

Maple Grove Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110640
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	356786
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Steve Nelson

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Greenall
Headteacher	Lynda Quince
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2008
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. A total of 18 lessons taught by nine teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school leaders and other staff, and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at curriculum planning, data on pupils' achievement including their current progress, documents relating to safeguarding, plans for improvement, pupils' work and records of the school's monitoring of its performance. They also analysed 84 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers together with those completed by staff.

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

- What are the current levels of pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and among groups of pupils particularly boys?
- How well does teaching provide challenge for all pupils so that they make the best possible progress?
- What has been the impact of management actions to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence?

Information about the school

Maple Grove is an average sized infant school. The large majority of the children are of White British heritage. A growing number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are now starting to attend the school but the proportion remains below the national average, as does the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is slightly above average. Both the proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the number with statements of special educational need are below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises three full-time Reception classes. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

Maple Grove Infant School is a good school where pupils are well cared for and achieve well. Senior leaders lead the school well, ensuring that all staff share their understanding of the needs of pupils. They have been very effective in increasing the attainment in mathematics and this year boys and girls achieved equally well.

Teaching is good, effectively challenging pupils of all abilities, and teaching assistants are well deployed so pupils are supported effectively in their learning. They have lots of opportunities for independent learning. Teachers routinely share learning objectives and help pupils identify the steps to success. Early Years Foundation Stage staff skilfully encourage children to talk about their activities. They provide good models of spoken language through conversations with them, so the children quickly gain confidence and make good progress. This enables pupils to enter Year 1 at the anticipated level. The good progress continues in Key Stage 1 for all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. As a result, by end of Key Stage 1 their attainment is above average.

The good curriculum is underpinned by an emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Information and communication technology is used effectively across the school to promote learning.

The school has implemented a range of initiatives to promote good attendance, such as half termly awards, but overall attendance remains average. Some recently introduced strategies to reduce the number absences are still to have an impact, so the school's persistent absence remains above average.

The school is caring and welcoming and pupils enjoy being there. They know they will be listened to if they approach an adult with a concern and as a result feel safe in school. Pupils learn tolerance and care for one another and are eager to take on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council. Pupils' behaviour is well managed and is good. They say that any misbehaviour or bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively.

The headteacher and senior leaders have a good understanding of the needs of pupils and their families as well as a clear vision for the future improvement of the school, to which all staff are committed. Good leadership has been effective in ensuring that challenging targets for pupils' attainment have been met and this underpins the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate. However procedures and systems to collect, analyse and monitor data about pupils' performance are not yet fully developed. Senior staff regularly monitor teaching, which has led to well-targeted professional development for staff that supports the good teaching.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the efficiency of monitoring and analysing the progress of whole cohorts, groups and individuals by ensuring that leaders and managers at all levels routinely monitor and analyse pupils' progress and attainment.
- Reduce persistent absence to the average of similar schools for the 2011/12 school year, by working more closely with families in order to reduce the number of absences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning. Achievement for all groups of pupils across the school is good, with pupils making fastest progress in year groups where the teaching is consistently good. For example pupils in Year 2 responded with enthusiasm to inspiring teaching and wrote poems of a very high standard for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because the school is quick to identify their individual needs and provide effective personalised support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including those in the early stages of learning English, are given carefully targeted teaching so their English vocabulary increases quickly and, as a result, they make similar progress to their peers.

A majority of children start in the Reception class with skills that are below those expected of their age, and communication, language and literacy skills and listening skills are particularly weak. However, well-planned and carefully structured activities and effective adult intervention ensure all children make good progress to achieve levels typical for their age by the time they start Key Stage 1, particularly in personal and social development and communication, language and literacy.

Final outcomes in Key Stage 1 have been above average for several years, and current work in pupils' books shows that this has been sustained. All pupils achieve well in reading and writing because of a structured programme linking sounds and letters, which has accelerated their progress. For example, pupils in Year 1 showed keen interest in finding the meanings of newly introduced words and settled quickly to write sentences, using punctuation well.

Pupils feel safe at school and are aware of what makes an unsafe situation. Their behaviour is good around the school and contributes to a positive learning environment. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of being healthy, for example through drinking water and taking regular exercise. They make a good contribution to the wider community such as making collections for local and national charities. Pupils' interest in learning and increasing awareness of the world of work, contributes to a sound preparation for the next stage of their education and later life. They know the difference between right and wrong, socialise well together, and their cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

Teaching assistants and teachers work well together as a team. Tasks are usually well matched to pupils' previous learning and understanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan exciting lessons that are often tailored to pupils' interests and needs. They use a rich variety of resources to appeal to the wide range of pupils. Pupils' learning is enriched by good use of information and communication technology such as the use of video material to enhance writing. Assessment is good. In particular, teachers use effective targeted questions to challenge and engage pupils, developing their listening and thinking skills well,

The good quality curriculum supports teaching and learning well. Pupils acquire good basic skills and are able to apply them effectively through interesting real life situations. They enthusiastically participate in the broad range of enrichment opportunities.

The school works well with a range of agencies to support pupils, especially those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, so that they are helped to achieve well. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle in quickly. The school co-ordinates transition into Key Stage 2 to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning, for example by arranging teacher visits from partner schools. Although actions to reduce persistent absence have yet to have full impact, the school provides effective additional support to ensure pupils catch-up on missed lessons.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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 drive and ambition of senior leaders has secured good improvement. The headteacher has been particularly effective in promoting high standards in a supportive culture that is appreciated by staff and pupils. Self-evaluation is effective in many ways. Systems for monitoring the progress of whole cohorts, groups and individuals across different subjects are not yet sufficiently fully developed, which means that leaders are not precisely informed about the strengths and areas for development in teaching. The school is committed to equality of opportunity irrespective of race, religion or gender and additional support, such as one-to-one teaching, is provided quickly for pupils identified as underachieving, ensuring they catch up quickly. As a result all groups of pupils make good progress. Effective leadership and management, with a focus on maximising resources to help all pupils to do their best, means that the school offers good value for money.

Governors provide the school with a good level of support; they challenge and ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties. Safeguarding procedures are good. The school's effective safeguarding policies ensure systems and procedures are constantly updated. There are effective links with other agencies that promote child protection. As a result, pupils are safe and secure in school. Extensive and effective partnerships with partner schools and a wide range of agencies make a good contribution to pupils' learning and well-being.

The school has a good understanding of the needs of its own and neighbouring communities, based on a careful analysis of its context. As a result, pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. However, school leaders know that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different cultures and beliefs elsewhere are less strong and have begun to implement plans for improvement. Good communications with parents including regular newsletters and open afternoons and evenings, maintains effective engagement and positive relationships with parents and carers. As one parent commented, 'The teachers work very hard for the children in their care, always with a friendly but professional approach. Our daughter absolutely loves her school.'

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and form very good relationships with adults. From skills that are below expectations when they start towards the early learning goals, children make good progress as a result of good teaching and an exciting and challenging curriculum. This is equally true of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language. Children, observed during the inspection, greatly enjoyed the developmental movement play area and talked with enthusiasm about the snails they made with clay. There is a good balance of adult-led activities and those the children choose for themselves, which provide good opportunities for children to follow their own initiative. Carefully structured teaching of letters and sounds ensures children reach expected standards in communication, language and literacy. They feel safe and learn to take responsibility for their actions, demonstrating good behaviour.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures assessments are thorough and used to plan activities to meet the needs of all pupils and set challenging targets. Adults show a good understanding of the children's learning and development, and welfare requirements. At the end of the year carefully planned transition ensures children are effectively prepared for their next stage in learning. Children are well cared for and effective procedures are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded well.

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

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are supportive of the school with almost all saying the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle and all agreeing that their child is kept safe. Although the proportion of questionnaires returned was comparatively low, responses indicate that a higher proportion than that found nationally hold positive views about the school. With the vast majority of parents and carers agreeing that the school meets their child's needs and that their child enjoys school. A few parents and carers highlighted concerns over behaviour but inspectors saw generally good behaviour and pupils say that any misbehaviour or bullying is dealt with well by staff. A very small minority commented that they felt the school could do more to recognise their views. Inspectors found that staff welcome parents and carers to talk about any concerns about their child's learning and progress at the beginning and end of each day as well as holding termly parents' evenings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maple Grove Infant 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	63	29	35	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	71	23	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	42	43	51	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	50	36	43	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	56	36	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	51	34	40	5	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	48	41	49	1	1	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)	44	52	30	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	54	34	40	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	43	37	44	4	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	36	44	52	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	46	55	30	36	3	4	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	63	28	33	2	2	0	0

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	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.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maple Grove Infant School, March PE15 8JT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and showing us what you are learning. We really enjoyed talking to you and sharing your lessons. You go to a good school and here are some of the reasons why:

- your teachers care for you and look after you well so you feel safe
- the children in the Reception get a good start to their school life
- you make good progress
- in many lessons you enjoy exciting activities and your teachers try to make learning fun for you, so you are actively involved
- those of you who find work difficult are given lots of support so you can keep up with your classmates.

In order that your school improves further we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do the following:

- keep a better check on how well you are doing as you move through the school
- make sure that more of you come to school regularly because some of you miss too many days.

All the adults in your school want you to do well. You can all help them by making sure you come to school every day when you are well and by always doing your best.

I wish you lots of success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Steve Nelson

Lead inspector

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