pushing, shoving, teasing, or hurting someone on purpose. They know that such actions are unkind, are confident that any member of staff would help them with any concerns and respect their confidentiality if asked to do so.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their conduct in lessons and around the school are excellent. They are hugely respectful of others and of others' feelings. They talk animatedly about how the personal skills developed through the 'forest school' work

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equip them for now and for later life. For example, they discussed how important it is to 'get along' with others, to do 'jobs we might not necessarily like, but are important for harmonious living', and to be confident in themselves without being 'boastful', because that would not help in later life. They talked about people being 'dominant' in some schools, but here 'we learn to take turns, make a rota, be fair'.

Attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy school thoroughly. They are immensely proud of it and the part they play in improving it, for example, as school councillors, mentors, and office helpers. They have a very strong sense of fairness, explaining, for example, how a less-able pupil might have to make more effort to improve than the more-able and that the less-able pupil should be given credit for that effort. The pupils' very high levels of engagement in everything the school has to offer enhance their learning and personal development greatly. All of that is underpinned by the school's excellent provision, which ensures that pupils thrive in an atmosphere of respect and dignity for all.

Leadership and management

Excellent leadership has set very high expectations for staff and pupils. The uncompromising drive to make the school outstanding is underpinned by an in-depth and accurate understanding of the school's performance and how it can be improved and by very strong teamwork amongst the staff. The monitoring of teaching and learning is extremely rigorous and all areas for improvement are followed up robustly. Pupils' rates of progress are tracked meticulously and swift action is taken to support and accelerate learning, whenever this becomes necessary. The accurately pinpointed priorities in the school improvement plan lead to well-considered professional development, which is then checked further for its impact on pupils' achievement. The school's self-evaluation is somewhat cautious, but it shows the school knows itself well and wants to improve further. Its capacity to do so is demonstrated in the excellent improvement since the previous inspection and a deep-seated determination to remain outstanding. The governing body has an excellent understanding of how to challenge, as well as support the school. The very detailed information it receives from the headteacher enables it to do this.

Safeguarding procedures are effective, ensuring that pupils work and play in a safe, vibrant learning environment, where high-quality displays celebrate pupils' work. The excellent curriculum ensures all pupils have an equal and fair chance to thrive in this school, which also tackles any form of discrimination robustly. Pupils' comments about not having to be the best at a sport to be part of a team and that everyone should be equally valued, regardless of background or ability, demonstrate this well, as do the excellent range of artistic, sporting, and other cultural opportunities afforded to them. Outstanding provision is made for all pupils to learn indoors and out and to become increasingly aware of their place in society and the wider world. It starts with an excellent range of outdoor activities in Reception Year, which included making apple pies and ice-cream outside, and continues through to, for example, Year 2 searching for answers to calculations in the woods and the campfire activity observed in Year 6. The school's very successful engagement with parents,

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carers, other schools, and external agencies contribute greatly to all of that.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



12 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lea Primary School, Matlock, DE4 5JP

When I first looked at the information about your school, I thought I was coming to a good school, but I was wrong. I came to an outstanding school. Thank you very much indeed for making me so very welcome there and for talking with me about what you do and how well you learn. What you told me helped me greatly in coming to my judgements. I was particularly impressed by your excellent behaviour, your constant willingness to learn as much as possible and to help and support others to do the same. You have an exceptionally well-developed understanding of fairness and justice and of how your attitudes and actions can impact on your lives and those of others now and when you grow up. All of this is helping you to make excellent progress in all aspects of learning and to reach high standards in your work year after year.

You, clearly, appreciate very much how well you are taught and the many different ways in which teachers make learning exciting and memorable for you. That includes, of course, the forest school work, where you extend and sharpen your personal and academic skills very well. I was very impressed with the quality of some of your written work and have asked the school to do two things to help keep up the high standards you have reached.

- Make sure that the writing you do, for example, in topic work, is marked to the same high standard as the marking of the writing you do in literacy lessons.
- Help you, when you are assessing your own work, to pinpoint more accurately in the 'wish', what it is in your work that you need to improve.

You can help by continuing to look for ways to improve and keeping up the excellent attitudes you have shown so far. I hope you will continue to enjoy learning for the rest of your lives, as much as you do now. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell
Lead inspector

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