

Robert Mellors Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122521
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	380482
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Susan Hughes

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yvonne Simmons
Headteacher	Susan Laplanche
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2009
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Age group	3-11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eighteen lessons were observed; seven teachers were seen; discussions were held with parents and pupils; meetings were held with governors, groups of pupils and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at key safeguarding documents, school policies, teachers' planning and staff, pupil and parental questionnaires. They scrutinised the questionnaires returned by 96 parents and carers, together with those received from staff and students in Key Stage 2

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

- How effectively the school is raising achievement in English, particularly writing.
- How effectively the school is challenging potentially higher attainers.
- To what extent the school is identifying and addressing the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Information about the school

Robert Mellors Primary and Nursery School is a broadly average-size school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The school has a lower-than-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average.

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

Robert Mellors Primary and Nursery School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The leadership and staff are committed to providing a safe, exciting learning environment for the pupils and this is evident as pupils enjoy sharing their learning. All staff members work very hard to ensure that pupils are listened to and supported and, as a result, pupils and parents alike feel that the school is a safe and happy place where children’s welfare is highly valued. Teachers make the curriculum exciting and engaging for pupils. However, although attainment in maths has risen over the last year, attainment in English has not seen a similar improvement. Progress of most groups of children is no better than satisfactory. This is because there are lost opportunities in some lessons to challenge potentially higher attaining pupils effectively. Work is not always well matched to the needs of pupils so those who require more support are sometimes overwhelmed by finding work too hard. Where teaching is good, lesson plans are adapted to ensure that the pace and challenge engage all pupils and they make good progress. Teachers’ guidance to pupils as to how they can move on in their learning is sometimes too generalised and not specific enough for them to put into action. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported through specific interventions and additional adult support. The school has identified the need to realign interventions so that they have more impact on pupils’ learning. The school’s system for tracking pupil progress is not fully embedded to ensure easy ongoing access of data to inform teachers’ planning. Leadership roles are well defined but the monitoring role of foundation subject leaders has still to be developed.

The school community is one of caring and support. Behaviour is satisfactory and any challenging behaviour is well managed by teachers so that it does not affect the learning of other pupils.

The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their education. Under good leadership, the staff provide a stimulating environment for enjoyable learning. Children develop confidence and are happy to talk to other adults about their learning. They develop strong social skills through learning and playing together and make good progress in all areas of learning.

The school’s self-evaluation had already identified writing as a priority. It has a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary improvements both with progress in English and in developing the leadership of the school.

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Up to 40% of schools judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit prior to their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, and particularly in writing by:
 - ensuring tasks are well matched to all abilities
 - being clear about small steps in learning which will lead to improvement
 - ensuring interventions are accurately matched to need

- Strengthen the school's leadership and management at all levels by:
 - embedding systems to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the school's work in order to raise attainment
 - ensuring that middle leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility in order to accelerate progress

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

By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils leave with attainment broadly in line with pupils nationally. They start in Key Stage 1 broadly in line with other pupils nationally so make satisfactory progress through the school, with some good progress in Years 5 and 6. Progress in mathematics has improved over the last year bringing attainment to just above average. However, this is greater than progress in English where attainment remains just below average. The school has identified a need to raise standards, particularly in writing, and has already started to address this, but more needs to be done to help all pupils make better progress. Some pupils who have the potential to achieve well are not always given challenging tasks to help them learn and make good progress, whilst other pupils sometimes find the lessons too difficult for them to make good progress from their starting points. In the best lessons, pupils made good progress, but progress over time is generally satisfactory. All groups of pupils, such as those from minority ethnic communities, make at least expected progress whilst those who are eligible for free school meals make good progress. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported in their learning through small group and one to one support and also make satisfactory progress. Some children are currently making good progress as a result of recent support strategies that have been implemented by the school.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. They say that 'the teachers look after us' and they deal with any problems they may have. They are taught how to stay safe in and out of school, for example learning about e-safety, road safety and taking part in anti-bullying activities. They have a clear understanding about healthy lifestyles and the active after-school clubs are very popular and well attended. Some pupils and a few parents have some concerns about behaviour. Pupils say that levels of behaviour 'sometimes go down' but 'more often this is dealt with'. Most children behave well

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most of the time. Pupils make a good contribution to the school as they willingly and effectively take on roles of responsibility such as supporting younger children at lunchtimes. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and this has resulted in fewer persistent absences. Pupils are adequately prepared for the next stages of their education. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is good as they have opportunities to learn and think about other cultures and ways of life, whilst relating it to their own experiences. Most children have a good understanding of right and wrong.

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	3
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	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is at least satisfactory and some is good. Teachers are passionate about providing good learning opportunities for the children. They form good relationships with the pupils and build effective and supportive learning environments for them to work in. However, work is not always well matched to the pupils’ needs. This means that on some occasions more-able pupils are given work that does not challenge them while some pupils find the work too difficult. When this happens these pupils do not engage in the lesson as much as they could and do not make enough progress in their learning. Where teaching is good, teachers accurately assess the needs of the pupils and amend and change lesson plans to meet these needs. However this is not consistent across all classes. Marking in books is always supportive and encouraging. Guidance for pupils regarding their next steps in their learning is often included but this is sometimes too broad to help them take effective

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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steps forward. For example ‘Think carefully about your punctuation’ does not give direct guidance as to what the pupil can do to ensure progress.

The good curriculum, which includes support from specialist visitors to the school and links with other local schools, is exciting and relevant for pupils, coming from their own ideas about what they would like to learn. There are plenty of opportunities for children to experience things first hand through theme days and trips linked to their learning. There is a strong focus on developing thinking skills to equip pupils to become independent learners and acquire problem solving skills which will help them in their future lives.

The good care guidance and support that the school provides for all pupils is a strength of the school. Staff see the well-being of their pupils as a high priority and, as one parent said, ‘They go the extra mile’. Vulnerable pupils are identified and supported through good links with external agencies and clear lines of communication between home and school. Parents of a pupil who has special educational needs say that moving their child to this school was ‘the best decision we have ever made.’ Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning and effective arrangements are made for pupils who may be in vulnerable circumstances on transfer to secondary school.

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 partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership structure of the school has been in place for a number of years and consists of experienced staff, supporting satisfactory leadership by senior and middle leaders. They have a clear vision for the school and there are some strategies in place to raise standards, but these have not yet affected pupil’s learning and progress, especially in English. Other leaders in school have some experience of improving the delivery of their subjects through training staff and increasing resources. However, they have not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards and progress effectively through regular lesson observations and effective tracking of their subjects. Although school leaders and the governing body have clarity of vision, a minority of parents feel that this is not well communicated. The governing body provides good support and challenge for the school and is actively involved in monitoring progress through regular visits to school and analysis of school data. They have a clear view of what the school does well, where it can be improved and how this can be achieved.

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Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the education provided for their children. They appreciate the range of communication methods, the approachability of staff and ways in which the school provides opportunities to help them support their own children’s learning. The home school learning projects and clubs that welcome both pupils and parents or carers help them feel an integral part of their children’s education. The school provides satisfactory equality of opportunity and no groups of children make significantly less than satisfactory progress. The school is a safe environment and meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding. Community cohesion has developed well since the last inspection. The understanding of school and local community is very strong and links with schools in other socio-economic and cultural areas help pupils relate to different societies within this country. Links with a school in Nairobi have been established and communications between the pupils of that school and Robert Mellors are poised to begin. The school achieves satisfactory value for money

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 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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a safe secure learning environment for children and outcomes are good. Children start in the Nursery with skills below those of other children nationally. It gives the children a good start to their education and by the time they leave the Reception class, they have broadly reached national expectations. There is good progress with developing personal and social skills as children are given regular opportunities to develop independence and organisational skills, taking on responsibilities. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of learning and development requirements and provide a safe, exciting and welcoming environment for the children to learn. There is a good balance of adult-led opportunities and those initiated by the children themselves. The children relate well

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to adults and to each other. They play together well, take turns and negotiate resolutions to situation such as how many people are allowed in the role play area at one time. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led with well trained staff who use effective questioning to develop both language skills and understanding. Children’s progress is rigorously tracked, but there is a need to streamline the current system so that learning is recorded effectively to enable accurate assessment which will inform planning. Good communications with parents and carers help the children settle well into the nursery and help smooth transition through reception and into Key Stage 1

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 overwhelmingly supportive of the school and feel that their children enjoy their time there. Parents with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly pleased with the home school liaison which keeps them well informed about their children’s progress. Parents and carers feel that teaching is good and the school gives them good guidance on how to support their children’s learning at home. A very small minority express concern about how the behaviour of some children is managed in school. During the inspection, the team saw some challenging behaviour handled effectively by teachers, causing no disruption to other pupils’ learning. A few expressed their concern about the way the school is led and managed but overall almost all parents and carers who submitted questionnaires or spoke to team members said that they were happy with the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robert Mellors 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 219 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	51	45	47	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	58	35	36	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	40	42	53	55	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	41	53	55	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	51	46	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	38	40	56	58	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	34	56	58	5	5	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)	36	38	56	58	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	37	39	53	55	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	21	56	58	10	10	5	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	27	58	60	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	26	51	53	13	14	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	44	46	49	51	0	0	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

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.



24 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robert Mellors Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham, NG5 7EX

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. It was lovely to see how happy you were to talk about your learning and how well you get on with each other. I was particularly impressed with the way older pupils help the younger ones when they can. Some pupils from Year 6 supporting Reception children at lunch times told me how they enjoyed 'helping the little ones'.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education and you make similar progress to other children across the country. Your curriculum is exciting and it is good to hear that you have a say in what you are learning. Sometimes though, the lessons are too hard or too easy for some of you. This means that some pupils get a bit confused by the work while others don't get as far as they could with their learning.

We are asking your teachers to make sure that everyone in the class has work provided at the right level so that you can all make good progress, especially with your writing. You can play your part by making sure your good behaviour helps the lesson to run smoothly and by telling your teachers if you are finding the work too hard or easy. The teachers and the headteacher will be following your progress to make sure you don't get left behind.

I am sure that you will continue to work hard and hope that you have an exciting end of the term.

Yours sincerely

Susan Hughes
Lead inspector

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