



Charnwood Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120072
LEA Leicester City
Inspection number 280726
Inspection dates 21 February 2006 to 22 February 2006
Reporting inspector Tom Shine AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Nedham Street
School category	Community		Leicester
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Leicestershire LE2 0HE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2516574
Number on roll	454	Fax number	0116 2539564
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Iqbal Lambat
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Judith O'Connor

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Charnwood is a larger-than-average primary school in Leicester city centre. It serves the pupils from the surrounding area, where there is a high level of economic and social disadvantage. The majority of pupils' families originate from the Indian sub-continent or Somalia. Just under a quarter of pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Just over one fifth of pupils have learning difficulties, which is also higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. This differs from the more generous view of the school, which judges itself to be good. This is also the case in most other areas of the school, with the exception of care, guidance and support. This is because pupils' standards and achievements, and the quality of teaching in particular, are not quite as good as the school's own judgement. The school has made satisfactory progress in most areas identified for improvement in the last report, and has the secure capacity to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and much of it is good. However there good teaching is not enough to enable all pupils to achieve at consistently good levels, particularly in English, mathematics and science. In addition, many more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should and procedures to check on pupils' progress are not rigorous enough. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well and make good progress. Provision for the significant minority of pupils who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language has improved since the last inspection and these pupils also make good progress. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and enables children to make a steady start to their education. Standards are still below those expected when children leave the Foundation Stage. A friendly, welcoming atmosphere permeates the school and there are good levels of care and support for the pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with good provision for information and communication technology (ICT). There is a wide range of clubs, including music and sport, which adds enjoyment and interest to pupils' learning. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance remains below the national average.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching throughout the school, including procedures to check on pupils' progress is consistently good in order to raise standards and to challenge the more able pupils to do their best.
- Continue to take measures to ensure all pupils attend school regularly, and encourage parents to take holidays out of term time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactorily. Those in the early stages of learning English and those with learning disabilities are supported effectively and achieve well. Children enter the Foundation Stage with key skills that are weaker than normally expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress because of the sound provision but are still below average in nearly all areas when they leave the Foundation Stage. Most children reach the expected goals for learning in physical development. By Year 2, although there has been a steady improvement in recent years, standards are still below those expected, most notably in reading and mathematics. Relatively few pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

In 2005, the national test results of pupils in Year 6 were significantly below average in English and mathematics. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress. However, some of the most able pupils are not making the progress needed to enable them to reach the higher levels, especially in English and mathematics, as work set is not sufficiently challenging. By Year 6 in ICT, pupils' standards are above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and have some notable strengths. Pupils enjoy coming to school, co-operate well with each other, and are polite, friendly and caring. Behaviour in lessons and elsewhere around the school is good. Pupils' development of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. They show respect for others' feelings and opinions. Pupils are learning about decision making through, for example, the school council, one member of which said, 'we make a big difference'. They feel they are listened to and that their suggestions are thoroughly considered.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy, especially through exercise and healthy eating. Pupils say they feel happy and safe. They have a good awareness of economic matters through fundraising activities and are developing the skills to help them in later life satisfactorily.

The school takes a strong stance on pupils' punctuality and attendance. It works hard with the education welfare officer to tackle those pupils who drag the overall attendance rate down to below the national figure. Carefully maintained school data show that there is a significant minority of families who take their children out of school in term time for holidays abroad and this affects pupils' learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there are variations between classes and year groups. Effective teaching occurs in Year 2 and Year 6 and in ICT across the school. Good subject knowledge and organisational skills are features of the best lessons and behaviour is managed well in all classes. In many lessons, however, there is not enough planning to take account of pupils' different needs, particularly those of the most able pupils. For example, in some English and mathematics lessons, the worksheets, which are used too frequently, do not match the wide range of all pupils' attainment.

Teaching assistants provide valuable support in lessons for pupils who have learning difficulties. The bilingual support workers are effective in working alongside the pupils to ensure that those who are at an early stage of learning English are fully involved in lessons, a notable example being in the Foundation Stage. Procedures to check on pupils' progress are used satisfactorily in the main. The new procedures for raising

standards in writing are good and are beginning to contribute to better planning, accurate target setting and precise marking. As a result, there are early signs of improvements in standards. Assessment and target setting systems in reading, mathematics and science are not yet as rigorous. Effective procedures ensure that the needs of pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are identified when they first join the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils are grouped by ability for English and mathematics. However, the programmes of work planned for the pupils within these groups are not always precisely matched to the wide range of abilities. As a result, some pupils, especially the more able, do not always make the progress they should. The provision for ICT is good and results in pupils making effective progress and reaching above-average standards by Year 6. Teachers make good use of visits and visitors to enliven learning, and beneficial links have been made with a secondary specialist sports college to enhance the teaching of physical education. Personal, social and health education is well planned and is effective in making pupils aware of staying safe from drugs and the dangers of smoking and keeping healthy. A wide range of clubs and other activities out of school hours adds interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning. The most able pupils pursue their particular talents through planned activities both in and out of school, which helps to raise standards in subjects such as ICT and physical education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. Pupils feel that the school listens to their views and ideas. They say that bullying is rare but that it is dealt with promptly by the staff when it does occur. There are good arrangements for ensuring pupils are healthy and safe. Regular safety checks and robust child protection procedures are in place. Systems for monitoring pupils' personal development and academic achievements are satisfactory, although in some classes teachers' marking is not as effective as in others in showing pupils how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language receive good support. The support given by the learning mentor to Year 6 pupils is a particular strength. The very strong links with parents encourage pupils' good attitudes to their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management are satisfactory. This differs from the school's view, which judged it to be good. This is because pupils' standards are not high enough. Although the school has identified the need to raise these further, not

enough has yet been done to achieve this, with the notable exception of writing, where the action taken by the school to improve pupils' writing is already beginning to have a positive effect on standards in this aspect of English. The school's plans for improvement take account of the views of parents and pupils and show it has accurately identified its most pressing priorities. The senior management team work well together as a group and are aware that the key to raising standards depends on ensuring consistently good quality teaching. However, the school's systems for monitoring teaching are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure this is brought about. The governing body is very supportive and has a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They allocate generous funding to ensure that groups, such as those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language and pupils with learning difficulties, receive good support.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. There is a positive ethos where all staff work well as a team and contribute effectively to the good personal development of and care and support for pupils.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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	Yes
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 very much for all the help you gave to the inspectors when we came to your school recently. We liked talking to you and to your teachers and enjoyed your singing. Now we want to share with you what we thought about your school.

These are the things we liked most about your school

- You are all very friendly and polite.
- You told us you feel safe and well supported.
- Mrs O'Connor makes sure those of you who need extra help get it.
- You enjoy school, behave well and get on well with each other and with all members of staff.
- You are taught to realise the importance of exercise and healthy eating.
- By the time you get to Year 6, you have good skills in using computers.
- We enjoyed your singing in a music lesson.

But there are some things which could be improved

- We think that some of you could do much harder work if your teachers challenged you more.
- Some pupils need to come to school more regularly than they do.

Yours sincerely

Tom Shine Lead Inspector