

Mapperley Plains Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122525
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	359264
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanne Norris
Headteacher	Andrew Cassidy
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 15 teachers and saw 22 lessons. Inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. They studied pupils' books. Inspectors also visited the breakfast club. Questionnaires returned by 178 parents and carers, 150 pupils and 32 members of staff were analysed.

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

- How effective are the school's actions to raise the attainment of girls in mathematics?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to plan learning tasks that challenge and extend pupils of all abilities?
- To what extent does the school leadership have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the capacity to move the school forward?

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. An average proportion come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governors. It has gained recognition for its work in several areas and holds International Schools, Healthy Schools and Dyslexia-Friendly status, together with the Activemark and Eco-Schools award.

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

Mapperley Plains Primary and Nursery School provides a good education for its pupils. It is welcoming and pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school. They take responsibility very readily, behave well and are respectful of their peers, adults and visitors. Pupils feel safe and secure. Their enjoyment of school life is reflected in their above average rates of attendance. A further strength is the excellent promotion of healthy lifestyles, evidenced in the school's achievement of Healthy School status and the Activemark award. Pupils participate in regular physical exercise and fully understand the importance of diet to health. They take full advantage of the additional activities, sports and clubs provided, many of which arise from the school's good partnerships with outside providers. Because pupils of all ages get on well together, the learning atmosphere is purposeful and harmonious. This is recognised by parents and carers. The very large majority who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed considerable satisfaction with their children's experience at the school.

An effective Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start to school. Due to careful early assessments, children begin to make good progress immediately. This good progress continues as pupils move through the school and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. A dip in attainment in 2009 has been addressed effectively and Year 6 pupils are on course to match the above average results seen in national tests in 2010. This is confirmed both by reliable school tracking information and the work inspectors observed in Year 6.

Attainment in mathematics, although above average, is not as high as attainment in English, where staff have been particularly successful in improving the standard of pupils' writing. Staff recognise that this is because of weaknesses in pupils' problem solving skills, particularly those of girls, whose attainment in mathematics is below that of boys. The more effective use of assessment information to identify where additional teaching will be most beneficial has made a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement, particularly that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Much has been done to improve the quality of teaching and learning and most is good. However, this quality is not yet found consistently throughout the school. There is more still to do to ensure that pupils in all classes are provided with learning activities that consistently challenge and engage them. Marking also varies: it does not always give clear guidance on what pupils need to do in order to improve their work. Because many subject coordinators are new to their roles, responsibility for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning has rested heavily on the headteacher and his deputy. Staff with coordinating roles are keen to develop their monitoring and evaluation skills so that they can contribute more fully to school improvement by identifying and sharing good practice and tackling weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. A well-structured school

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improvement plan based on accurate self-evaluation together with a record of raising attainment shows the school is well placed to build on its strengths and has good capacity for continued improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics, particularly that of girls, to at least match attainment in English by developing pupils' ability to apply their numerical skills to problem solving.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that lesson introductions are not too long and that learning tasks are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils
 - ensuring consistency in the marking of pupils' work so that they are given clear guidance on the standard they have reached and how to improve
 - developing the monitoring and evaluation skills of staff with coordinating roles so that they can contribute more fully to school improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children's skills on entry to the Nursery are mostly in line with expectations for children of their age. Pupils enjoy their lessons and their good, and in some lessons excellent, behaviour makes a significant contribution to their good achievement. However, pupils' work in lessons and in their workbooks indicates that while progress overall is good, it is uneven across the school. Pupils achieve well in lessons that are stimulating and engaging. This was exemplified in a science lesson for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils where good progress was made in understanding the importance of light, air and water to plant growth because all were actively engaged in well-planned learning activities. Reliable school assessment information and other inspection evidence show that the progress of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those who speak English as an additional language and the few known to be eligible for free school meals is comparable to their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are sensitively supported with good challenge in class or receive specialist support.

Pupils have good knowledge about how to keep safe and demonstrate a good awareness of how to avoid risks, for example on the internet or during their journeys to and from school. Pupils are very keen to contribute to the community and take great pleasure in doing jobs around the school and taking care of younger pupils in the playground. The school council plays an active role, for example, in organising events to raise money for those in need. Strong social and moral development is a feature of pupils' good personal development. Regular attendance and above average basic skills ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

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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	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	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?

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils. In the very best lessons, pupils make rapid progress because assessment information is used particularly well to guide the planning of learning tasks. Pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning extends pupils' thinking and encourages the use of more varied vocabulary in their answers. This was seen in a literacy lesson for Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, for example, where pupils made good progress in understanding the use of language to construct a persuasive argument. However, in a few lessons, pupils are given some work that is too easy and this slows the progress they make. Progress is also slowed in lessons where teachers take too much time introducing learning, which gives pupils too little time to apply their learning and skills independently. Particularly effective use is made of assessment information to track pupils' progress towards their targets, identify underperformance and provide additional support where necessary. Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, marking does not always provide pupils with enough guidance on how well they are doing and what they must do in order to improve.

The curriculum provides pupils with a good range of learning experiences. Pupils' good progress in English is underpinned by many opportunities to apply and develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to similarly develop their mathematical problem solving skills have yet to be fully embedded as an integral part of

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curricular provision. The school's provision for creative subjects, such as art and music, is good. The curriculum is enhanced well through local partnerships: for example, links with other schools broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils' enjoyment, as do trips out of school, including residential visits. The vast majority of parents and carers say that the school is very caring. This is borne out by inspection findings. Good support is given to children whose circumstances make them vulnerable to promote their well-being. Pupils are well cared for in the breakfast club and as one said say, 'We have lots to do and enjoy coming here.'

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?

The school is well led by the headteacher and his deputy. Together they are providing a clear sense of direction and ambition for further improvement. The school is set on an upward path. At the heart of all initiatives is a determination to further improve teaching and learning. Targets are constantly reviewed to ensure that they are both realistic and challenging, and consequently pupils make good progress. Good links with external agencies support the individual needs of pupils from a range of backgrounds. The school's careful monitoring of pupils' progress also demonstrates its commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.

Governance is good. Members of the governing body have worked well with staff to ensure that safeguarding procedures are of good quality and all staff are well trained in these matters. As a result, the school has the confidence of very large majority of parents and carers. The governing body takes its statutory responsibilities seriously and provides the school with considerable support. Its members are well informed about the school through regular reports from the headteacher, and they have a keen interest in the school's performance. Parents and carers are provided with a good range of information. This is enhanced through an excellent school website. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. A plan and clear actions promote pupils' understanding from a local perspective well. Through links with schools abroad, recognised in the school's achievement of International Schools status, pupils' minds are opened to the range and diversity of culture in the wider world. The school provides good 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	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

Most children settle quickly on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the well-organised induction arrangements and good adult care and support. As a result, children feel safe and enjoy their learning. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon begin to share, to learn and to play together. All adults are vigilant in meeting the needs of children, and welfare requirements are fully met. Teaching is good because staff have a good understanding of how children learn and they work well as an enthusiastic team. They provide a broad range of activities to promote all areas of learning. Children have good opportunities to explore, be creative and to work independently. The teaching of letters and sounds receives good attention and children are making good progress in acquiring early writing skills. Effective leadership and management ensure that there is a shared vision about what can be done to enhance children's learning experiences. Staff are now in the process of developing the outdoors so that outdoor learning activities fully reflect the good quality of those indoors.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

There was an above average return from parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire reflect a positive relationship with the very large majority of parents and carers. Most say that they are happy with their children's experience at school, their children enjoy school and that staff keep their children safe and help them to develop a healthy lifestyle. Although a small minority of respondents expressed concerns about behaviour, pupils behave well because the school has consistent expectations and deal with misbehaviour effectively. A similar proportion feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions or concerns. Inspectors found that there is good communication between the large majority of parents and carers and the school. Nevertheless, the Chair of the Governing Body is keen to explore ways in which communication can be improved. A very few parents or carers had individual concerns about care and support. These concerns were followed up in confidence by the inspection team. It found that the school was already aware of the matters raised and action was being taken.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mapperley Plains Primary 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 178 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 386 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	97	54	73	41	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	91	51	79	44	6	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	61	34	98	55	15	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	38	85	48	15	8	6	3
The teaching is good at this school	70	39	87	49	14	8	3	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	35	88	49	20	11	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	72	40	93	52	9	5	2	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)	52	29	101	57	10	6	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	63	35	90	51	14	8	6	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	56	31	78	44	25	14	11	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	25	84	47	33	19	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	56	31	96	54	7	4	13	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	51	69	39	13	7	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

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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mapperley Plains Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham NG3 5LD

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you and you were really helpful and friendly.

Yours is a good school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a good start to their school lives and make good progress. You told us you enjoy school. You listen carefully to what your teachers say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. Your good behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons why you are doing well. You make more progress in some lessons than others and we have asked your teachers to make sure that in all of your lessons you are really stretched so that you make the best possible progress. We have also asked that you are given more opportunities to develop your mathematical problem-solving skills. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked that when they do this, they make clear what you have to do to improve. You can help yourselves to make even more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

You have an excellent understanding of the importance of being healthy. You eat sensibly and take part in physical activities regularly. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. We were impressed with how you all do so much to help the school, especially those of you involved in making decisions through the school council and who help at playtimes and in the classrooms. Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. As part of this, we have asked that staff who coordinate different aspects of the work of the school are more closely involved in checking how well you are doing.

We think that everyone can work together to do these things and that you will want to play your part by working hard and attending regularly.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector

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