



Oxley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119961
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280698
Inspection dates 22 February 2006 to 23 February 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Brooker HMI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Thorpe Road
School category	Community		Loughborough
Age range of pupils	4 to 10		Leicestershire LE12 9LU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01509 502483
Number on roll	225	Fax number	01509 505536
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Mark Hook
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Lawrence Richards

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school serves an area of mixed housing, but one with comparatively high levels of social and economic deprivation. The number on roll has decreased since the last inspection, reflecting population changes in the local area. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with national figures.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Oxley Primary is a good school because its caring and positive environment enables pupils to enjoy their learning and make good progress. Inspectors agree broadly with the school's evaluation of its strengths and areas for development, although the school underestimates its overall effectiveness and is rather cautious in some of its judgements.

Many children start at the school with weak basic skills. However, they have a very good start in the Reception class and these gains are sustained in Years 1 and 2 so that, by the age of seven, the standard of the pupils' work is broadly in line with that expected. Although their progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 is rather more uneven, most pupils sustain the good start to their schooling and are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave at the end of Year 5.

The school is systematic in the way that it assesses and records the pupils' progress, but does not always make efficient use of this information to guide improvement. In the past, there has not been a sharp focus on raising standards. However, good quality teaching ensures that the pupils achieve well.

The pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Visitors are immediately struck by the school's happy and inclusive climate. The pupils are friendly and considerate. Their behaviour is excellent and they have positive attitudes to learning. The school's safe and happy environment encourages the pupils to flourish socially and to develop as independent learners.

The school is well led and managed. However, some subject co-ordinators are only now developing their leadership roles. The hard work and determination of the staff mean that the school has been able to address key priorities for development and has good capacity for further improvement. The issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more efficient use of assessment information to track, analyse and guide the pupils' progress
- Further strengthen the roles of subject co-ordinators so that they lead more confidently the drive to raise attainment.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good because, given their starting points, the pupils make good progress overall as they move through the school. Children enter the Reception class with skills that are well below those normally expected, especially in language and communication, and in numeracy. They make rapid progress in the Foundation Stage although when they start in Year 1 their standards are still below those seen in most schools. The pupils are further ahead in their social and emotional development than in language, literacy and aspects of numeracy.

The pupils continue their good progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards of attainment in the national tests for 7 year olds are broadly average. This represents good achievement. The school's results have declined in the last two years, with the performance of boys being significantly lower than that of girls. However, this reflects specific characteristics of each cohort. Standards in writing and reading are lower than those in mathematics.

The pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in Years 3, 4 and 5. Their progress is good in reading and in science. However, the quality of their writing lags behind other areas of their learning. The school has recognised this issue and has taken suitable steps to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

The pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Their well-focused support ensures that they meet their targets and that a significant number are taken off the special educational needs register by the time they leave the school.

The school is systematic and thorough in the way that it collects assessment data. However, it does not always make effective use of all this work to improve pupil performance. Insufficient use is made of short-term targets to guide the pupils' improvement. An electronic system is being adopted to make this process more efficient, but the culture of target setting is not yet embedded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good strides in their personal development. During their time at the school, the pupils develop the essential social skills and self-confidence that equip them well for their future lives. They maintain very good relationships. Pupils are friendly and caring towards each other and will instinctively applaud each other's efforts. They have excellent attitudes and behaviour in the classrooms and show genuine enjoyment in their work. The pupils feel safe.

Children in the Foundation Stage respond well to the school's high expectations, so that there are no behavioural barriers to their good progress and enjoyment of their new surroundings.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are good overall, and help to foster their confidence and self esteem. The school raises the horizons and aspirations of the pupils, who are developing an understanding of their future role as citizens in a multicultural world. Pupils appreciate the need for behaviour rules and they take responsibility through the school council. The school is developing the pupils' healthy lifestyles, and 'fruity Friday' captures the approval and imagination of pupils.

The pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils have very good attendance, although a very small minority have high levels of absence, including some who take holidays during term-time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some outstanding features. Teachers work well together as a strong team to ensure that pupils of all ages make good progress in lessons across a wide range of subjects. Lessons are soundly planned with clear objectives and an excellent variety of interesting activities. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their thinking through a range of independent and collaborative tasks. They are expected to take responsibility for their learning, for example by asking – as well as answering – questions. Across the school, the outstanding relationships between adults and pupils enable teachers to sustain a good pace in lessons. Work is very well explained, sometimes with good use of information and communication technology (ICT), and the pupils are skilfully managed and directed. Teaching assistants provide very good support for individual pupils and small groups.

Work is well marked, often with clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve. Teachers are systematic in recording and assessing the pupils' progress, but assessment data is not always used to set challenging targets. Systems for target setting are developing, but better use could be made of individual targets to underpin the good teaching that pupils receive.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teaching is well adapted to meet the specific needs of individual pupils and the wider cohort, for example with well tailored support for speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and is organised so that most lessons build systematically on what has gone before. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The teaching of ICT has improved. Teachers make effective use of digital cameras and interactive whiteboards to support the pupils' learning, but the potential of ICT for promoting learning is not fully exploited in all lessons.

The school offers pupils a variety of activities to enhance the curriculum. Although the pupils have relatively few opportunities to develop their experiences with trips outside school, their learning is suitably enriched by a good range of visitors, which they enjoy.

Transition arrangements for Year 5 pupils are very well established and ensure that the pupils' move to secondary school is as seamless as possible.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care, guidance and support for pupils is good overall. The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to ensure that every child in the school really

does matter. They are keen to provide the best possible level of care, and provide sensitive support to pupils and their parents. Attendance procedures are rigorous. Behaviour management creates purposeful and enjoyable classroom learning. Health and safety procedures are thorough. Child protection arrangements are implemented well and staff benefit from regular training.

The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. Assessment information is very well used to guide their progress. However, the assessment and tracking of other pupils, although systematic, is rather time-consuming and is not used so effectively to regularly set and review individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher manages the school very well and provides steady and effective leadership for the staff. He has achieved considerable success in firmly establishing a safe and happy environment where the pupils' well-being is at the heart of everything that the staff do. During the long-term absence of the deputy headteacher other staff have assumed additional responsibilities to ensure that the pace of school development has not been impeded.

The headteacher undertakes systematic observations of teaching. Feedback from these has contributed well to improving provision and has given the school an accurate picture of its broad strengths and weaknesses. The school has identified weaknesses in attainment and has implemented suitable strategies to bring about further improvements, particularly in writing. Subject developments are suitably led by curriculum co-ordinators. However, most of these roles have been allocated to staff only recently, and responsibility for guiding curriculum development and leading the drive to raise standards is only now developing as it should. The roles of the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have been well supported by local authority (LA) consultants, but need further development.

Governors are closely involved in the school and procedures are in place to ensure that they can effectively hold the school to account. Governors are regular visitors and monitor the school appropriately.

Although the school has not had a sharp or relentless focus on raising standards, it has accurately identified priorities for development and has taken steps to secure improvement. The views of parents and pupils are regularly sought and help inform development planning. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The LA has provided the school with good support to help it improve. The school has benefited, in particular, from guidance for curriculum managers and also for the governing body.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming Mr Wood and myself to your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons. You were all very friendly, helpful and polite. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We could see how much you enjoyed your lessons, especially when you had a visiting speaker with handcuffs! We could also tell that you always try hard to do your best and co-operate with each other. Your behaviour was excellent, even though the bad weather kept you indoors for most of the time we were at the school. Well done!

Your teachers, the headteacher and all the other adults in school work very hard to make sure that you are safe and that your learning is fun. I have asked Mr Richards and the staff to continue with all the good things that are happening in your school. We have also discussed a few ways that the school might improve, so that you might do even better in your lessons. For example, teachers need to use the results of your tests and assessments to set you challenging targets, so that you can do even better.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Paul Brooker Her Majesty's Inspector