

Greenfields Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134842
Local Authority	CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LA
Inspection number	294180
Inspection dates	5–6 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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 on roll	
School	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Glyn Jones
Headteacher	Mr Terry Smith
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Orange Gardens Off Kirkby Gardens The Meadows Nottingham NG2 2JE
Telephone number	0115 9153762
Fax number	0115 9153726

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school, located in an area of high social and economic deprivation within the city. It opened in September 2005 following the amalgamation of two primary schools. The Foundation Unit is linked to the main school by a walkway across the playing field. Children start school with levels of knowledge and skills that are low for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, although a lower proportion than nationally has a statement of special educational needs. Three quarters of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and the number for whom English is an additional language is much higher than that found nationally.

The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status.

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 good school, moving forward in all aspects of its work. Through good leadership and management, the pupils have adjusted well to their new learning environment. They are responding to the high expectations of staff and the good quality learning experiences available to them. Central to all that the school does is the celebration of its multi-ethnicity. Throughout the day, pupils of different cultures work harmoniously in an atmosphere of support and respect. From their first day at school, they feel safe and secure because care, guidance and support of pupils are good. The progress of pupils who find learning difficult is accelerated by prompt identification of their individual needs and the good support of teaching assistants.

The effective support children receive in the Foundation Stage ensures they make a good start, with many coming close to the expected standards in reading by the time they leave Reception. Standards are consolidated in Key Stage 1. While the standards of pupils in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Key Stage 2, their progress through both key stages is good. Standards have been higher in mathematics than in English for the last two years and the low literacy skills of many pupils have pulled overall results down. Effective strategies are now in place which are raising standards. Pupils' good progress is the direct result of good quality teaching and a good, well co-ordinated curriculum. Teachers plan well and pupils always know the purpose of lessons. However, they are less sure about what they have achieved and how to make further progress in their learning because marking does not regularly tell them this. The increasingly creative curriculum, whilst focusing on literacy and numeracy, allows pupils regular opportunities to work independently and choose their own areas to investigate through topics and themed weeks.

Parents are delighted with the school. Their children are happy here. Pupils' consideration towards others is evidence of their good personal development. They value the opportunities that they are given to grow into responsible and thoughtful young people, not least because they have to apply for a number of jobs and roles. Their cultural and spiritual development is a strong feature, primarily because it is part of every school day. It is reinforced by regular learning activities that ensure pupils understand and can empathise with the beliefs and lifestyles of others.

The good lead and steer of the headteacher, supported well by the deputy headteacher is pivotal to the school's good progress. Governors monitor the school's performance effectively and know it well. Most middle managers are also monitoring their subjects regularly so that they know the strengths and areas for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The involvement of parents and the good knowledge that the school has about children's backgrounds and abilities, ensure children have a smooth start to school. The provision of many and varied play-based activities enable them to make good progress in the six areas of learning from their low starting points. Outside learning is restricted, however, by the lack of a permanent cover. Teaching is good because tasks match the levels at which children are working. Already, targets are part of their daily life and they are proud to achieve them. This is having a positive impact on their personal development, which is good, and on standards. For example, the majority of children are close to achieving their expected levels in reading, and levels in writing

and mathematics are improving. Careful planning and regular assessments of children's progress reflect the good leadership and management of this stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science by ensuring marking is regular, always informs pupils what they have achieved and explains how they can move forward in their learning.
- Provide a permanent cover for the Foundation Stage outdoor learning area so that children have access to the full range of learning activities throughout the year.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below average. Inspection evidence and the school's data show that achievement of all pupils, including those who find learning difficult and those who speak English as an additional language, is good. The standards that pupils reached by the end of Year 2 in 2007 were below average overall and exceptionally low in reading. Year 6 pupils' results were also low, although the school achieved a significant rise in mathematics standards as a result of good intervention work. No pupils achieved higher levels in English at Key Stage 2. Nonetheless, good learning programmes, good teaching and effective tracking of pupils' progress are now resulting in improved standards, especially in English, with tracking information indicating that pupils on course to meet their challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the wide range of educational opportunities available, including the opportunity to work with their friends and as one child added, 'to see my teacher'. This is evident in their improved attendance and behaviour, both of which are now satisfactory overall. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They benefit from thoughtful assemblies and a range of visits, visitors and the school's commitment to multicultural education. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including exercise, a balanced diet and freedom from drugs through informative personal, social and health education lessons. They feel safe in lessons and also know who to go to if they feel troubled. All pupils are able to practise being monitors and taking on other responsibilities. Older pupils value the fact that they have to apply for particular roles in school. Community projects and school based fund raising helps them to manage money and work in teams. Preparation for the next stage of their education is satisfactory because of their good personal development, although standards in numeracy and literacy are below national averages.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

These are both good and lead to pupils' good progress. Learning gets off to a strong start because teachers make the purpose of lessons clear and revisit objectives regularly. It is strengthened by good relationships between teachers and pupils and teachers' high expectations. In the best lessons, an interesting, or sometimes fun, introduction means that pupils focus quickly. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to think and practical and creative activities give

them opportunities to learn for themselves. Teachers know their subjects well and use different learning styles to motivate pupils. This includes interactive whiteboards, which pupils say help them to learn. In most classes, tasks are chosen carefully to match the levels at which pupils are working. Marking, however, whilst always encouraging, does not regularly tell pupils in sufficient detail what they have achieved and how to make further progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The phonics with rhyme programme, introduced in 2006, is strengthening the curriculum and raising standards in reading and writing in the Foundation Stage and Year 1. The newly introduced topic based approach to learning, whilst still being developed, provides opportunities for visits and visitors to play an important role in extending children's first hand experience and developing literacy, numeracy and, information and communication technology.

French is taught in Years 3 to 6 by class teachers supported by a specialist teacher. All pupils in Year 4 learn to play an instrument in weekly music lessons. Pupils enjoy the wide and varied range of after school clubs and activities which help them to discover new interests and learn new skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All requirements for child protection and health and safety are in place. Pupils with emotional problems are guided and supported well by in-house specialist staff and external agencies. Well trained teaching assistants play an important and effective part in this. Teachers support and guide pupils of all abilities and cultures well. Parents' involvement in their children's learning strengthens family involvement in school life. However, although a number of pupils have extended absences, work is not regularly set for them during this time.

Academic guidance is good and developing well. The school has detailed systems to track pupils' attainment so that any under achievement is quickly identified and tackled. All pupils have literacy and numeracy targets but they are not yet fully developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The successful merger of two primary schools owes much to the headteacher's clear vision and detailed planning. He has involved all parties, including parents, in the process. This has ensured a smooth transition of pupils and staff into the school. The senior leadership team's careful monitoring of the school's performance has resulted in strategies and activities that help pupils to develop in all areas of learning. The impact of these on pupils' progress is good. The staff work well as a team, are appropriately involved in school decisions and grasp opportunities to develop professionally. Governors are leading the school effectively and are sufficiently well-informed to be able to challenge its work. Middle managers are important in helping the school to move forward, with most subject leaders monitoring their subjects carefully. The school's capacity to improve is, therefore, good.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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 disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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	2
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

7 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greenfields Community School, Nottingham, NG2 2JE

Mr Wiggins and I enjoyed our recent visit to your school. Thank you for making us welcome and for telling us all about Greenfields. This letter will tell you what we found out.

Your school is a good school. You and your parents know that the staff care for you. You are making good progress in your lessons because teaching is usually good. You told us that you enjoy school and especially like lessons where you can learn by doing and learn for yourselves. You enjoy learning through topics because you can learn in more detail. The staff organise lots of activities and visits, which you appreciate. We can also see that your school is helping you to develop lots of skills that you will need when you are older. These include taking responsibility by being monitors and leaders.

There are ways in which your school can be better. The standards that you reach in English, mathematics and science need to be higher. The best way to help this to happen is for all lessons to be as good as the best ones. We have asked Mr Smith to check that when your work is marked, you are always clear about what you have done well and what you need to do to reach the next level in your learning. We are pleased that those of you in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start but you need your outdoor learning area to be covered. This will mean you can learn outside, whatever the weather.

Best wishes for the future

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector