

Middleton Primary School and Nursery

Harrow Road, Wollaton Park, Nottingham, NG8 1FG

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils achieve well due to good teaching, very broad experiences and effective support for those who need it.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave the school.
- A high proportion of pupils gain the higher levels in mathematics.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils have excellent attitudes towards their learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong.
- Pupils feel safe and learn to look after themselves and others very well.
- Pupils develop high levels of confidence and independence. Their friendliness and enthusiasm help to make the school a pleasant and positive place for everyone.
- The school is very inclusive. Pupils learn about a wide range of cultures, abilities and disabilities. They show high levels of interest in, and respect for, their own lives and those of others in the school and wider world.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. They have successfully improved the school since the last inspection and are already addressing issues identified in this inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress occasionally slows because a few aspects of teaching require improvement and not enough is outstanding.
- Teachers' marking does not always clearly show pupils how to improve their work.
- Teachers' questions do not always challenge pupils sufficiently well or help them to extend their learning.
- The pace of lessons is sometimes too slow, especially for more-able pupils.
- Some roles and responsibilities of leaders, particularly in relation to improving teaching, are relatively new and have not yet raised this to outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons and small support groups, taught by 17 teachers and six teaching assistants. Twelve of these observations were joint visits with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, a representative from the local authority, senior managers and teachers in charge of subjects, as well as parents and carers.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers from the 71 online responses to the Parent View website and informal discussions.
- They considered 29 responses to the staff questionnaire, and the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current progress, pupils' work, leaders' reports on lesson observations, the school's development plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Barnfield	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Middleton Primary and Nursery School is much bigger than most other primary schools. It is situated in a suburban area of Nottingham.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than in most other schools. About a quarter of the pupils are of Pakistani heritage.
- Over a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language. This proportion is higher than in most other schools. About a third of these pupils start at the school at early stages of understanding and speaking English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, extra funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services, is smaller than in most other schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- At times the school uses the alternative provision of specialist schools, to support a very few pupils who have significant emotional and behavioural needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The acting headteacher has been in this position for 18 months since the substantive headteacher went on planned leave.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by making sure that:
 - teachers' marking clearly shows pupils how they can improve and extend their learning
 - teachers' questions consistently deepen and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - the pace of lessons is suitably demanding for all pupils, especially the more able
 - the new roles of senior leaders have a strong focus and positive impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start in the Nursery or Reception classes with knowledge, skills and understanding broadly in line with expectations for this age. The communication, language and literacy of some is lower than this because they are at the early stages of learning English.
- All groups of children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because there is a good balance between activities which adults lead and those which children choose for themselves. Teaching is good and children who have additional needs are supported well. Occasionally progress slows because the activities which children choose are not always demanding enough, especially for those who are more able.
- All groups achieve well through Key Stages 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics. They are often significantly above this because many pupils reach the higher levels, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils' very high levels of enthusiasm and hard work contribute well to their good achievement. For example, children, including boys of all ethnicities, were highly engaged in writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 showed great enthusiasm and diligence working out which coins they could use to pay for items which they pretended to buy.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve well. Their progress is tracked very carefully, and they receive additional support to address any identified needs. By the end of Year 6, most of these pupils reach average standards in English and mathematics and are well prepared for later life and learning. This good teaching and well-focused support promote equality of opportunity and the gap between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the national average is closing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because teachers clearly identify their particular needs and provide effective additional help where it is needed.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because their needs are identified and met well. Other pupils are very friendly and helpful towards them and lots of activities are very visual and practical to help them access learning fully.
- Pupils achieve well in reading because the sounds that letters of the alphabet make in words (phonics) are taught well. Parents and carers frequently hear their children read at home. The proportion of six-year old pupils who did well in the national reading check was above average.

The quality of teaching is good

- A high proportion of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Consequently, all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Learning is interesting, relevant and well planned. Links between different subjects are good. For example, capital letters and spaces between words and full stops were strongly emphasised to children in a Reception class, within an information and communication technology lesson.
- Pupils benefit from a highly creative, stimulating curriculum which includes many different countries and cultures.

- Staff have high expectations of the behaviour, attitudes and learning of all pupils. They successfully promote both achievement and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through imaginative activities which extend pupils' understanding of the wider world. For example, pupils in Year 5 watched a video and wrote about African animals and going on a safari in Kenya.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed, helping pupils in lessons in small well-focused support groups.
- Teachers frequently look at how well pupils accomplish tasks in lessons. They often bring the whole class back together to refocus pupils on the aim of the lesson or explain a particular aspect again. While this is useful for many, it occasionally slows the progress of more-able pupils, because going over what they already know sometimes interrupts their tasks.
- Occasionally, questions are too easy or staff want particular answers, which reduces the impact the questions have on deepening and extending pupils' learning.
- Due to accurate identification and effective leadership marking has improved even though some inconsistencies remain. Some marking still lacks comments showing pupils how to improve and pupils do not always have the chance to respond and act upon advice when it is given. .

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have exemplary attitudes towards learning, themselves and others. They enjoy school greatly. Attendance is above average. Parents and carers are very positive about behaviour and safety.
- Pupils develop confidence and independence extremely well throughout the school. Relationships are very positive, expectations high and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility extensive. Pupils eagerly help with tasks such as operating the computer in assembly, serving on the school council and acting as 'playground buddies' at break times.
- Pupils' experiences, life skills and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are successfully extended through assemblies, topics and special events. For example, residential trips in Years 2, 4 and 6 help their social development, faith celebrations help their cultural and spiritual development and activities such as recycling waste materials help their moral development and attitudes towards the wider world.
- Pupils feel very safe because they learn how to reduce risks, such as those in using computers, and who to tell if they have any concerns and worries. They help and support each other extremely well, for example in lessons and playtimes, readily including others in games and eagerly assisting their younger 'buddies', known in the school as 'amigos'.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, including verbal, physical, cyber and prejudice-based bullying. They are confident that the extremely rare instances of these are tackled well by staff and know what to do and who to tell if they are involved or witness them. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Older pupils showed high levels of interest and tolerance, asking and answering questions in a Key Stage 2 assembly on wheelchair etiquette.

- Pupils develop very positive attitudes towards a wide range of cultures through assemblies, lessons and special events. In a Key Stage 1 assembly younger pupils showed great interest, respect and broad knowledge about Chinese New Year.
- Pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable than others are supported particularly well by teaching assistants and the school learning mentor. Behaviour, confidence and attendance of these pupils have all increased greatly.
- The behaviour and attendance of the few pupils who have behavioural or emotional difficulties, improve greatly because communication between all who work with these pupils is good and support is effective and consistent.

The leadership and management are good

- The effective work of leaders and managers has improved the quality of teaching and attendance. Many of the classrooms have been enlarged and decorated. They are bright, spacious, pleasant and safe places to be.
- Leaders, including governors, have a robust, detailed and accurate view of the school, which they use to bring about greater improvement. For example, they have recently refined assessments to give an even more detailed picture of pupils' achievement and reorganised the senior management team to spread responsibilities and speed developments, particularly in teaching. These changes are relatively new and have not yet had time to show their full impact.
- Leaders are highly ambitious for the school and for all pupils. Systems to drive improvement and to safeguard the well-being and safety of all pupils are effective.
- Staff morale is very positive. All questionnaire responses from staff were highly positive about all aspects of the school's work.
- Staff working together, partnerships with other agencies, the use of specialist teachers and the engagement of the whole range of parents and carers, is strong. One example of this is when parents and carers, other adults and governors talk to pupils about their jobs and careers. This has broadened the experience of pupils, extended their aspiration and ambition and helped promote equality of opportunity for all. One parent, reflecting the views of most, said 'Middleton is amazing, dinner ladies, office staff, caretaker and staff – truly commendable'.
- The school is supported adequately by the local authority, even though personnel are now few, through courses, discussions and links with other schools and colleges.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good knowledge about the quality of teaching and how well pupils are doing, especially the achievement of groups in relation to all pupils nationally, the breadth of their experiences and the impact of pupil premium funding. Systems for managing and improving the performance of all teaching staff, including leaders, are effective. Governors take full responsibility for managing the performance and salary of the head teacher. They ask searching questions and are fully involved in developing and improving the school. They know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122427
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	403488

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	465
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Pearce
Headteacher	Claire Sadler Penn (Acting) Rebecca Plaskitt (Substantive)
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2007
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