

Sneinton St Stephen's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122776
Local Authority	Nottingham City
Inspection number	363958
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Taylor
Headteacher	Rebecca Meredith
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2007
School address	Windmill Lane Sneinton Nottingham NG2 4QB
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	25–26 May 2011
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 13 lessons and several intervention group sessions. Meetings were held with pupils, parents, representatives of the governing body and all school leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information, school policies and 57 questionnaires from parents and carers.

Information about the school

The school is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average and includes pupils with learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and physical disabilities. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Almost 50% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is a high percentage compared with schools nationally. A well above average proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The government's floor targets have been met during the past three years. There are before- and after-school clubs and a lunch club which are managed by the governing body. The school has achieved several awards including gold Healthy Schools status, Activemark and the Eco Schools bronze award. It is a National Support School.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement	1
Teaching	1
Leadership and management	1
Behaviour and safety	2
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. Pupils achieve exceptionally well and by the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is above average.
- Outstanding engagement with parents and carers and strong links with external agencies help ensure that pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs grow in confidence and self-esteem, and make progress equal to their peers.
- Teaching is outstanding. Pupils enjoy their learning because the work is stimulating and well matched to their needs. In those lessons where pupils' learning is less than outstanding, teachers' planning is not focused enough on pupils' learning, consequently, some pupils are not guided through the small steps which help them learn exceptionally well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, and lessons are very calm and orderly.
- Rigorous systems to improve pupils' attendance are having a positive impact, especially in reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.
- All groups of pupils are cared for exceptionally well. Teachers do their best to ensure that all pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school and in the wider community. Instances of bullying are rare. When it does occur, it is quickly and successfully dealt with by the school.
- The headteacher's relentless endeavour to improve the life-chances of all pupils is the major reason why the school has improved year on year. All leaders have

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high expectations of staff and pupils, rigorously monitor all aspects of the school and share a clear vision for improvement. The governing body contributes effectively to the life of the school, supports the senior leaders well and effectively holds the school to account.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that in all lessons, teachers' planning is focused on pupils' learning and all pupils are guided through the small steps which help them learn exceptionally well.

Main report

Strong and committed leadership has built successfully on the good provision found at the last inspection. School leaders and staff operate very effectively as a team and have raised the quality of every aspect of the school. Consequently, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has risen year on year. The gaps are closing between the attainment of groups of pupils who were previously below the national average and that of most other groups. Adults act as positive role models, giving calm and positive praise to pupils, promoting good behaviour and outstanding achievement. Parents and carers speak exceptionally highly of the school. They appreciate that teachers do all they can to ensure that pupils are safe in school and are aware of the potential dangers in the local community and the wider world. The school has a welcoming and delightfully happy environment in which pupils thrive, behave with kindness and want to do their best. Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are accommodated exceptionally well. Unobtrusive individual support in lessons, the calm ethos of the school and very effective use of the sensory room help ensure pupils are given time and support to deal with and understand their feelings and emotions.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make rapid progress from their low starting points. The well-organised learning environment provides children with exciting learning opportunities, allowing them to make choices and develop independence. Particularly impressive gains are made in children's personal, social and reading skills. Consequently, by the time they start in Year 1, pupils' attainment is much closer to age-related expectations. As pupils move through the school, they continue to make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. All groups, including those pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve equally well. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average.

Across the school, pupils make particularly strong gains in reading. This is largely due to the emphasis placed on developing pupils' reading skills and the systematic programme of interventions for pupils who find learning difficult. These carefully planned programmes of one-to-one and small group support are effective in raising

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pupils' attainment and self-esteem. This means that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities feel positive about developing reading skills and also make the progress necessary to achieve as well as they can. By the time pupils reach the age of six, their attainment in reading is close to average and is above average by the end of Year 6.

Excellent relationships between adults and pupils are evident in all lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy their learning and take pride in the presentation of their work. Teachers regularly check on pupils' learning and very skillfully ensure that pupils are given support to help them overcome any difficulties. Teachers' marking provides pupils with clear areas for improvement. Pupils are encouraged to work productively in groups, sharing ideas and discussing their work. Regular tracking of pupils' progress and discussions with the senior leaders help teachers have a detailed and accurate understanding of pupils' attainment and ensure that work is nearly always very well matched to pupils' needs. In a few lessons, teachers are not completely clear about what they want some of the groups of pupils to learn. Where this occurs, although the pupils readily engage in the activities, a small number are not guided through the small learning stages which help them build upon their current skills and knowledge.

The school places much emphasis on providing pupils with lively and memorable experiences. Planned links between subjects enable pupils to use their skills in meaningful ways. The high quality 'forest school' activities provide many opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally and socially. They help pupils appreciate the wonders of life around them, learn to work as a team and develop their numeracy and literacy skills. Visits from representatives of different faiths, visits to places of worship, regular communication with pen pals in Nepal and Germany, and texts carefully chosen to illustrate different cultures help pupils gain a strong understanding of the diversity of cultures and traditions throughout the world. During this inspection, a technology workshop challenged pupils well to apply skills to solve problems.

Breakfast club is typical of the warm, stimulating, high quality care given to pupils. It provides a very good start to the day and helps encourage many pupils to attend school and arrive on time. The caring ethos of the school is evident in all the school's actions and interactions between staff and pupils. The school's 'zero tolerance' bullying policy is implemented strongly by all staff and promotes good behaviour. The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to understand how they can keep themselves safe, including practical cycling sessions, and work on the dangers of drug abuse. All of the parents and carers who replied to the inspection questionnaire or who talked to the inspectors felt that there was a good standard of behaviour at the school and pupils felt safe. During the inspection, all groups of pupils also said that they felt safe in the school and most pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed. Pupils say that behaviour is usually exceptionally good but occasionally anti-social behaviour occurs. Pupils add that, when this does happen, it is dealt with immediately and successfully by the school. The school is rightly proud of its willingness and ability to work with pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour.

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There have been no exclusions in recent years. One pupil told inspectors how the attention to her individual needs and the time given by the headteacher and staff to resolve her problems had significantly improved her behaviour. She commented, 'The school has changed my life'.

The school has a strong capacity for continuous improvement. All leaders, including the governing body, know the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a clear strategy for further improvement. The school's leadership has an excellent track record of improving pupils' attainment, gaining the support of the local communities and reducing the proportion of persistent absentees. Regular communication, breakfast provision and workshops are among the many successful strategies used by the school to engage parents and carers into the life of the school and support their children's learning. The school is strongly committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination. Every pupil is known as an individual and, as one parent commented, the school 'goes the extra mile' to ensure that those pupils who are experiencing difficulties in their lives are cared for and supported exceptionally well. A strength of the school is the consistency with which the school's vision and values are implemented by all members of staff. High expectations, regular monitoring and evaluation, and a clear focus on raising pupils' achievement in a supportive and happy environment are embedded into all aspects of school life.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sneinton St Stephen's CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 225 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	46	81	10	18	0	0	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	45	79	12	21	0	0	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	40	70	17	30	0	0	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	36	63	21	37	0	0	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	41	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	46	81	10	18	0	0	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	34	60	23	40	0	0	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	30	53	26	46	0	0	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	32	56	19	33	3	5	0	0
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	43	75	14	25	0	0	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	43	75	13	23	0	0	0	0
Q12 The school is well led and managed	40	70	17	30	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sneinton St Stephen's CofE Primary School, Nottingham, NG2 4QB

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We appreciated meeting with you and visiting your lessons. We were very pleased to see the sensible way you behave around school, and we liked the way you play happily together and work hard in lessons. You told us that you feel safe in school and your parents and carers agree.

You go to an outstanding school. The headteacher and other school leaders work very hard to keep you safe, make you happy and ensure that you achieve exceptionally well. The teachers are very kind and helpful, and want you all to make as much progress as possible, especially with your reading, writing and mathematics. Some of your parents and carers told us that all the adults in the school do their very best to look after you all, especially those who are experiencing difficulties in your lives. We agree and found that you are cared for exceptionally well.

To make the school even better, we have asked the headteacher to make sure that, in all your lessons, the teachers are perfectly clear about what they want all of you to learn and plan very carefully how all the children in the class can make outstanding progress.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and helping each other all you can.

We shall take away many good memories of your school. Thank you again for being so helpful and courteous.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector

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