

Meadowside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131782
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	360323
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Colin Lee

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 of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Webley
Headteacher	David Zeal
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by seven teachers. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, school planning documents and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors analysed 75 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as speaking to a group of parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- The impact of initiatives to improve pupils' attainment and rates of progress in Years 3 to 6.
- The extent to which provision for the more-able pupils helps them reach their full potential.
- The action being taken by senior and middle leaders and managers to evaluate the impact of provision on pupils' academic and personal development outcomes.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils are taught in seven single-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has received awards for several aspects of its work, including the International Eco Schools Green Flag, and it has gained Healthy School status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. There has been good improvement in all aspects of its work since the last inspection. The most significant progress is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the effectiveness of the provision is now outstanding. In the rest of the school, better provision is resulting in at least good outcomes for pupils in both their academic and personal development. All groups of pupils achieve well. This all-round improvement and the school's effective self-evaluation show that the school has demonstrated good capacity for sustained improvement.

Close cooperation between the headteacher and deputy headteacher exemplifies the strong sense of teamwork that is present amongst all staff. Pupils do their part to improve the school through their high levels of attendance, their positive attitudes and the good contribution they make to the day-to-day running of the school. All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points.

Attainment is above average in most year groups and in some cases is well-above average, as in the current Year 6, and very high, as in the current Reception Year. Year 6 attainment is now higher than in the past. Fluctuating Year 6 national test results in recent years made the school look closely at how it could improve pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6. Progress has been accelerated by improving the way that teachers check progress over time and is now consistently good. The teachers' assessments are used well to identify any underachievement and there is prompt provision of carefully planned programmes to help pupils to catch up. Such programmes have been highly successful in addressing specific weaknesses, such as in boys' writing throughout the school and the lack of confidence in mathematics of groups of girls in several classes that was slowing their progress. Improvements like these show that leaders and managers are having good impact on teaching and learning, most especially in English and mathematics.

Good care, guidance and support for all pupils are leading to good outcomes in all aspects of the pupils' personal development, including good behaviour. Pupils enjoy school and all that they experience there. There is good support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, particularly from teaching assistants and a range of outside agencies, that is helping the pupils make good progress in their personal development. The well-managed, good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a key reason for these pupils making the same good progress as their peers.

The school knows itself well and identifies areas to improve rigorously, although its self-evaluation judgements are a little cautious. Senior leaders have a determination to improve the quality of teaching still further. Whilst teaching is good, there are some inconsistencies. Pupils have group learning targets and know these well, but some pupils' progress is hindered temporarily by them not being set new targets as soon as they are ready. In contrast with the good assessment of pupils' progress over time, the more

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immediate, short-term checking of pupils' learning in some lessons is more variable in quality. Feedback given in lessons while pupils work does not always give them enough guidance on the next steps needed to improve that piece of work immediately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding, in order to increase pupils' progress further, by:
 - consistently assessing pupils' work during lessons in order to give them short-term targets for small steps in improvement
 - moving pupils on to new group targets in literacy and numeracy, as soon as they are ready.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most year groups started school with the expected levels of skills when they joined the Reception class. In the past, there has been a trend of good progress in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, with some inadequate progress in Years 3 to 6, resulting in only average attainment by the end of Year 6. This has now changed significantly and improved teaching has accelerated progress to outstanding in the Reception Year and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils of different abilities, those from different backgrounds, and girls and boys make similar progress to each other.

High-quality work was seen in many lessons. In an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, Year 5 pupils worked enthusiastically and successfully, showing sophisticated skills as they improved their multimedia presentations with voice-overs and used fading for a transition between images. Year 3 pupils demonstrated higher-than-expected levels of knowledge and understanding when they identified adverbial phrases accurately in a short story. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning, as well as their confidence, was very evident. Pupils are aware of how well they are doing. When Year 1 pupils talked to an inspector about their topic work, one said that the teacher was right when he recorded at the bottom of each piece of work that the learning objective had been achieved.

Pupils feel safe in school and this view is shared by parents and carers. They enjoy physical activity and explain well how this and healthy eating form the basis of a healthy lifestyle. The impressive number of pupils who walk or ride bicycles or scooters to school reflects their desire to be healthy. Those pupils with special responsibilities, for example as school councillors or play rangers, carry out the responsibilities very conscientiously. The environment committee plays an important role in implementing a range of initiatives to encourage recycling, waste reduction and energy conservation. Committee members record water, gas and electricity use and each class has monitors who check the use of water and lighting. The outcomes in pupils' personal development and their good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills mean that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and their future economic well-being.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Teachers plan the content of each lesson so that it builds carefully on the pupils' prior learning. Pupils are provided with learning activities that are matched closely to their abilities and needs, ensuring that the more able are suitably challenged and achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to assess their learning for themselves. The oldest pupils do this very constructively because they are given clear success criteria against which to check the quality of their work. The teacher uses the criteria also as an opportunity to guide pupils on next steps in their learning. Such good use of ongoing assessment is not a consistent feature of all teaching. Whilst all teachers' marking informs pupils about how work can be improved, feedback to them in lessons is variable. For example, sometimes teachers work with a group and don't make time to check on the progress of pupils working independently. That reduces the guidance pupils can get whilst working about how work can be improved.

The good curriculum follows a programme of imaginative topics in which subjects are linked together. Topic ideas are also brought into literacy and numeracy lessons. For example, after Year 2 pupils had learnt about lighthouses, a story about a lighthouse keeper was used very successfully in a literacy lesson. Then, pupils showed good knowledge of letter structure when writing a letter to the lighthouse keeper persuading him to eat healthier lunches. Such practice exemplifies also how topics focus successfully on personal development outcomes as well as subject knowledge and the breadth of the

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approach has helped the school achieve its Healthy School status. The curriculum is fully inclusive and is adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The good quality of pastoral care, guidance and support has good impact on pupils' personal development, particularly social skills. The needs of potentially vulnerable pupils are met well and there is extra help and support for these and all other pupils whenever they need it.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have a good impact on teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils. There is a shared drive and ambition, at all levels, which improves the school successfully. The senior leadership team monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of any new initiatives rigorously. The recent close focus on monitoring the success of initiatives to improve pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6 has been well structured. Senior leaders are aware that other subject leaders have not had as much time to check on attainment and progress in their subjects and have plans to rectify this in order to evaluate the impact of the curriculum as a whole.

The school's good promotion of equal opportunities ensures that no member of the school community experiences any form of discrimination and that all pupils are helped to make good progress. The school promotes community cohesion well and has established a task group to develop and evaluate this work. Pupils are involved in a wide range of activities in the local community and the school has links with communities further afield. The school works closely in partnership with other schools and with professional and community organisations; this has a good impact on provision.

Governance is good. The governing body supports and challenges the school's leaders and managers effectively. It has ensured that important responsibilities, such as safeguarding, are secure and thorough. Staff are trained appropriately and regularly in health and safety, risk assessment and child protection procedures. A well-planned programme for monitoring the school's work ensures that the governing body is well informed about the school's main strengths and areas for development. Occasionally the governing body's monitoring and review falls short of those standards for example, school policies are sometimes reviewed without asking the school to provide all the information about their impact.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly in the Reception class as a result of excellent liaison with the pre-school providers and with parents and carers. The children start to benefit immediately from the outstanding provision. Very strong teaching and the very stimulating learning environment are the cornerstones of this provision. Children experience a rich curriculum and show tremendous enjoyment of school. They are inquisitive and are exceptionally keen to learn new things. They talk enthusiastically about their discoveries. During the inspection, days started with a buzz of excitement as each child rushed to see if his or her caterpillar had grown overnight. Later, when putting pictures of the butterfly's life cycle in order on the computer, a child explained to an inspector, 'That's going to happen to my caterpillar. He was an egg, next he'll be a cocoon and then a beautiful butterfly, and then it will start all over again.'

Learning opportunities are planned carefully to provide a balance of indoor and outdoor learning and children move to and fro between these environments throughout the day, registering on a task chart which activity they are going to do. Regular assessment of children's learning by recording observations of their successes and areas for development is used very well to plan the next stages in learning for each child. That contributes significantly to the exceptional progress they are making this year. Nearly all the children are attaining high levels in all areas of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed collectively and highly effectively. The two teachers who share the teaching benefit from the support and outstanding level of expertise of the teaching assistant. Together, they ensure that all children have an ideal start to school life.

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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

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are confident that the school provides a good quality of education. Levels of satisfaction are generally above average. Parents and carers see several strengths and are particularly appreciative of how the school keeps their children safe, the good quality of teaching and the extent to which they enjoy school. A few parents and carers have concerns with how well unacceptable behaviour is dealt with. However, all behaviour observed during the inspection was at least good and, on some occasions, outstanding. Those questionnaires that had additional, positive comments referred to the headteacher's good impact on the school. Praise for children's progress in the Reception Year was common. The views are substantiated by inspection evidence.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	53	32	43	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	57	31	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	33	45	60	4	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	41	36	48	6	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	29	39	43	57	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	33	43	57	5	7	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	45	34	45	4	5	1	1
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)	28	37	37	49	7	9	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	32	42	56	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	27	47	63	7	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	40	32	43	10	13	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	28	37	37	49	5	7	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	49	37	49	0	0	1	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

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 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.



18 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadowside Primary School, Gloucester GL2 4LX

I thank you for helping us during the inspection of your school. We enjoyed especially talking to you and listening to your views. We have taken those views into account in writing this report. Meadowside Primary School is a good school, with some things that are outstanding. Here are some of the main findings from the report.

- Those of you in the Reception Year are making a marvellous start to your education and doing extremely well in all your learning.
- Those of you in Year 6 are also doing especially well and the standard of your work is above average.
- All of you are making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You told us how much you enjoy school and your high level of attendance helps to show this.
- You are taught well, but we want teachers to give you more ideas about what to aim for in lessons and how you can improve your work and to set your new targets more quickly.
- You do many jobs around the school and this helps the school community. You contribute well to the local community also.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular physical activity. It was good to see how many of you walk to school or ride bicycles or scooters.
- You say you feel safe in school this is because all the adults do a good job in looking after you and making sure that you get help whenever you need it.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school well and all the adults work well together to help the school to improve.

All of you can help your teachers to make Meadowside Primary School an even better school by continuing to work hard and enjoying your learning. Thank you once again for your help during our visit and best wishes for your work in the future.

Yours sincerely

Colin Lee

Lead inspector

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