



Maltby Craggs Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106870
LEA Rotherham
Inspection number 277645
Inspection dates 8 May 2006 to 9 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Joe Peacock CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Strauss Crescent
School category	Community		Maltby
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Rotherham, South Yorkshire S66 7QJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01709 812729
Number on roll	216	Fax number	01709 798202
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr K Thompson
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Shelia Ralph

Age group 3 to 7	Inspection dates 8 May 2006 - 9 May 2006	Inspection number 277645
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school moved into a new building in 2005. It is situated in a residential area, suffering from high levels of unemployment. The school is of average size with almost all of the pupils coming from a white British background. The proportion entitled to free school meals and the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are both well above the national average. The school has experienced a period of disruption over the past four years caused by the move into the new building, three different headteachers and the on-going long term absence of key managers. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2006.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It is giving satisfactory value for money. Most of the issues from the last inspection six years ago have been dealt with successfully with the exception of attendance, which is still a problem. Inspection judgements mostly agree with the school's self-evaluation but pupils' personal development and well-being and how well learners are cared for, guided and supported are judged to be good rather than satisfactory. Every pupil is respected and valued. The headteacher has accomplished much in the short time since her appointment and there are encouraging signs that improvement is beginning to happen in a number of areas. Pupils love coming to their new school and parents appreciate the high level of care being provided for them all. Effective links with the Junior School have been established and good use is made of the learning mentors and other specialists to support pupils' learning.

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below the level expected for most schools but children's progress is good in the Foundation Stage Units. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. In some lessons, teachers are not providing sufficiently challenging work for pupils in order to increase their rate of progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Checks on the quality of lessons, however, do not happen often enough. The governing body has changed significantly in the last year. New governors are deeply committed to the school but are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the school's performance. The school's capacity to further improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics by:

- improving the rate of attendance of pupils
- improving the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring that teachers expect more of pupils, providing work that is sufficiently challenging in order to increase their rate of progress
- developing further the role and responsibilities of all staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's performance so that weaknesses are quickly identified and decisive action is taken to bring about improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The standards attained in reading, writing and mathematics are below the national average in Year 2 and the trend over the past four years shows that overall standards, compared to those nationally, have been slowly declining. Detailed tracking of pupils'

attainment, however, shows that pupils' progress is at least satisfactory given their low starting points.

The attainment profiles for children as they enter the Nursery clearly show that the majority are well below the level expected. Most make good progress in the two Nursery and Reception Foundation Stage Units, due to the good quality of teaching and the positive learning environment. Despite this, by the time they enter Year 1, many are not expected to achieve all the early learning targets in any of the six areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress but the standards they achieve are still below the national average by the time they transfer to the Junior School. From their low starting point on entry to the school, this represents satisfactory progress overall. An emphasis on improving reading and writing skills is beginning to have an impact and the school's assessment data show an improvement in the number of pupils who are on target to achieve the standard expected of all pupils nationally in writing.

A relatively high proportion of pupils at the school have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and they make good progress in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils generally meet the challenging targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being at the school are good. Those pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they enjoy school and feel safe and secure. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils also speak highly of the regular celebration assemblies and of feeling valued by the staff. One pupil summed up the feelings of many pupils when he confidently said, 'I love this school!'

Pupils' overall attendance is inadequate, being well below the national average. In addition, a significant minority are often late for school. The attendance figures, however, are to some extent distorted by a very small minority of pupils who have a very poor attendance record, some below 50%. There have been few pupil exclusions and the vast majority behave well in classrooms and around the school. Pupils say that they like sport and physical education and they are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles by, for example, eating more fruit. The school's strategies to improve the current standards in literacy and numeracy are having a satisfactory impact on pupils' future economic well-being.

The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at the school is good, overall. However, pupils' understanding of our multicultural society is currently underdeveloped. Moral and social development is strongly promoted, helping pupils to appreciate the benefits of looking after one another and behaving sensibly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the two well organised Foundation Stage units, which each have Nursery and Reception children, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan the curriculum carefully with the skilled teaching assistants and the favourable adult to child ratio ensures a high level of attention for individual children, helping all to make good progress.

In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to good. Where teaching is more effective, a key feature is the effective use of support staff in the classroom to ensure that lower attaining pupils have the help that they need to complete challenging tasks. In addition, the pace is good, helping to keep pupils' full attention. In other lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough and their questions do not sufficiently encourage pupils' speaking skills. In some lessons, teachers' planning does not provide enough opportunity for pupils to make use of their literacy, numeracy or computing skills. The quality of teachers' marking and how well they assess pupils' progress are both satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and or disabilities are particularly well provided for by their teachers and by teaching assistants who demonstrate a good range of specialist teaching skills to improve aspects such as literacy skills or behaviour. The learning mentors make a major contribution to pupils' learning by supporting pupils in class and advising parents how to help their children in Family Learning sessions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that the curriculum is satisfactory. Significant emphasis is given to the promotion of reading, writing and mathematics skills, as staff are well aware of continuing weaknesses in the standards pupils achieve. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is well organised, covering the required areas of learning within an appropriate combination of adult-led activities and those in which children have a degree of choice. The outside learning area for the Foundation Stage, however, is not yet sufficiently developed to provide an exciting or stimulating learning environment for the children. Pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship are promoted well. The headteacher, an experienced musician, successfully encouraged pupil participation as she led a school celebration assembly. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed singing and receiving special awards in recognition of their achievements. The curriculum is currently enriched by a satisfactory number of clubs for pupils to attend at lunchtime and by opportunities to visit, study and work in the local environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, support and guidance for pupils is good. The school roll includes a wide spectrum of pupils, many of whom have very complex needs and low levels of self esteem. There are very effective and relevant levels of support, welfare and guidance provided for all by teachers and skilled support staff, many of whom have specialist knowledge. The few vulnerable pupils and those with behaviour problems are particularly well provided for in school.

Good child protection procedures are in place and appropriate checks are made on staff new to the school. Accidents involving pupils are quickly and effectively addressed by the school's staff and detailed records are maintained. Regular fire drills take place and detailed risk assessments are carried out in advance of school trips. Pupils are aware of and understand their short-term targets for improvement. The school's assessment procedures are satisfactory for reading, writing and mathematics but are not yet securely embedded for science and other subjects. Annual reports to parents are good, focusing on what pupils know and can do and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has a clear understanding about the changes that are necessary to raise standards and the quality of education for pupils. Governors say that they are excited about the future as a result of her energy and enthusiasm and parents are very supportive, as reflected in the questionnaires returned to the inspection team.

The headteacher and governors know the school well and have already identified the key priorities for development. This is reflected in the overall accuracy of the school's self-evaluation. The headteacher is the third in four years and some management initiatives have not progressed as rapidly as expected because of this and some unavoidable absence involving key members of staff. An innovative and effective subject management strategy has been devised that links subjects into groups based upon the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. Teams of teachers and teaching assistants manage each group of subjects. This is giving an element of stability and continuity in the face of so many staff changes. Some aspects, such as the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are under-developed at present so that teaching which is only satisfactory is not being improved quickly enough. There are good procedures for checking on pupils' progress. Governors are deeply committed to school improvement and carry out their role satisfactorily. They plan their budget prudently and financial resources are used effectively. Most are keen to become more involved in helping to monitor school effectiveness. The school's capacity to improve further is clearly good.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to everyone and looking at your work. The things that we particularly liked were:

- how much all of you really love coming to your new school
- how well you behave in lessons and around school
- the interesting things for you to do in nursery and reception which help you all to make such good progress. It is a pity the outdoor space has not been made more exciting for you.
- the good work of all the teaching assistants and learning mentors. They try so hard to help you in lessons.
- the way all the staff care for you and look after you in school
- the big difference that your new headteacher has made since she arrived. She is leading the school well with good support from all staff. We particularly like the strong links with the junior school.

We are asking your headteacher, staff and governors to do the following things:

- make sure that teachers plan harder work for you. We are sure that you will be able to do it. It is really important that all the staff concentrate on helping you to do better in reading, writing and mathematics.
- try and get as many teachers and governors as possible involved in checking how well things are going in school to see if they can spot anything which could be improved.

Thank you again for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will all keep trying hard to help your teachers to make it even better! The most important thing to remember is that coming to school every day and being on time is important. You miss so much if you are absent, even for one day.