

# Charnwood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120072
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicester City
<b>Inspection number</b>	327192
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rajinder Harrison

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	430
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Iqbal Lambat
<b>Headteacher</b>	Judith O'Connor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Nedham Street Leicester LE2 0HE
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 251 6574
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 253 9564

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this school are of Indian heritage. There are small numbers from other minority ethnic groups that include pupils with Somali and Polish backgrounds. Almost all pupils learn English as an additional language and many are at an early stage in their understanding. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. These pupils have mainly specific learning needs, speech and language and moderate learning difficulties.

The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision is organised as Foundation 1 (Nursery) and Foundation 2 (Reception). Children start in the Foundation 1 class at the age of three. The school has a significant number of pupils who join the school, often with little or no English, at times other than the start of Foundation 1.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Its success stems from the exceptional commitment and expertise of all staff, led by an extremely determined headteacher and governors, all of whom want pupils to have the best education possible. Outstanding leadership, inspirational teaching and excellent care, guidance and support arrangements result in pupils having extremely positive attitudes to school and making outstanding progress. The school is a dynamic and harmonious community where differences are valued and everyone is treated with respect. Because pupils feel secure, happy and valued at school, they form excellent relationships, grow in self-confidence and are inspired to do their best. Their high achievement shows that they love learning. Pupils are very eager to be at school because they are so happy there but a few are absent too frequently. School leaders have been successful in establishing what parents typically describe as 'a brilliant school; the teachers are all very good'.

Achievement across the school is outstanding. The many exciting activities and experiences help children in Foundation 1 grow in confidence and independence. Bilingual staff use the children's preferred languages to help them participate fully. Consequently, children make an excellent start to their learning. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, most attain average standards in all but numeracy and their general knowledge of the world. Excellent achievement is maintained through Years 1 to 6, resulting in above average standards at the end of Year 6. Improvements in teaching word-building skills and the high emphasis on speaking, reading, writing and investigation activities have had a significant impact on raising standards generally since the last inspection. Excellent support for pupils who need extra help with their learning ensures they achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils learning English as a new language have the help they need from highly skilled language support staff and make equally rapid progress. The good curriculum, with its good range of additional activities, is well planned to help pupils reach their potential both in their learning and their personal development. Teachers provide pupils with the challenging and realistic targets and good advice on how to improve their work successfully.

Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent. The headteacher involves staff and governors in identifying the right improvement priorities and evaluating the school's performance. Through good subject leadership, improvements in teaching and the curriculum have resulted in higher standards. The close analysis of each pupil's progress allows the school to deploy staff to best effect to ensure every pupil succeeds. Expectations of staff and pupils are very high and the school successfully meets its very challenging targets. Despite the school's good efforts, a few parents still keep their children off school too often and this does affect the progress they make. The relationships between the diverse ethnic minority groups within the school are outstanding as are the school's links relations with its local community. Links with the wider world, both home and abroad are less well developed. Given that leaders have been successful in raising standards and that the school now provides excellent care and education, their capacity to improve the school further is outstanding.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff have high expectations of what children can do. Attainment on entry to Foundation 1 is well below the levels expected at this age. Most children speak little or no English. Many also lack confidence

when they first start, so nurturing their personal and social development is high priority. In the supportive atmosphere, where routines are well established, children settle quickly and achieve well. Classrooms buzz with excitement as children explore and discover. The youngest children mix freely with those in Foundation 2, who provide excellent role models. Care and welfare arrangements are excellent. Staff sensitively support those who need extra guidance. Children ask for help confidently because of the trusting relationships they form. They talk in whichever languages they can best express themselves comfortably. Liaison with parents is very good and parents are confident they can raise any concerns regarding their children.

Leadership and management are inspirational. Effective teamwork and regular assessments help staff identify how well children are doing and plan subsequent work. Teaching is of high quality. Because of their low starting points in English, developing children's language skills is high priority, particularly their vocabulary. Creative planning ensures children have a wide range of imaginative activities to explore and discover. Children select from a good balance of adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. The classrooms and outside areas are vibrant, urging children to investigate and ask questions. They gain confidence and independence as they experience new situations. For example, children were fascinated by the microscope images they projected onto the computer screens of items such as leaves, feathers and their fingers. Staff guide children effectively and intervene with questions frequently. They check that children try everything and steer them gently to activities they find more challenging, for example creative play and mathematics.

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

- Encourage all parents to send their children to school regularly.
- Promote pupils' awareness and understanding of the wider world both in this country and abroad.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils make excellent gains through Years 1 to 6. The school's data and the 2008 teacher assessments show standards at the end of Year 2 to now be above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in the Year 6 cohort in 2008, who attained broadly average standards when they were in Year 2, made very good progress through Key Stage 2 and attained above average in English, mathematics and science. Current Year 6 pupils are working at similar levels. Standards have risen steadily in the last three years because the school has taken the right action to improve provision. Standards in literacy have improved markedly because teachers plan exciting activities and pupils enjoy many opportunities to practise these skills. Excellent opportunities to learn through practical activities, particularly in science and mathematics, benefit all pupils, but particularly those who find learning difficult or are new to learning English. These pupils receive excellent guidance from teachers and highly skilled support staff, including many who speak other languages, so that they can participate fully in all lessons and achieve as well as their classmates. Every effort is made to help the few who have low attendance to catch up with their work and their progress is generally at least good.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is outstanding and their cultural development good. Pupils love responsibilities and take these roles seriously. The school council plans

fundraising events, and playground buddies ensure pupils play sensibly and very safely. Pupils understand well the importance of living healthy lifestyles. Most select healthy meal options but not all take sufficient part in sporting activities. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are always polite, friendly and respectful. They speak with kindness and concern about the importance of caring for others and working with others supportively. They are confident that on the rare occasions that disagreements arise, these are sorted out quickly. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding, particularly through their involvement in religious festivals, community events and other local partnerships. They have a very good understanding of global issues, such as caring for the environment and recycling. Religious leaders and other community members support their excellent awareness of their own culture and traditions. Visits and other visitors extend their awareness of other cultures well. Although their understanding of the multicultural nature of British society, particularly the western culture, is less well developed than their own, pupils are very aware that differences should be valued and respected. A few pupils fail to attend regularly through no fault of their own, but when at school they work hard because they know school is important. Vibrant displays reflect how proud they are of their achievements. Their high achievement and very good personal skills prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

When asked what they liked about school, pupils said the teachers were 'brilliant' because they made lessons fun. The many exciting lessons seen reflect how hard teachers work to plan interesting and exciting activities. The Year 6 literacy lesson, 'Mr and Mrs Ghandi', inspired pupils to reflect on Mahatma Ghandi's life. The teachers' powerfully visual dramatisation fired up pupils' interest and enthusiasm and the follow-up discussions reflected outstanding learning. Imaginative themes such as this, that link work across subjects, help pupils see the relevance of their learning. Pupils particularly enjoy the many practical approaches teachers use to make lessons come alive. Activities are very varied and demanding and often completed against tight timescales so that everyone works at a brisk pace. Searching questions make pupils think and encourage high levels of self-motivation. Teachers and support staff guide pupils in tackling problems cooperatively and pupils work together extremely effectively. Pupils settle to work promptly, eager to explore and investigate, often using computers to help them. Teachers know their pupils' varying capabilities well and provide work that gives the right level of challenge or support. Because of the exceptional teamwork between adults and pupils, learning is highly successful.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is successfully designed to make learning exciting and fun. Particularly effective are the many practical approaches teachers use to make learning very visual. Drama, role-play and investigations help all pupils learn effectively, but particularly engage those who find it more difficult to understand their learning. Standards in reading have improved markedly because of the greater focus on developing pupils' word-building skills and ensuring that pupils read in class regularly. The 'Big Write' programme has had significant impact on pupils' writing because pupils find this visual approach helpful in extending their understanding. More time is being given to extend pupils' calculation and problem-solving skills to raise standards further

in mathematics. The curriculum is resourced well, with excellent use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning. Provision for pupils who need extra help with their learning is not only excellent but also exciting. Hence many pupils spend their spare time in school at various academic clubs where they can complete their work. Although sporting activities are limited because the school lacks appropriate facilities, a good range of other clubs, visits and visitors enrich learning and pupils' personal development well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school takes excellent care of its pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures all meet requirements. Adults who come into contact with pupils are vetted appropriately. Pupils' individual needs are considered sensitively, and because the school has excellent links with external agencies, these are consulted promptly when necessary. Staff take immediate action if pupils raise any concerns. Excellent support for pupils who find learning difficult allows them to participate successfully in all activities. Pupils are prepared well for secondary school and are not worried about moving on. The school works hard to improve attendance, but still has a few families who keep their children off school too readily.

Academic guidance is good. Achievement is tracked regularly to set challenging individual targets. Teachers use assessment information to plan precisely what pupils are expected to learn and senior managers, check that this happens. Excellent systems identify quickly when pupils fall behind, and relevant and effective support provided to help them catch up. Teachers mark work regularly and offer detailed supportive comments. Occasionally, comments are too general to show pupils how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher, staff and governors ensure that pupils learn in a friendly and safe environment where everyone is valued equally. The school's ethos encourages a very strong belief that all pupils will achieve to high levels. Supported by effective senior leaders, the headteacher promotes a culture of high expectations. Diligent teamwork ensures agreed improvements are implemented consistently and that everyone is held to account regarding the progress pupils make in each class. Teaching and learning are monitored rigorously. Staff have the support and training they need to carry out their roles successfully. Subject leaders share responsibility for much of this work and do so effectively, hence, for example, the improvement in teaching reading and writing. While the school collects excellent data regarding pupils' progress, the information is not easy to access in its current form to help identify, for example, the impact of the frequent absences of a few pupils on their attainment. Governors support the school well. Regular visits enable them to monitor the school's performance and ask probing questions regarding developments. They have been less successful in ensuring that all parents send their children to school regularly. Governors have agreed a good community cohesion plan and pupils have an excellent understanding of the diverse faiths and cultures within their local community. Links with communities beyond the local area and with other countries are less well developed. Partnerships with the local schools and colleges are outstanding and support curriculum enrichment well.

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**Annex A**

## 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?	1
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	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

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<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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

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

20 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charnwood Primary School, Leicester LE2 0HE

You may remember that three inspectors came to visit your school recently. Thank you for making us welcome. We loved talking to you about the interesting things that you like about your school. You told us how much you enjoy being at school and that your teachers are brilliant. We agree. We know that your headteacher and all the other staff do an excellent job in making sure you make a good start to your education. We are happy to tell you that your school is outstanding.

We were impressed with your excellent behaviour, and how hard you work in your lessons. We saw you settle to work quickly and work with each other very sensibly. We could see that you enjoy learning in the way you listen carefully to your teachers. It was brilliant to see so many hands go up to answer questions. You told us how much you enjoy activities like the ICT and mathematics clubs. It would be good if more of you joined in the sports activities too. We saw many of you use computers confidently in lessons and you said that you can use the school computers anytime to finish your work. We were particularly impressed by how much you know about the different cultures and religions in your school. All of you who have specific jobs as school councillors and playground buddies carry out your duties very sensibly.

Staff take excellent care of you and give you plenty of help so that you do even better. You all make outstanding progress. The youngest children get off to an excellent start in the Foundation classes and those of you in Year 6 are working at standards that are above average.

Yours is an outstanding school but a few things could be even better. To make this happen, we have asked the school's leaders to make sure all of you come to school regularly so that you learn even more. We would also like the school leaders to give you more opportunities to learn about the different communities in other parts of this country and countries abroad.

Most of you come to school everyday because you say you love school. It would be good if a few of you did not miss school too often because this will stop you learning as well as you could.

We hope that you will all do well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector