



Medway Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120108
Local Authority Leicester City
Inspection number 291631
Inspection dates 1–2 February 2007
Reporting inspector Tom Shine

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Stephen's Road
School category	Community		Leicester
Age range of pupils	3–11		LE2 1GH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2544811
Number on roll (school)	429	Fax number	0116 2544811
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Sarah Eaton
		Headteacher	Geoff Payne
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2007		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 1–2 February 2007	Inspection number 291631
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school, near the centre of Leicester, attracts pupils from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds with nearly all the pupils coming from minority ethnic groups. The movement of pupils in and out of the school at other than the usual times is higher than average. As a designated community school, additional provision includes a comprehensive adult education programme, with a strong emphasis on teaching English as an additional language. Extended care facilities after school are also available. The school achieved Healthy Schools status in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school whose effectiveness is satisfactory. The headteacher and his leadership team provide satisfactory leadership and together they are striving to drive improvement forward. They have identified accurately the main areas that need to be addressed to ensure effective learning can take place. This is as a result of good procedures being in place to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses, such as a programme of regular monitoring of teaching.

While the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, teachers' planning does not consistently provide for all the pupils, particularly the more able, to be stretched enough to enable them to make better progress. The school is aware that the overall quality of teaching must improve, if pupils' achievement and standards are to rise more rapidly. While pupils achieve and make satisfactory progress from very low starting points, as reflected in the results of recent national tests, standards are still below average at the end of Year 6. However, targets for the current Year 6 are more challenging than previously and here pupils are making good progress as a result of good teaching.

Pupils enjoy coming to this school and like their teachers because of the way different teachers teach. They are increasingly keen to attend school and their attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. In the Nursery and Reception, where teaching and learning are good, children settle in well and make good progress in all areas but particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. From Year 1 onwards, pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They enjoy lessons and like the activities they are asked to do such as enacting stories through drama. They feel safe as a result of the school's sound procedures for care, guidance and support. For example, at lunchtime, they say they know who to go to if they have a problem. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. While it is generally good in lessons and around the school, the behaviour of some of the older boys in the playground is unruly at playtimes, is insufficiently checked and tends to spoil these sessions for others. They are keen to eat healthily and most choose fruit as a snack. They also have a good awareness of the value of exercise and say 'We like PE because we get lots of exercise.' The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and pupils enjoy an adequate range of activities during lunchtime and after school.

The recent improvements in the school's performance are due to measures introduced by the senior management team such as the monitoring of teaching and learning and a good system for tracking the progress of pupils, in addition to the support of the local authority. Until lately, there has been too much turnover in membership of the governing body for it to have been fully effective in challenging the school about standards. The governing body is chaired well and some new governors have recently been appointed. Taken together, the leadership of the school has a satisfactory knowledge of where it is now and where it needs to develop. As a result, it has a sound capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers' planning to ensure that work is matched more closely to the abilities of all pupils, especially the more able, to enable them to achieve better in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that all adults supervising the playground receive appropriate training to manage behaviour.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and progress are satisfactory but pupils' standards are below average. In the Nursery and Reception, children achieve well. When they join the school, their abilities are well below average in all areas of learning. Although they make good progress, their attainment is still below average when they enter Year 1. But this good start is not built on sufficiently in the rest of the school. From Year 1 onwards, pupils' progress is patchy and varies according to the quality of teaching. By Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress, although in the national tests in 2006, standards were below average in English but exceptionally low in mathematics and science. In the present Year 6, pupils are making good progress and are working well to achieve more challenging targets than last year. However, in the rest of the school, more able pupils do not consistently make the progress expected of them, as teaching does not always challenge them. Pupils with learning difficulties receive effective support and make the same rate of progress as their peers. Pupils whose home language is not English also receive good support and make satisfactory progress. Pupils' improving skills in literacy and numeracy prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils reflect sensitively on their own actions and on issues such as the environment and our responsibilities towards protecting it. Most pupils adopt safe practices in the way they move around and handle equipment but some use outdoor equipment in a careless way. From the time they enter the Nursery with well below average skills, pupils grow in confidence. As they progress through the school, they become confident and self-assured young people. They have a good understanding of other cultures and beliefs and they contribute soundly to achieving racial harmony in school. Parents and pupils are rightly concerned that a few older boys are often unruly and inconsiderate in their behaviour at playtimes which spoils the generally harmonious atmosphere in the school. The school has recognised a need for improvement in this area. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the life of the school and the community. They enjoy running the Healthy Tuck Shop and being members of the school council, but express frustration that their views are not listened to. They also support a number

of charities enthusiastically each year and enjoy performing in their dance groups to a number of local settings.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but inconsistent across the school. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they should. In the Nursery and Reception classes, for example, teaching is consistently good and as a result children learn well and make good progress. Children respond enthusiastically to the many stimulating activities provided by adults. Language skills are developed very effectively through role play linked to, for example, the 'doctors' surgery'. There is good learning in Year 6 because teachers match work well to pupils' needs, provide interesting activities and give additional support which helps move pupils on to the next level. In other classes, teachers are less successful in planning to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, especially the more able who could be given more challenging work. In all lessons, children know the purpose of the lesson because learning objectives are clearly stated. Support to groups is good, particularly those with learning difficulties, those new to English as an additional language and the lower attainers. Some marking gives clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work but this is not consistently the case.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced well by many visits to places of interest such as museums and theatres. Visitors to school, including an artist in residence and musical groups for example, Travelling by Tuba, have a positive effect on developing pupils' creative skills. There is a satisfactory range of out of school clubs, and good provision for booster classes to raise standards for older pupils.

In the Nursery and Reception, children enjoy an exciting range of stimulating activities which capture their imagination and develop learning well. They particularly enjoy, and benefit from, a weekly visit to the school's computer suite.

The needs of pupils whose home language is not English are well provided for and as a result these children make progress in line with their peers. Pupils with learning difficulties also receive good quality support to enable them to have full access to the curriculum. The needs of the pupils of higher ability are not fully met because they are not always challenged sufficiently to enable them to achieve to their full potential.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, support and guidance. Day-to-day routines are well established and teachers' recognition of pupils' work and their personal efforts help them to feel happy and comfortable in school. However, pupils' views are often not taken seriously enough and some pupils and parents are unhappy about this. Adequate child protection procedures and systems are in place. However, supervision in the playground is not always secure enough and on occasion staff are too slow to intervene when pupils use outdoor equipment inappropriately. The school works well with other professionals to ensure pupils and their families receive the support they need. A high number of adults, ably led by managers, provide good quality support for those pupils who need it, including those with learning difficulties and those with English as a new language. Although all pupils throughout the school have learning targets, there are inconsistencies in how well the school helps pupils to know what they need to do next to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior management team is hardworking and leads the school adequately. It knows that the key to achieving higher standards depends on securing a consistently good quality of teaching. Although measures to raise standards, including monitoring, support and training, are beginning to bear fruit, the headteacher and his senior staff recognise that more needs to be done. They have an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. For example, the issues for improvement identified in this report reflect very closely the main priorities in the school's improvement plan. The school has worked successfully to establish a cohesive team. As a result, staff work effectively together and have a shared commitment to improvement. Governors are supportive and the newly appointed chair is aware that their role in monitoring the performance of the school has been neglected.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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?	3

¹ Grade 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.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for all the help you gave to the inspectors when they came to your school recently. We liked talking to you and to your teachers and coming to your school assemblies. The education and teaching you receive are satisfactory and things are getting better.

These are the things we liked most about your school:

- When you first come to school in the Nursery and Reception classes, you make a good start to your education and do well, and make satisfactory progress after that.
- The standards of your work are improving in English, mathematics and science but are still below average by the end of Year 6.
- You enjoy school, including the range of out-of-school activities, and most of you attend regularly.
- Your headteacher, who leads the school satisfactorily, makes sure that those of you who need extra help get it.
- You told us you feel safe and you are given sound levels of care, guidance and support.
- Most of you behave and get on well with each other and with all members of staff.
- You understand the importance of exercise and eating healthily.

These are the things that we think could be better:

- We think that some of you could be doing more difficult work in lessons.
- A few of you do not behave as well in the playground and do not think of others.

We really enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn and wish you all well for the future.