

The Middle Rasen Primary School

North Street, Middle Rasen, Market Rasen, LN8 3TS

Inspection dates 21–22 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders, managers, staff and governors create an environment in which learning flourishes. They ensure improved teaching and achievement.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn so lessons are never disrupted. Pupils show courtesy and respect to each other and to adults.
- Pupils are safe in school. They are known well as individuals and are confident about who to turn to if they need help.
- Teachers provide interesting and varied activities which challenge both boys and girls. They give good support to any pupils who are struggling.
- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress as they move through the school. They achieve well and reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are at least average by the end of Year 6.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They become more mature and responsible in preparation for their role as adult citizens in British democratic society.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, pupils are given work which is too easy or too hard. This prevents them from making more rapid progress.
- There are insufficient opportunities for teachers to improve their skills by observing best practice in the school and elsewhere.
- Pupils' cultural development is limited by a lack of first-hand experience of the diverse make up of modern British society.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes. He looked in detail at pupils' work to assess the quality of teaching and of pupils' progress over time. He carried out lesson observations jointly with the headteacher. He listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, senior and subject leaders and other staff, governors and a representative of the local authority who has worked closely with the school.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents. These covered safeguarding and child protection, attendance, behaviour, pupils' progress and attainment, the work of the governing body, the school improvement plan, and the monitoring of teaching quality.
- He consulted the Parent View website, where 24 responses to the online questionnaire were displayed. He examined the results of the school's own questionnaire for parents, to which 44 responses had recently been received.
- He analysed the responses to a questionnaire completed by nine members of staff.

Inspection team

Richard Marsden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. Very few are from other ethnic groups, and currently no pupils speak English as an additional language.
- At 15%, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding is below average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in care.
- At 7%, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. At just over 5%, the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Children attend the Early Years Foundation Stage full time and are taught in their own Reception class. Pupils in the other years are taught in three mixed-age, mixed-ability classes.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 to be able to make a statistically reliable judgement on whether the school meets the government's current floor standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of modern British society by creating opportunities for them to have first-hand interaction with their counterparts from different backgrounds beyond the immediate locality.
- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement so they are consistently outstanding by:
 - checking that no pupils are ever given work which is too easy or too hard for them
 - extending opportunities for teachers to develop their skills by learning from each other, or from teachers in other schools, about what works best to ensure pupils' more rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has ambition for pupils' higher achievement and this aspiration is shared by all staff. In all years, including Reception, there is a common sense of purpose to provide an environment in which children can thrive and learning flourish. The school's strong commitment to equal opportunities means that no pupil is denied access to anything the school offers.
- The school's self-review is accurate and perceptive. Leaders and managers, including subject leaders, keep all aspects of the school's work under careful review. They constantly look for aspects which can be further refined. The school has improved since it was last inspected and all areas for improvement identified then have been rigorously addressed and resolved.
- The quality of teaching is checked carefully by the headteacher and subject leaders. All staff have individual targets for improvement and these link to the school's overall improvement plan. Staff show an eagerness to improve and refine their skills. Pupils' achievement is also monitored in detail and swift action taken if any individual pupil appears to be falling behind.
- Staff are eager to improve their practice. They freely share ideas and learn from each other's expertise. However, leaders have not provided staff with sufficient opportunities for them to observe excellent practice in this or other schools so that pupils can be helped to make more rapid progress.
- Pupils learn a broad and balanced range of subjects. They enjoy clubs such as the early-morning running club and the sewing club as well as more traditional music and sport. There are residential visits which help develop pupils' self-confidence and resilience. Special events, such as the open-air production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the 'Forensic Science Day' arouse much interest and bring learning to life for pupils. Provision for pupils' personal development gives them understanding of their future responsibilities as adult citizens within the context of their own social and cultural environment.
- Extra funding for disadvantaged pupils (pupil premium) is used well to provide extra teaching support for these pupils. It is very effectively closing the gaps in attainment between these pupils and others. It is also used to enable these pupils take part in all out-of-school activities.
- The recently introduced sport funding is used well to extend pupils' participation in sport. It has paid for specialist coaching to enable pupils to experience a wider range of sports. The funding enables teachers to increase their own expertise in teaching different sports. It has also enabled pupils to enter more sporting competitions and to gain in health and physical well-being. The impact on pupils' participation in sport is checked carefully.
- The local authority provides the school with helpful support and helped overcome weaknesses identified in the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well organised and well informed. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They understand how the school's performance data on attainment and progress compare with those of schools nationally.
 - Governors know what the quality of teaching is and ensure the management of staff performance is effective, but have not yet broadened professional development opportunities for all teachers. They make sure that pay rises are based on staff competence in enabling pupils to achieve well. Governors ask incisive questions of leaders to make sure that any areas of underperformance are tackled.
 - Governors understand clearly how the pupil premium funding is used and ensure its positive impact on eligible pupils' achievement.
 - Governors are aware of the importance of pupils being well prepared for life in modern Britain. They make sure that the school promotes acceptance of people from different backgrounds or with different beliefs. They are diligent in making sure that the school meets all legal requirements for the safeguarding and protection of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. From the beginning of the Reception Year, pupils understand clearly what conduct is expected of them. Their good behaviour makes the school a calm, orderly and purposeful community where pupils learn without disruption. They show curiosity and an eagerness to learn in lessons. Attendance rates are above average.
- Relationships are good. The school provides an environment in which each individual can thrive. Adults treat children with warmth and respect, giving them plenty of praise and encouragement so that they grow in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils listen politely to each other and to adults. From the Reception Year upwards they take turns and share things appropriately.
- Pupils are proud to talk about the many jobs they do to serve their school. They serve, for example, as lunch, assembly or register monitors. They may be school councillors or eco-warriors. In the Reception class they happily join in with tidying up, singing their special song as they do so. Pupils willingly help people less fortunate than themselves by organising charity fund-raising events.
- The school's insistence on high standards of behaviour means that pupils' moral and social development is good. Their spiritual development is also good. They are given times to reflect or to respond to art or music, for example, and do so thoughtfully.
- Pupils' cultural development is good. They learn about different people's social and ethnic backgrounds, customs and beliefs. However, opportunities for them to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of modern British society by interacting at first hand with their counterparts from different cultural background beyond the immediate locality are underdeveloped.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Access to the school is secure and staff are carefully checked prior to appointment. Pupils and their parents say that pupils are safe in school and inspection findings endorsed their views.
- Safety matters have high priority and procedures are robust. Appropriate to the age of the pupils, safety features regularly in assemblies. Guidance is threaded through the work done in lessons. Pupils serve as Junior Road Safety Officers or Junior Police Cadet Support Officers and welcome visitors from the police and fire services.
- The school gives good support to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. It draws on a range of outside agencies to do so. The inspector saw how this support has helped such pupils to settle in school, and to grow in confidence and motivation. These pupils make the most of what the school provides and progress at the same rate as other pupils.
- All parents and pupils spoken to were confident that bullying is not an issue in the school. Pupils showed that they understand the different forms that bullying can take, such as cyber-bullying, and how to keep themselves safe from it. They are confident that the staff would take appropriate action if needed.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching promotes good achievement in reading, writing and mathematics from early years provision onwards. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give confident and clear explanations. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, they use a wide range of vocabulary – words such as 'precipitation', 'chronology' and 'onomatopoeia' – and they routinely expect pupils to use these themselves. They present material in many different ways in order to make sure that learning is solid and secure.
- Teachers question pupils well to make sure that everyone understands the work as lessons progress. They

make sure that pupils learn from their mistakes and are not afraid to 'have a go'.

- Work is usually challenging for all pupils, including the most able. For example, in mathematics, young pupils were studying proportion. They practised their mathematical skills very effectively and were challenged to experiment to see what colours emerged when they mixed colours in different proportions.
- Teachers are generally careful to stretch all abilities. Occasionally, the work they set is too easy or too hard for some pupils. Teachers welcome the opportunity of observing best practice elsewhere so they enhance their skills in this and other areas. However, such opportunities are only at an early stage of development and cannot yet be evaluated for their impact on pupils' achievement.
- The school gives good support to disabled pupils' and those with special educational needs. When teachers work with the whole class, they constantly make sure that every pupil is keeping up. Teaching assistants are well prepared. They are familiar with pupils' learning needs. They are patient and encouraging as they work with individuals or small groups.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. They add comments showing pupils how to improve their work. Pupils say these are very helpful. Teachers make sure that pupils actually read and act on the advice they are given. This promotes good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Individual children's starting points in communication and mathematics vary greatly when they join the Reception class. Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, and in some cases exceptional progress, as they move up the school.
- There are no significant variations between the progress of boys and girls. They achieve equally well. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups also achieve as well as other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They receive good support and gain confidence in learning.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. The gaps in the attainment of these pupils compared to others have narrowed substantially. In some cases their standards are higher than those of other pupils. In 2013, the latest year for which national comparisons are available, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to evaluate their achievement without identifying individuals. During the inspection, disadvantaged pupils were seen to be making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2013, pupils' scores in the Year 1 national check on phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they represent) were just below average. In 2014, the school's score improved by 26% to be considerably higher than the latest national comparison because teaching was more effective.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. They read regularly, usually each day. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and non-fiction topics. The most able in Years 2 and 6 read with excellent understanding and expression, coping with words such as 'metamorphic' and 'manoeuvre'. Less-able pupils in these years read more hesitantly, but they can clearly show how they cope with unfamiliar words using the 'sounding out' techniques they have been taught.
- Pupils achieve well in writing because they are given many opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects, not only in English lessons. They are given things to write about which interest and motivate them. The recent First World War topic was very well received by both boys and girls, for example, and the Great Fire of London is currently catching their interest. Teachers stress the importance of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar at all times and in all subjects and pupils are generally accurate in their written work.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. They are able to do complex calculations with a variety of equipment, such as, plastic cubes, hand-held computers, cameras, diagrams drawn on mini whiteboards as well as

with pen and paper without help from calculators.

- Although the most-able pupils are, occasionally, given work that is too easy for them, they are usually well challenged and achieve well. They apply themselves well and enjoy learning. They reach the higher levels, particularly in reading and writing in national tests and make good progress throughout the school.

The early years provision is good

- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Staff plan as a team to provide activities which stimulate and inspire both boys and girls in all areas of learning. They keep a very close check on children's progress and take decisive action if an individual child gives cause for concern.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Children are safe. They are known very well as individuals. They rise to the occasion as staff seek to establish routines and introduce them to the school's high expectations of behaviour. They respond well to the warm and encouraging way in which adults treat them.
- The quality of teaching is good. The classroom and outdoor area are attractive, welcoming and stimulating. Adults interact constantly with children, taking every opportunity to develop children's observational, mathematical and communication skills. There is a suitable mix of whole-class teaching, group teaching and individual activities chosen by the children themselves.
- The children achieve well. They start the Early Years Foundation Stage with communication and mathematical skills which vary greatly. They make good progress, and by the end of the Reception Year, most reach a good level of development and are well prepared to move into Year 1. The learning needs of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are swiftly identified and steps are taken to make sure that they are appropriately met.

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	120463
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	441936

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Patrick
Headteacher	Melonie Brunton
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2012
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