

# Mountfields Lodge School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	119994
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379931
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Vivienne McTiffen

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	501
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jean Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sheila Grice
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Epinal Way Loughborough LE11 3GE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01509 214119
<b>Fax number</b>	01509 264989
<b>Email address</b>	office@mountfieldslodge.leics.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	1–2 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379931



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Vivienne McTiffen

Additional inspector

Michael Lafford

Additional inspector

Patricia Underwood

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. Inspectors observed 21 lessons. In addition, inspectors observed mathematics groups, extended writing, sports education and linking sounds to letters (phonics) sessions. They listened to pupils read. In total, 19 teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at development plans, information on pupils' attainment and progress, monitoring systems and safeguarding documentation. They analysed responses to questionnaires from 116 parents and carers, 48 staff and 76 pupils.

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average but increasing. The number from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is broadly in line with the national average. The number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.

The school meets the current government floor standards.

A daily breakfast club uses the school hall during term time and is managed by the governing body.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It prizes the academic achievement and personal development of all its pupils. A strength is the way in which the school carefully tracks pupils' progress and the high level of support provided for those who find learning difficult or who have specific needs. The school is not judged to be outstanding because the quality of teaching, whilst good, is not outstanding.
- Pupils make good progress to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6, in English and mathematics. Over time, standards are higher in English but recent results show that standards in mathematics are improving due to an increased focus on the subject.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make lessons interesting and motivate pupils to learn. Tasks give the right level of challenge, especially in English, but sometimes in mathematics, work is not well enough matched to ability and marking does not always give pupils sufficient help to improve.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are attentive in lessons and behave well around school. They say they are happy and feel safe. They show tolerance towards those who have difficulty in behaving well. Attendance is above average and few pupils are persistently late or absent.
- The quality of leadership and management is good. Leaders stringently monitor teaching and learning. This means they quickly pick up gaps in provision and support staff well in their professional development, leading to improvement. They ensure an exciting curriculum, linking subjects together in topics. As a result, pupils have good opportunities to write for a range of purposes although they have less chance to use mathematical skills in other subjects.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Build upon the good start made to raise achievement in mathematics by:
  - ensuring good match of work to ability in all classes so pupils make the best possible progress
  - developing a consistent approach to teachers' marking which gives guidance on how to improve and is directly linked to pupils' targets
  - giving pupils more chance to use their skills in collaborative problem solving and investigative work, and reinforcing these opportunities in other subjects.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel that their children make good progress in developing communication, reading, writing and mathematical skills, and inspectors agree. Children start in the reception classes with skill levels broadly in line with expectations for this age group but, increasingly often, possess communication, reading and writing skills that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress to reach expected levels by the time they enter Year 1 because the curriculum is well matched to their needs and abilities and teaching is good. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attainment in reading is above average. Pupils do well because the school nurtures the enjoyment of books. For example, during the inspection, the whole school celebrated World Book Day and lessons revolved around stories, when pupils made good progress in their learning. Regular sessions for linking sounds to letters (phonics) and guided reading groups contribute to pupils' success in reading. There are strong links between reading and writing. In weekly writing sessions, infant pupils use punctuation and grammar and phonic knowledge to spell. Older pupils write neatly, using more complex sentence structures and grammar to write at length. In mathematics, pupils develop calculating skills well but have only limited opportunities to use these skills widely across the curriculum, especially in problem solving and investigative work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn mathematics in ability groups, leading to improved achievement, although within these groups and throughout the school, there is some variation on how well work is matched to ability and the amount of progress pupils make.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. A notable feature is the way in which some of these pupils, in Years 5 and 6, are supported in their writing. The opportunity to word-process their work on computers helps those who find writing arduous to achieve a complete piece of writing more quickly. Pupils say they value this choice and show increased confidence in committing their ideas to paper. Equally, those with behavioural difficulties develop positive attitudes towards learning. They build strong relationships with staff and show improvement over time in conforming to the school's expectations. Pupils whose first language is not English and those from minority ethnic groups make good progress because of the level of support they receive and links made with their

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families. The school monitors closely the performance of the increasing number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Most of these pupils make good progress in line with their peers because of additional support they receive, but this group remains one whose achievement the school is keen to improve in order to close the gap on standards nationally.

### Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel their child is taught well, typified by one comment, 'The staff team do a fantastic job and the emphasis is on the children, always.' Pupils say they learn a lot in lessons. The inspection found that teaching is good and is directly responsible for pupils' good achievement. The best learning takes place when teachers set the right level of challenge. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, in which the teaching was good, pupils based their writing on Roald Dahl's story of 'George's Marvellous Medicine'. They were inspired by a film clip and their teacher's demonstration of her own mixture before talking about their ideas for their own ingredients. This lesson was carefully planned to take account of the different ability levels of pupils and, consequently, they made good progress, especially the more able who used adjectives and alliteration with confidence.

Teachers give positive feedback and plenty of praise for effort. They pick up misconceptions well in lessons and ensure pupils understand what they will achieve by their end. One pupil commented that this is useful 'because you know what you are learning.' When marking pupils' work, teachers do not always make it clear how to improve or make reference to pupils' targets, especially in mathematics. As a result, pupils do not always know how to do better.

Teachers develop pupils' social skills effectively, encouraging them to work together, and especially to share ideas before writing. However, there is less imaginative and effective use of group working in mathematics. Teachers manage classes well, consistently expecting good behaviour, aiding pupils' good moral development. Teaching assistants and support staff are skilled at helping pupils who find learning difficult. Staff plan lessons together for continuity between classes and for those which are taught by more than one teacher. Learning is made interesting by linking subjects together. For example, in Year 3 and 4, geography and history are linked by work on the Egyptians and the River Nile, whilst the rivers topic in Year 5 and 6 links geography and science. Teachers make good use of the natural links between different subjects to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development well, nurturing curiosity and knowledge of past and present cultures. In the reception classes, teachers provide imaginative activities, encouraging children to find out for themselves. Children's work is carefully compiled in exemplary, high quality 'Learning Journeys', clearly showing development over time. These are regularly shared with parents and carers, who greatly value the opportunity to see children's progress and be involved in their learning.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' good behaviour contributes strongly to the smooth running of this large school. They move around the site sensibly and mix well with each other. Pupils are keen to learn and respond well to teachers and school staff. They are polite and eager to talk about their work and responsibilities. Older pupils help younger ones and their teachers very willingly. Pupils know the importance of good behaviour and how it affects their learning because it is made clear to them by the school. They say they understand the sanctions and reward systems and strive to do well. Although parents and carers expressed some concerns over disruptive behaviour in lessons, inspectors found that those pupils with behavioural difficulties respond well to the school's systems and are managed consistently and effectively by staff. As a result, disruptive incidents seldom occur. Incidents of bullying of any type, including cyber-bullying, are rare. These are taken very seriously by the school and stringently recorded.

Evidence that behaviour has been consistently good over time is provided by parents and carers, with nearly all of those who returned questionnaires agreeing their child feels safe at school. Staff have clear rotas and systems to ensure pupils are well supervised and kept safe. Pupils say they know who to speak to if they have a problem and express confidence in the school's level of care and support. They explain unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe because due regard is paid to this by the curriculum, especially in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and personal and social education.

## **Leadership and management**

The leadership team share a common sense of purpose in moving the school forward. Thorough analysis of the school's successes and areas for development has led to well-defined and realistic plans for improvement. These plans link well to the monitoring by all leaders of the quality of teaching, helping staff to understand how to improve. Governors are well informed and highly supportive. They know strengths and weaknesses and monitor how well the school is doing. There are clear channels of communication with parents and carers. Governors extend links, for example through Parent Forums, so they can more fully gather views. Those parents and carers spoken to and those who returned questionnaires appreciate the chance to support their child's learning. The current focus on improving mathematics and the adoption of a more creative approach to curriculum planning since the last inspection indicate that the school is in a good position to continue improving.

Performances, trips and sports activities, some of which are the result of the school's good partnerships with others, enhance the curriculum. These together with involvement in the school council and the eco-committee make a positive contribution to pupils' social development. As a result, pupils acquire personal qualities which prepare them well for the next stage of their education. The breakfast club, managed by the governing body, provides a valuable facility and a healthy and sociable start to the day for children of all ages.

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Leaders and managers, including the leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage, strongly promote equality to ensure a cohesive school community. Highly effective systems for tracking pupils' progress flag up any underachievement which are quickly addressed: for example, raising girls' achievement in mathematics and narrowing any gaps in performance, especially for those pupils identified as being eligible for free school meals. Very good links with external agencies and families support pupils' learning well, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Staff receive the required training in child protection and vetting procedures are in place.



## 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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



5 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Mountfields Lodge School, Loughborough, LE11 3GE**

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed listening to your views about the school and seeing you at work. Thank you for completing the questionnaires and talking to us. Your answers to our questions have helped the inspectors a lot.

We were impressed by the way you all get on well together in your large school. You told the inspectors you are happy to come to school and you feel safe. You are polite and attentive in lessons. Your behaviour is good and your attendance is above average. Your teachers make lessons interesting and you say you enjoy learning.

You attend a good school and you reach standards above those expected for your age by the time you leave. The school is good at tracking how well you are all doing and making sure you receive support in your learning, especially those of you who have specific needs. Because of this, you make good progress in English and mathematics but inspectors think you can do even better in mathematics. We have asked the school to make the following improvements to help you all do better in mathematics:

- make sure teachers give you work that is just right, not too hard and not too easy
- make sure when teachers mark your work they help you to understand how to improve and make reference to your targets
- to give you more chance to work together on problem solving and investigative work, especially in other subjects.

We hope the things we have asked the school to do will help you to make the best possible progress. All of you can help by continuing to behave well and working hard in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen  
Lead inspector

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