

Maids Moreton Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110438
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	395401
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2012
Lead inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Owen
Headteacher	Keira Ainsworth
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2008
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons and part lessons, taught by five teachers, amounting to approximately four and a half hours in total. For approximately three quarters of the lessons, the inspector was accompanied by the headteacher. The inspector held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. She took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. She observed the school's work, and looked at the school's documentation and policies, including those relating to safeguarding, data on pupils' progress, attendance figures and the school's development planning. The inspector scrutinised pupils' work, listened to pupils reading and evaluated 28 questionnaires received from parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized infant school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage; others are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. There are no pupils currently known to be eligible for free school meals. Since the last inspection, the school has been without a substantive headteacher and the current acting headteacher has been in post since September 2011.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Pupils achieve well, behaviour is exemplary and attendance is high. It is not yet outstanding because standards in writing are not yet as high as in reading and mathematics and inconsistencies in teaching restrict the rate of progress in some lessons.
- Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve significantly above average standards in reading and mathematics because the teaching is good and pupils are extremely keen to learn. Standards in writing are above average and pupils achieve well from their starting points. However, the standards pupils reach are not yet consistently high. Opportunities for pupils to complete extended pieces of writing independently or for the youngest children to record their ideas are not always planned for and this hampers their achievement.
- Teaching is good and, in some lessons, outstanding. Most lessons fully engage and motivate pupils, including at the start or end of lessons when the whole class are together. Where this is not a consistent feature, the pace of learning dips. Similarly, the effectiveness of how teachers use marking to accelerate learning and involve pupils in improving their work, whilst good overall, varies across the school.
- Pupils enjoy their whole time in the school. Their behaviour and attitudes are exemplary and this is a key factor in the high standards pupils reach. The vast majority of parents, carers and pupils all agree the school is thorough in ensuring that pupils are safe and secure.
- Leaders' and managers' plans to improve the school demonstrate their good understanding of its strengths and areas for development. They have been successful in maintaining high standards during a period of staff changes. Performance management procedures and the leadership of teaching are good overall, though have yet to secure outstanding teaching and progress.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure standards in writing consistently match the very high standards in reading and mathematics by:
 - providing increased opportunities for pupils to write independently, especially for the youngest children
 - ensuring all marking in books matches the best, so pupils always understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work and have time to reflect and act on teachers' comments.
- Accelerate progress and secure outstanding teaching overall by:
 - providing greater opportunities for sharing best practice already present in lessons and classes
 - increasing the pace of lessons so that all pupils are actively engaged and involved in their learning at all times.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Across the school, pupils are clear about their learning, talk with confidence and share their ideas willingly with one another. Pupils of all ages talk eagerly about what they have been learning, about what strategies they might need to solve the problems they are set and know their targets. Where learning is best, such as in a Year 1 literacy session on onomatopoeia, pupils discuss their learning as they look at their own work as well as their partners. Using a list of key features for their written work, they were able to evaluate whether they had met the success criteria for the lesson. They listen carefully to comments teachers make when reviewing their work during lessons and this engages them very effectively in the next steps in their learning. Parents and carers expressed a high level of satisfaction in the progress their children make and how well the school enables them to be involved in their children's learning. The inspection endorsed these views.

Throughout the school, all pupils achieve well. Attainment in reading and mathematics is consistently and significantly above the national average by the time pupils leave school. Effective systems for tracking progress ensure all pupils, including those with disabilities and those with special educational needs and the small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, achieve well and make good, and sometimes better, progress.

From broadly expected skills and understanding when they start, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. Children use the skills they learn in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) as they write. However, they do not always have sufficient opportunities to practice and consolidate these skills and write independently. The picture is similar across the school, where opportunities for independent and extended writing are not yet a regular feature. Consequently, writing remains a relatively weaker area. Pupils'

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enthusiasm for reading is developed very effectively because teachers promote reading well, often using texts to support learning in other subjects. Plenty of opportunities to use the skills they have learnt in lessons to solve problems ensure pupils have a good understanding of mathematical concepts and develop their numeracy skills well.

Quality of teaching

The teaching is typically good, and occasionally of the highest quality. The vast majority of parents and carers agree that this is the case. Staff prepare lessons carefully, matching the work well to pupils' different needs and linking different aspects of learning. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson, pupils combined their reading and information and communication technology (ICT) skills as they researched the life and achievements of the scientist Edward Jenner. The activity enabled pupils to practise their reading skills whilst developing their historical understanding, with the most able explaining they were 'skimming and scanning' to gather their information.

Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to pose questions effectively and also answer pupils' questions fully. Lessons on the whole are very well paced, with good use of time, although occasionally pupils are expected to spend too long listening to explanations when they are eager to start their work and, as a result, their interest and learning dips. Throughout the school, staff use extremely effective strategies to manage behaviour. Interesting activities, attractive environments and very good relationships between staff and pupils keep the pupils really focused and support learning well. Teachers regularly use paired talk which supports pupils' speaking and listening skills effectively and promotes their social development through negotiating ideas.

Staff keep good records of pupils' progress and use them to ensure they are effectively challenged in most lessons. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are taught well through a mix of class, group and individual activities. Teachers and teaching assistants, across the school, work together well, providing tailored support for each pupil's individual needs, enabling them to make good headway. Learning objectives and success criteria are increasingly shared with pupils and this helps to accelerate progress. Marking is helpful and generally supports pupils' next steps in learning. However, pupils do not always fully understand teachers' comments to improve their work or have the time to respond to these suggestions, and this hinders progress. Where pupils make rapid progress, as observed in both English and mathematics sessions in Years 1 and 2, teachers use the knowledge they gain from assessment during lessons to adjust their questioning and set new tasks. Pupils' misconceptions are quickly tackled; extra time to consolidate learning is provided or the level of challenge is increased.

Teachers interpret the curriculum in imaginative ways, providing an interesting range of activities which engage and motivate pupils. They place great emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills, and take every opportunity to thread the

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promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development into their teaching.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school's high expectations, strong caring ethos and aim to develop pupils' independent learning skills are key factors in pupils' high attendance and exemplary behaviour. Pupils' outstanding behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils respond extremely well to the support of adults working with them, particularly in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. Parents and carers praise the approach of teaching and support staff alike, commenting 'We love the safe family environment' and it is a 'wonderful and caring setting where my child can learn and develop'.

Due to school leaders' very effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example in lessons and assemblies, pupils get on really well together and show considerable support for one another, regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Visits, such as to a local mosque, give the pupils excellent first-hand opportunities to find out about the lives and beliefs of others living in Britain. Incidents of bullying, such as name calling, and persuading others to do things they do not want to, are rare. During the inspection, pupils were adamant that it 'just doesn't happen' and were equally keen to state how safe they felt in school. They are keen to explain how they would deal with a range of types of bullying and know exactly who to turn to for help if they need to. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire commented positively on how the school deals with behaviour, and all pupils during the inspection agreed that behaviour is 'always good'. Opportunities to take responsibilities in class, on the playground and as part of the school council contribute positively to pupils' excellent moral and social development and are highly regarded by the pupils.

Leadership and management

Following a period of staff and leadership changes, the acting headteacher's effective leadership has continued to drive improvement. Attendance is now high and pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning have been maintained. Well supported by other senior leaders, including a core of dedicated governors, she has ensured that the school's ethos is happy and cohesive, with staff feeling valued as part of the team. The school has met the recommendations for improvement from the previous inspection. For example, children in the Reception class are making the same progress in their creative skills as in other areas of learning, and the indoor and outdoor learning environments continue to develop. Effective self-evaluation ensures an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what remains to be done. This, together with the school's track record of improvement, indicates that it is well placed to continue moving forward.

Leaders visit classes to ensure that standards of teaching are always improving and have focused on providing advice to individual teachers on refining their skills. The school has rightly identified the need to strengthen procedures to disseminate best

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teaching practice and acknowledge that, in some lessons, a greater focus on the pace of pupils' learning and their opportunities to respond to teachers' comments is necessary to improve provision further. Further training is provided when appropriate and successful strategies are shared in order to achieve the highest levels of teaching and learning.

Leaders, managers and members of the governing body are effective in ensuring that the arrangements to keep pupils safe are rigorous. Statutory requirements concerning safeguarding are met. Leaders, managers and teachers promote equality of opportunity well, ensuring that all pupils, whatever their social or ethnic backgrounds or needs, make good progress. Pupils respect one another, and those from all backgrounds get on particularly well together, because discrimination is not tolerated by teachers or leaders and managers.

The curriculum effectively supports pupils' academic progress and personal development. Pupils' learning is enriched through memorable experiences. They are very keen to share a taste of what they have been learning with visitors and take a real pride in their school community. The pupils' enjoyment of such shared experiences shows the strength of the school's development of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maids Moreton Church of England School, Buckingham MK18 1QA

Thank you for talking to me and showing me your work during my visit to your school. I was pleased to hear that you like school a lot and how much you enjoy all that the teachers plan for you. It was good to see that you get along really well and look out for one another. Your school gives you just the right help so that you know how to behave extremely well and keep safe. Your attendance is high – well done!

The inspection found that Maids Moreton is a good school. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs well and teachers are good at helping you make good progress in your work. The leaders in the school know just what needs to be done to make sure your school keeps on getting better. In order to help you to reach even higher levels, I have made these suggestions:

- Provide lots of opportunities for you to practise your writing.
- Make sure that your teachers give you time to read the comments they make about your work so you can make changes to improve your writing even further.
- Make sure that teachers do not spend too long explaining your tasks so that there is more time for you to be actively involved.
- Provide more opportunities for teachers to share with each other what works really well in their classes.

You can all help by continuing to try so hard and getting on really well together. Thank you again for your warm welcome.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall
Lead inspector

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