

# Catherine Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120003
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicester City
<b>Inspection number</b>	327171
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Weston HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	367
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dee Bahra
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joy Denning
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2006
<b>School address</b>	Brandon Street Leicester LE4 6AZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01162 625896
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 253 8751

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 May 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	327171

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- how well all pupils make progress, but particularly boys in writing and average attaining girls in mathematics
- how well marking, target setting and tracking are being used to increase the rates of pupils' progress
- the impact of pupils' personal development and well-being on their learning and achievement
- the impact of leadership on school improvement, including the part played by subject leaders and governors in school evaluation.

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This large multiracial school is located close to the city centre of Leicester. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A very high proportion of pupils do not speak English as their first language. The main home languages for these pupils are Gujerati and Punjabi. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above that found nationally, with speech and language needs predominating. The school has gained the Eco Management of Schools and Healthy Schools awards in recent years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a school which provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide a clear vision, and this is shared by all staff. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say that their children enjoy school and they make good progress because the teaching is good. One parent commented, 'The school is well organised and managed and teachers are friendly and welcoming.'

The school successfully builds on pupils' prior skills and knowledge. Standards on entry to Year 3 have improved steadily and are now close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The current Year 6 pupils have made good progress from their lower starting points to achieve standards similar to those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. School tracking data showed boys' achievement lagged behind that of girls in writing and some pupils made slower progress in mathematics. A range of strategies have been implemented to address these areas and they are beginning to pay dividends. Standards in mathematics, in particular, have risen sharply as a result of more precise teaching, work pitched at the right level and the targeting of those making slower progress. Writing standards have also improved because teachers are providing a greater range of opportunities to write across the curriculum. Although the gap between boys' and girls' achievements is narrowing perceptibly, staff know that it is still too wide.

Pupils' achievement is good because they are taught well. Teaching strengths include good lesson planning, good subject knowledge, and interesting and challenging work that is well matched to pupils' needs. In a small number of lessons, the pace occasionally slackens and pupils become inattentive. Although this can slow some pupils' short-term progress, there is no significant difference in progress over the longer term between different groups of pupils. Across the school, there is a very strong emphasis on identifying precisely what pupils are expected to learn in lessons and how they will know if they have done so. This works well because pupils tackle their work with a clear picture of what they are working towards. Most teachers take account of pupils' varying capabilities and provide work that gives the right amount of challenge or support.

Although all pupils have targets which they know and understand, little reference is made to these when teachers mark their work. Consequently, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and what they might do to improve. A draft marking policy has been agreed to address this issue, but has yet to be implemented. High quality support staff dovetail with teachers extremely well. Those pupils needing a boost to their confidence benefit from teaching in small groups, so that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to play a full part in lessons and achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils of all abilities benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum, supported by a good range of clubs and other enrichment activities.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is the quality of care, guidance and support. These positive features underpin pupils' good achievement. Good links with outside agencies such as education welfare officers ensure pupils' well-being, and systems to safeguard health and safety are securely in place. Pupils have a good understanding of, and commitment to, leading healthy lives, through eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise. Pupils feel safe because teachers are there to help them. Most enjoy school. However, attendance is average because a small number of families take extended holidays abroad during term time.

School leaders are not content with this. Positive steps are taken to work with the few families where attendance is sometimes a problem.

Pupils are keen to contribute to the life of the school and many volunteer to help with tasks around the school and be playground buddies. The school council helps run the stationery shop and has been instrumental in purchasing more playtime games. In addition, the Eco management group has helped to develop the pond area and composts waste for the school grounds. Pupils support a variety of local and national charities to help others less fortunate than themselves. Within the curriculum, opportunities are presented for pupils to learn about different people around the world. Pupils' cultural understanding has been strengthened following their work with another school in Devon. Older pupils also have the opportunity to go on a residential trip to the Isle of Wight. Pupils' satisfactory key skills in areas such as literacy and numeracy mean that they are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education and for their future economic well-being.

The school's leaders and managers are ambitious, and are keen to develop all aspects of it. They are well supported by a committed, experienced and stable staff. Effective and accurate monitoring and evaluation have led to improvements. Senior managers make good use of information about pupils' learning to set suitably challenging targets and to identify any who need additional support. A close check is kept on teaching and learning. Subject leaders share the responsibility for much of this work and they play a significant role in the drive for improvement. Good recent support has been provided by the local authority. Senior staff use the outcomes of lesson observations and assessments of pupils' work to identify what needs to be done to improve. The governing body is very supportive of the school. Through its committee structure, governors are kept informed about the work of the school. However, although priorities for improvement are identified and planned, they are not shared with the full governing body in sufficient detail. In addition, existing plans are not sharp enough. Proposed actions are not specific enough and key timings and milestones are not clearly identified. This limits governors' ability to hold the school to account for its performance.

The school works well with a range of partners. Good links with the neighbouring infant school aid the smooth transfer and transition into Year 3. This has a positive effect on learning. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of their own locality, and an appropriate awareness of wider national and international communities. However, the impact of pupils' involvement has not been evaluated, and there is no clear plan in place to develop and extend this work further. Parents and carers are canvassed for their opinions regularly and their views taken on board. The school has good capacity to continue to improve.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Further raise standards of boys' writing to close the gender gap.
- Implement consistently a marking and feedback policy across the school to help pupils know and understand what they need to do next to improve.
- Share clear and specific plans of action for school improvement with all governors so they can effectively hold the school to account.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

**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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

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

---

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

20 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Catherine Junior School, Leicester, LE4 6AZ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for showing me your work. You are polite and friendly. I enjoyed talking to the school councillors and I agree that Catherine Junior is a good school that does a lot to help you do well.

Here are some of the things I found out about your school.

- Good teaching helps you to learn well.
- You enjoy school. Your behaviour is good and you work sensibly in lessons.
- Adults make learning exciting by planning interesting activities and letting you take part in a good range of clubs and visits.
- All adults in school are kind and caring. They give you good guidance to help you understand how to improve and most of you can talk about your targets.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. The school councillors have done a good job in helping to get the toilets refurbished and buying more games and equipment for you to use at playtimes.
- The buddies help you at playtimes if you have a problem or need a friend to play with.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are leading the school well and are working hard to make it even better.
- Most of your parents and carers are pleased with the school.

I have asked your school to do three things in order to improve.

- Make sure that teachers help the boys amongst you to get even better at writing by providing opportunities that appeal to you and make you want to write.
- When teachers mark your work, always give you clear information about what you need to do to improve.
- Make sure that all governors have clear plans about what the school is trying to improve so they can check up on what is happening in classes better.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard. I thoroughly enjoyed watching you learn and wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Paul Weston

Her Majesty's Inspector