

Mount Street Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120694
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358822
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Birch
Headteacher	Catherine Paine
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 17 lessons or part-lessons in 10 classes, and 14 teachers were seen. Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils and several representatives of the governing body, and spoke to parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including tracking of pupils' progress, samples of the school's monitoring of teaching and learning, school curricular planning and the school development plan. Inspectors also closely scrutinised samples of pupils' recent work and documents regarding safeguarding. Questionnaires from 158 parents and carers and 47 staff were also scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

How effective are the strategies to improve reading?

- How does the school ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equivalent progress to other pupils?
- How well has the school dealt with the issues for improvement noted at the last inspection regarding improving the use of assessment?
- How has the headteacher's interim headship at another school affected the quality of the drive for improvement at this school?

Information about the school

Almost all pupils in this large infant and nursery school have White British backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Their difficulties are mainly in speech, language and communication or they have behavioural, emotional and social needs. The school has a stable population and Healthy School status. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a Nursery with 91 part-time places and three Reception classes. A daily pre-school and after-school care facility is run by an outside provider at the school and is not part of this inspection. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was also interim headteacher at another 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: how good is the school?**1****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****1**

Main findings

Mount Street Infant and Nursery is a highly effective school that provides an outstanding quality of education and care for its pupils. School leaders have an exceptional commitment to the development of creativity as a tool to support the best possible learning and, as a result, the school has an especially successful and vibrant curriculum. This fully promotes enjoyment in learning and benefits not only pupils' academic progress but also their finely-honed personal skills. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. All the curricular activities are linked, purposeful, interesting and enjoyable. During the inspection a local farmer visited, along with livestock, as part of a planned theme. 'It's cool here,' said one pupil, patting a sheep; others readily agreed. Parents and carers are strongly supportive and are thoroughly involved in the school's work. 'Mount Street is an exceptional school', was a typical comment. 'The teaching and non-teaching staff work as a team to provide a caring, safe and fun place for the children to learn.'

First-rate care, guidance and support are provided for all pupils. The outstanding collection, interpretation and use of assessment data ensures that all staff have a range of information to plan an excellent series of activities that challenge all groups of pupils equally well. This leads to high-quality teaching and learning. Because of this, most children make exceptional progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is reinforced as they move through the school. The gains in their learning lead to outstanding achievement. As a result, overall attainment has been significantly above average by the end of Year 2 for the past three years.

Inspection evidence indicates that reading, where attainment has been slightly less positive, is improving because excellent strategies are being implemented. For instance, a number of parents and carers have been trained by the school to assist with reading and most come into school to help on a daily basis. In addition, the school now has very thorough systems to monitor pupils' progress and to check and accurately evaluate effectiveness, both of teaching and learning and the care and support provided for pupils. This significant improvement since the last inspection, along with a marked increase in attainment in mathematics, points to outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

The governing body provides the school with good support. Governors have forged strong links locally that benefit the pupils but their work to develop the promotion of community cohesion in both a national and global context is not yet embedded. They enjoy a strong relationship with staff but have more limited opportunities to gain a first-hand understanding of pupils' experience of learning. The headteacher and senior team have thoroughly embedded ambition and orchestrated a successful drive for improvement. When the headteacher is carrying out duties at another school, the senior team ensures that the first class educational experience, enjoyed so much by the pupils, continues

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unabated. Overall there are significant strengths in all main areas, for example in the use of assessment and in teaching. Leaders and managers are constantly looking to maintain and develop their practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading so that it is as high as it is in writing and mathematics.
 - Improve the governing body's understanding of pupils' learning experience, to underpin their effectiveness in holding leaders and managers accountable, by broadening their monitoring work to include:
 - first-hand observation of pupils' learning experience
 - the comprehensive promotion of community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Most children enter the school with skills and abilities below those expected for their age and make great strides in their learning; they make outstanding progress so that they leave with above average attainment. Mathematics is particularly strong and writing close behind. Despite the slightly lower attainment recorded in reading in 2010, school records show the vast majority of pupils also make outstanding progress in this subject from their starting points. Assessment information indicates that pupils with speech, language and communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and pupils who speak English as an additional language have made at least equivalent progress to their peers, and in some cases even better progress.

Pupils are highly focused on their learning right from the start because staff use a compelling variety of interesting and fun approaches to promote pupils' good writing, language, reading and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. This facilitates pupils' motivation and enthusiasm for learning throughout their time in the school, whatever their background. For instance, in a Year 1 lesson on 'Where food comes from', a range of coordinated activities kept pupils in rapt attention whilst fully promoting their basic skills. During the lesson a lively debate about food pricing helped to contextualise real life economic aspects. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils learned practically about the journey of a potato from harvesting to selling in a shop. They dug up potatoes, sent them in toy lorries to the 'factory', washed, dried, sorted, weighed and bagged them, using the widest possible range of skills. Each activity was conducted at different skill levels to meet individual needs so that everyone could make excellent progress.

Pupils are happy, keen and enthusiastic learners who thoroughly enjoy school and feel a strong sense of belonging. Attendance is above average and rising. Behaviour during the inspection was consistently good and sometimes exemplary. The high expectations for pupils' behaviour and effort result in their highly developed social and moral awareness. Coupled with the school's very strong promotion of links with the local community, and the developing links with schools with different faiths and cultures in the wider community, this fosters pupils' excellent spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are proud of their work to maintain Healthy Schools status and have an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Commensurate with their age, they have a very well developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The discussion and exploration of pupils' ideas and creativity underpin the creative curriculum that assists pupils to enjoy their learning and achieve outstandingly. An exciting range of extra-curricular activities and a vast array of visits and visitors bring learning to life. ICT is used very well to support learning. Lessons weave together very well through skilled planning, brisk pace, sharp assessment and tasks matched well to ability. High expectations provide an extremely beneficial learning experience for pupils. In most lessons observed, every opportunity was taken skilfully to promote learning across a range of subjects in exceptionally well-planned and stimulating activities. Teachers' management of pupils is exemplary, resulting in a high motivation to learn. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were preparing, cooking and mashing potatoes, pupils' bubbling excitement was channelled to lead them to produce high quality explanations. These focused on technical vocabulary and complex sentence construction to include in the instructions they subsequently wrote. Staff make particularly successful use of the outstanding assessment information to ensure that activities are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils. Resources are fully integrated into learning, from the sensory garden in the grounds, to local facilities, parents and carers and specialists to enhance learning. Highly competent teaching assistants provide mostly excellent support, especially for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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The outstanding care, guidance and support provided for all pupils is a significant reason for some of the striking successes the school has in helping all pupils to learn and develop, including those who may experience difficulty from time to time. Staff provide assistance through either a kind word, action or specific support where appropriate. The Attendance Bears put in a popular weekly appearance to reward class groups with consistently high rates of attendance. During the inspection, Year 2 paid a regular visit to the nearby junior school, this time to be taught French by the Year 3 teachers. This is just one example of how pupils are well prepared for their next school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Central to the many improvements made in the school since the last inspection is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and the very effective development of both senior and middle leaders. The headteacher's clarity of understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses has been a crucial factor in securing significant improvement. The senior leadership team is very skilled in developing effective teaching and leading key areas. The deputy headteacher and middle managers have all been highly supportive and ensure that all staff have worked to embed the vision for the future of the school.

Partnerships, including those with local schools, have had an extremely positive impact on pupils' learning. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination very well because staff are well trained in identifying and addressing the needs of all pupils. The governing body is well led and governors are keen to develop the school even further. Their good work to promote community cohesion has created strong links with the local community and they are already planning to extend this more widely. The safeguarding of pupils is outstanding because day-to-day practices to ensure the safety of pupils are extremely well considered and the school is constantly improving its monitoring, recording, review and implementation of safeguarding policies. In this way, exemplary practice is constantly maintained and improved. Through the outstanding outcomes that pupils achieve, the school offers excellent value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Detailed school records show that the majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below age-related expectations. Home visits prepare them well for school, and staff are very welcoming and caring; thus children soon settle happily. Most make exceptional progress and enter Year 1 having reached all the Early Learning Goals for five-year-olds, because teaching and learning are often outstanding. The highly skilled teaching assistants also make a considerable impact on learning, as they monitor progress and attainment constantly. Best use is made of the outdoor hard surface area, which is not ideal, but well set out with activities, and rightly a priority for further development. The use made of the sensory garden is exceptional, as teaching assistants and groups of children at various times use it to promote learning and enjoyment. During the inspection, a group set off with magnifying glasses to find hidden objects beginning with 'm' to embed their learning in linking sounds to letters. Another group set off to find hidden number cards to promote their numeracy and reading skills. This kind of activity is characteristic of the detailed and exciting planning that takes place and leads to excellent learning. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding and parents and carers expressed in detail their delight with the many strengths. All aspects are thoroughly monitored and evaluated including teaching, the use of the accommodation, and the quality of attention to pupils' welfare. All staff are actively involved in the monitoring process. In this way the setting accurately identifies where further refinements could be made.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Almost half the eligible parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Over nine-tenths indicated strong support for the school in every question. They fully appreciate the quality of education and care provided in this large school. They are resoundingly convinced that the school keeps their children safe and recognise that their children enjoy school. There was no particular pattern to the very few concerns raised but inspectors investigated each one. In response to the two main concerns about pupils' progress, they found that information on progress is available regularly to parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mount Street Infant and Nursery 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 158 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 332 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	112	71	42	27	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	121	77	35	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	70	44	75	47	5	3	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	82	52	63	40	7	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	107	68	41	26	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	97	61	55	35	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	102	65	50	32	4	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	82	52	57	36	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	89	56	58	37	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	75	47	67	42	6	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	70	44	76	48	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	106	67	45	28	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	113	72	38	24	3	2	2	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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 school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



21 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mount Street Infant and Nursery School, Lincoln, LN1 3JG

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed chatting to many of you. You were excellent at explaining why you are so proud of your school and the exciting things you do. We also enjoyed observing and talking to you in lessons, at break and lunchtime and attending the assembly. These are some of our views from our visit.

You go to an outstanding school. This means that many things are excellent at your school. You behave well and you told us how much you enjoy all the exciting activities. Wasn't that amazing when all those farm animals came to see you at school during the inspection?

Because you enjoy your lessons so much, you try hard and make lots of progress. When you move on to your junior schools you have done better than most other children of your age in your work. Your teachers, the headteacher and the rest of the school leadership team are doing an excellent job and recognise what works well and what still needs to be done.

To improve your school even further, we have asked the headteacher and staff to make sure your reading is as good as your numeracy and writing skills, and for governors to have a closer look at what you are doing in school to see for themselves what an excellent education you are getting.

You can help with this by always trying your hardest with your work.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector

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