

Meath Green Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125012
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	375404
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Meena Wood HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Sutton
Headteacher	Alison Hilton-Childs
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 December 2009
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Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, observed 12 teachers, and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, leaders and managers, teaching staff, pupils, parents and carers. They carried out a number of joint observations of lessons with the school's senior managers. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plans, a range of school policies, local authority reviews, records of internal observations of teaching and learning, pupils' books and displays of their work.

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

- Whether the curriculum, teaching and assessment practice are sufficiently tailored to the needs of different ability groups, in particular, more able pupils.
- Whether the quality of the teaching and target setting extends the learning and progress of pupils in lessons.
- The levels of pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- How effective leadership and management are at all levels in addressing the key issues for development from the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Meath Green Junior School is a large junior school and has an Artsmark award. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The vast majority of all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very low. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

When this school was inspected in December 2009, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, it was inspected on five occasions. At the last monitoring inspection, the school was judged to be making good progress.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. It is an improving school and its overall effectiveness is satisfactory.

When the school was inspected in December 2009, attainment had been exceptionally low for some years and pupils were not making enough progress. This is no longer the case. Pupils' achievement has improved and is now satisfactory overall. As a result, by the time pupils leave, attainment has risen and is now broadly average in the key subjects of mathematics and English.

Since the last inspection, the school's senior managers, together with external support from the local authority, have secured improvements in the key areas. This has resulted in an increased focus on the quality of teaching and the capacity of all managers, including the governing body, to improve the school. The school's self-evaluation now indicates that it is aware of its strengths and the areas needing improvement. This underpins and supports a satisfactory and growing capacity to improve.

The headteacher, along with her senior managers, has worked effectively to address the key challenges arising from the last inspection, with the result that all leaders, including year group leaders, now have a better understanding of the features of good teaching and assessment. However, these are not fully embedded across all subjects and year groups. Inspectors observed good and outstanding teaching in a minority of lessons, where pupils made good progress in their learning. This resulted from clear planning of activities that took account of pupils' differing needs and abilities. In other lessons, teachers did not use information about pupils' prior attainment, knowledge and skills to plan appropriate tasks that extended pupils' learning. This was especially the case for more-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, there are considerable strengths in assessment, such as peer- and self-assessment techniques, and most teachers give sound feedback to pupils on how to improve. A minority of teachers lack consistency in the detailed checking of pupils' learning and marking of their written work.

Since the last inspection, tracking of pupils' progress by senior managers and teachers has improved significantly and is coupled with effective support and interventions for underachieving pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The

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process of reviewing pupils' targets in each subject is not timely and pupils' targets are not challenging enough in all cases. Monitoring by managers and the governing body of strategic and operational areas for improvement is satisfactory, although the school is aware that more rigorous follow through of the actions is required. Internal observations of teaching are focused more effectively on pupils' learning and progress across subjects and year groups. However, teachers and managers do not regularly share best teaching practice that accelerates the learning and progress of different groups of pupils.

Robust arrangements are in place for the good pastoral support of pupils. Consequently, pupils feel valued and safe. They display courteous and respectful behaviour towards each other and towards adults, and are willing and keen learners. Attendance is high and punctuality is good; all pupils are well motivated and enjoy school. Structured learning opportunities contribute to pupils' strong sense of moral and spiritual values as pupils are prepared to consider others' points of view and reassess their own beliefs.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and attainment, by August 2012, especially for those who are more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, through:
 - ensuring learning activities and pupils' targets are well suited to pupils and create challenge for all, especially those of higher ability
 - improving the quality of teaching through systematic sharing of best practice across subjects and year groups
 - more rigorous follow through by governors and senior managers of strategic and operational actions in school improvement plans
 - developing rigour and timeliness in reviewing pupils' targets.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

In the last two years, the pattern of attainment for Year 6 pupils has been broadly average and they have made expected progress in line with their abilities. However, the school's careful tracking of its pupils reveals some variation across the year groups in reading, writing and mathematics and more-able pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in their learning.

The sharper focus that school leaders now have on the writing skills of boys as an underachieving group shows signs of reducing the gap in attainment for this group, when compared with girls. Pupils whose circumstances place them at risk of being vulnerable, including those with moderate learning difficulties and those with

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behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, receive targeted in-class support, and most make at least satisfactory progress. In a small number of lessons observed by inspectors, pupils visibly enjoyed learning, were responsive to well-structured tasks and took responsibility for their learning. When given the opportunities, pupils worked successfully as independent learners and made good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. For instance, Year 5 pupils, through using an interactive whiteboard and sharing explanations with their peers, demonstrated excellent reasoning and numeracy skills and a clear understanding of mathematical problem solving.

Extra-curricular and innovative learning opportunities contribute well to broadening pupils’ social, moral and cultural horizons and help develop a strong sense of community. For instance, following a sensitively-handled and thought-provoking session, Year 6 pupils demonstrated an acute awareness of the impact of racist behaviours on children in British schools and in other parts of the world. Pupils participate well in a range of sports activities and they have a good awareness of the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

Pupils’ literacy, computing and numeracy skills are satisfactory. For instance, inspectors observed pupils with effective referencing skills and using a dictionary with ease. The school’s emphasis on pupils’ handwriting skills, grammar, punctuation and presentation has significantly improved the quality of pupils’ work. Pupils’ enterprise and team working skills are good and they display responsible attitudes and aptitudes.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
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

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How effective is the provision?

The majority of teachers have good subject knowledge and good classroom management skills and use them to inspire learning effectively. Teaching assistants are deployed well in most cases, but their support for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties is not consistently planned into lesson activities nor evaluated for impact. Questioning techniques do not always check and extend pupils' skills and knowledge. In those lessons where teaching and assessment activities were well structured and challenged pupils in their learning, inspectors observed high levels of enjoyment and good, and sometimes excellent, progress, very often through collaborative activities and structured pair work, such as in 'talk partners'. In most lessons, learning objectives and activities are linked to pupils' targets and levelled success criteria. All pupils value these and proudly informed inspectors which they were working towards, for instance, 'keep it simple', 'working on target' or 'work your brain'. However, in a number of instances, the targets and activities are not sufficiently challenging pupils' existing knowledge and skills. There are some very good examples of assessment and marking, for instance, pupils sign off comments from teachers about their next steps and redraft work, but there is some inconsistency in the quality of oral and written feedback.

A revised curriculum contributes to pupils' better understanding, skills and knowledge in science and writing. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to extend their information and communication technology skills for research and independent study. The school has not used its Artsmark award sufficiently to promote displays of pupils' art work around the school.

Sound partnerships with local infant schools ensure Year 3 pupils make a good start to their education, and pupils transferring to secondary schools receive a satisfactory preparation. Effective school-home liaison and contact with a range of services ensure well-targeted support for the tiny minority of pupils who are persistently absent. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is not always well targeted and, despite examples of well-written individual education plans, their progress is not consistently evaluated.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnership	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and her senior managers have worked purposefully on growing capacity among year group leaders through a strong emphasis on raising the quality of teaching and achievement. This is now beginning to transform the learning culture of the school. Delegated leadership and management and greater staff accountability are now firmly emerging. Greater emphasis is placed on the analysis of performance data by managers to ensure support for underachieving pupils. Self-evaluation at whole-school level is self-critical and reflects the need to raise attainment. School improvement plans, however, do not contain time frames and success criteria against actions and these are not consistently followed through.

The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by managers is effective and has clearly contributed to raising staff expectations. However, the school’s internal lesson observations are not sufficiently focused on whether all groups of pupils make the progress of which they are capable. At present, there is insufficient sharing of good and exemplary teaching practice across and within year groups. This is an important element in explaining the uneven quality of teaching.

Support provided by the governing body is satisfactory. As a result of recent appointments, the governing body is making good progress towards developing its full capacity. Members are very committed to raising achievement in the school and respond well to the need for self-evaluation processes and a greater involvement in understanding pupils’ learning experiences. Safeguarding procedures are good, with detailed recording and follow through of procedures. These have resulted in well-developed quality assurance systems and risk assessments that take into account the views of parents, carers and pupils. The school’s equalities plans focus effectively on ensuring that pupils do not suffer any form of discrimination, but there are no references to actions regarding narrowing the gaps in attainment between different groups of pupils. Community cohesion is good as pupils demonstrate a good understanding and awareness of their local and national communities within the global context and contribute well to their local communities during fundraising activities.

Parents and carers are kept well informed through the achievement books and the parents’ forum. Home-school books are greatly valued as parents are given valuable opportunities to comment on their children’s learning and care.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3

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met	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents with whom inspectors spoke reported that they feel welcome and increasingly involved in the life of the school. Some commented that the school's internal questionnaires do not focus sufficiently on the quality of teaching and the learning and progress of pupils. Inspectors found evidence to support this.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.

11 November 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Meath Green Junior School, Horley RH6 8HW

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. As you know, I have visited your school several times and have always enjoyed talking to you. I shall not be returning to your school because of all the improvements the school has made.

My colleague and I enjoyed this visit in particular and thought you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could be even better.

- Many of you told us that you enjoy school and you showed this by your good behaviour and hard work. The school is a happy place where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other. You are always polite and welcome visitors warmly into your school. You are very proud of your school.
- The school is now working hard to make sure you all make better progress and you are now reaching higher standards in your work.
- Your teachers are working effectively to make sure they tell you how to improve during lessons.
- Your headteacher and the managers run the school well. They want to keep on improving it and they and the teachers know just how to do that.

We have asked your school to improve some things to make it even better. In particular, we want your teachers to help you to make even better progress in English, mathematics and science by making sure all of you have work that is matched to your needs and that you are given more opportunities to work independently and make even more progress in learning, especially those of you whose target in lessons is 'work your brain'.

We know that you will all play your part in helping your teachers to keep improving the school. We hope that you continue to enjoy coming to school and to work hard and we wish you all the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood
Her Majesty's Inspector

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