

Outwoods Edge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119977
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313466
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan Greenfield

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	331
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Adshead
Headteacher	Mark Maksymiw
Date of previous school inspection	2 June 2003
School address	21 Redwood Road Loughborough LE11 2LD
Telephone number	01509 216177
Fax number	01509 264416

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Outwoods Edge is larger than most primary schools. It serves a community with quite diverse needs. Until recently, children's skills on entry to the school have been lower than usually found, but those of the children currently in Reception are now broadly typical of their age group. Most pupils are White British but a few are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Indian, Chinese and Eastern European. A higher proportion of pupils than usual are in the early stages of learning English. Eligibility for free school meals is broadly average. The school gained the Healthy Schools award in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Outwoods Edge is a good school. It is an improving school and has a number of outstanding features, including its leadership and management, the extremely high levels of care, guidance and support that staff provide pupils, and the pupils' personal development and well-being. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, as shown by the large group of parents that came to talk to one of the inspectors and the responses to the parents' questionnaire. The strength of their feelings is reflected in their extensive comments, writing, for example: 'Outwoods Edge is an excellent school;' 'I cannot praise the school highly enough for their care and understanding;' or 'My child is never happier than when he is at school – he is always talking about the interesting topics they are doing.' Children are at the heart of the school's work and widening their horizons is an important priority. As a result, pupils mature into well rounded young people who are prepared very well for their future lives.

The friendly atmosphere provides a secure environment in which all pupils learn and do well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all the opportunities that the school gives them through the good curriculum and the extensive range of additional activities. Their behaviour is mostly excellent, but a few pupils with additional needs find it difficult to concentrate when they are asked to sit still for too long or when the work does not engage them. Pupils play well together and take very good care of each other. They have an excellent understanding of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to keep safe, and make a very good contribution to the school and wider community.

Standards in the school are improving and are above average. The national test results in 2007 in Year 6 were slightly above average but the school's data show that its performance is set to rise considerably this year. Most pupils achieve well but some more able pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, are capable of doing more demanding work. Children make good progress in Reception and most work securely within the learning goals expected for children of this age by Year 1, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Although much teaching is excellent, mainly in Key Stage 2, overall it is good because it is not consistent across the school. The teaching helps pupils make good progress, but in a few classes, it does not always challenge or motivate pupils enough, which slows the pace of learning. There are excellent systems for tracking pupils' progress in mathematics and underachievement is very quickly identified. The tracking of progress in writing is good but not as rigorous.

Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and other staff ensures that the school constantly reviews its progress and takes robust, but carefully considered, action where improvements are required. The governors undertake their responsibilities extremely well and are fully involved in the school's development. The school has a very clear view of its strengths and weaknesses, and the improvements so far indicate excellent capacity to make further progress.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in Reception receive a good start to their education. Their skills and experiences on entry this year are broadly as expected, but higher than in previous years. The curriculum provides children with a wide range of stimulating experiences, and together with the good teaching, ensures that they make good progress in all areas of learning. Children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and they are

happy and settled. Good relationships, carefully planned tasks and effective support from all adults contribute to their good progress. As a result, most children work securely within the expected goals for learning by the end of Reception. Leadership is good and teachers and other adults plan together well, making good use of assessment information to inform planning and check children's progress. The outdoor areas for the Reception classes vary quite considerably, with one more stimulating than the other. Plans are in hand to remedy this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more able pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, with more demanding work to stretch them further.
- Assess pupils' progress in writing rigorously to ensure that those in danger of falling behind are quickly identified.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average by Year 6. Pupils make good progress overall and achieve well. Their progress is not consistent in all classes, as some of the teaching does not always challenge them enough, especially the more able pupils in Key Stage 1. Children in Reception make good progress across all areas of learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those identified as vulnerable receive a great deal of specific support, which enables them to make good progress.

Staff analysed carefully the national test results in 2007, which were average in Year 2 and slightly above average in Year 6. They identified the areas where pupils did not do so well, for example, in reading and calculation in mathematics. They have taken firm action to remedy these relative weaknesses, which is already making a difference. The school's tracking information shows that pupils are on course to exceed the standards attained in the national tests in 2007.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thrive in the positive environment within the school. They develop into friendly, well-mannered pupils who are eager to learn. As a result, they attend well. Their moral and social development is particularly strong, seen in their excellent relationships with each other and their mostly very good behaviour. Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is also strong, but their understanding of life in multicultural Britain is not as secure as other aspects. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the need to remain healthy and have an excellent understanding about staying safe. They say they feel safe and well cared for. They make a first class contribution to the school community, through their roles as monitors, reading partners, school councillors and playground leaders, as well as to the wider community, raising money for charities and performing with other schools. Pupils are developing a wide range of team-working and other key skills, which prepare them very well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is stronger in Years 3 to 6 than elsewhere, as a higher proportion of lessons are good and often outstanding. The very good relationships between adults and pupils and the emphasis on giving praise mean that the atmosphere in lessons is conducive to good learning. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan a range of stimulating activities to motivate and engage pupils. The good use of interactive whiteboards also helps pupils learn effectively. Occasionally, the work does not extend the more able pupils enough, especially younger ones, as they spend too much time listening to the teacher or undertaking low-level tasks such as cutting and pasting. As a result, time is used inefficiently and pupils do not develop sufficiently their skills of working independently. At times, a few pupils with additional needs do not respond appropriately because the activities do not actively involve them or teachers do not manage them well enough. Teachers make good use of targets, which pupils clearly understand, to support learning and set challenges. Teaching assistants provide very good support in lessons and are fully involved in helping pupils make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum, including that in Reception, is broad and balanced and is carefully adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has already adopted the new national frameworks for literacy and mathematics and as soon as these are firmly embedded, staff are eager to plan a creative curriculum to link subjects more closely. The programme for personal and social education and citizenship makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The excellent range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities enhances pupils' experiences and learning. Of particular note are the high participation rates in lunchtime and after-school activities, and the school's involvement with the local university on a number of challenging projects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff know their pupils very well and ensure that they are safe and well cared for. Pupils know that they can turn to any adult if they have any worries. Child protection and safeguarding requirements are robust, and health and safety receive high priority. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in the early stages of learning English or identified as being vulnerable is very well coordinated. The school identifies their needs quickly and ensures that appropriate support is provided at an early stage. Teaching assistants organise weekly sessions to boost the confidence and self-esteem of pupils considered vulnerable and to help those whose social and communication skills are weak. Such sessions benefit these pupils immeasurably.

The careful tracking of pupils' progress provides class teachers and senior managers with detailed information on how well pupils are doing, enabling them to identify those in danger of falling behind. Tracking in mathematics is outstanding. The setting of regular targets and some effective marking, which is exemplary in the Year 5/6 classes, help pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher, who provides outstanding leadership, has ensured that staff understand and share his vision and that of the governing body for the school's future development. This means that teamwork and a shared endeavour to do the best for all pupils are visible in the daily life of the school. The school's calm, yet vibrant, atmosphere is testimony to the strong lead provided by the headteacher. He receives excellent support from his senior team and middle leaders, who undertake their roles with enthusiasm. Governors play a key role in the school's development and undertake their responsibilities extremely well.

An outstanding feature of the school's work is the quality of its self-evaluation. Thorough systems are in place to check its performance and the clarity of focus that emerges from its evaluation is evident in the priorities identified in the school's improvement plan. Data are used extremely well to set challenging targets. The thorough analyses undertaken of these data, together with other checks that take place on a regular basis, give staff clear information on which to base their planning, to sharpen their practice, and set a clear agenda for further improvement.

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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?	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

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?	1

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?	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	1
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	1
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

10 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Outwoods Edge Primary School, Loughborough, LE11 2LD

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. We enjoyed our visit, especially in having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. This letter is to tell you what we found.

- You go to a good school that helps you to reach standards that are higher than in most schools.
- You work hard and most of you make good progress because the teaching is good.
- You are friendly and polite to each other and nearly all of you behave extremely well.
- You enjoy your lessons and many of you take part in the large number of clubs and other activities that the school provides for you. We were very impressed with the work some of you were producing in the K'NEX challenge with staff from the university.
- You know how well you are doing and how to improve your work, and teachers keep a careful check on your progress.
- Adults in the school look after you extremely well, especially those of you who have particular needs or find it difficult to settle into school.
- Your headteacher and other staff, as well as the governors, lead the school very well and work very hard to make sure that you get the best out of your time in the school.

The school does so much to help you do well and nearly all your parents are very pleased with the school. We have identified two things to help it get even better.

- Give some of you, especially lower down the school, harder work to do so that you make even faster progress.
- Ensure that teachers follow your progress in writing as well as they do in mathematics.

Because you do so much to support one another already, I am confident that you will all try your very best to make the school even better than it currently is.

Very best wishes to you all
Yours sincerely

Mrs J Greenfield Lead inspector

10 March 2008

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