



# Mercenfeld Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119937  
**LEA** Leicestershire  
**Inspection number** 280691  
**Inspection dates** 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Alison Cartlidge RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Oakfield Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Markfield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 10		Leicestershire LE67 9WG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 243151
<b>Number on roll</b>	292	<b>Fax number</b>	01530 245 708
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr David Sprason
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Kitchen

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 10	<b>Inspection dates</b> 3 October 2005 - 4 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280691
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in the village of Markfield on the outskirts of Leicester. It is of average size, though it only takes pupils up to the end of Year 5. Most children are of White British heritage, with a few coming from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language, and the proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Pupils come to the school from an average mix of home backgrounds and attainment on entry to the school, whilst varying from year to year, is broadly average.

## 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 strengths in pupils' personal development and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Good provision in the reception year helps children to make a good start in their education. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment is broadly average and the achievement of most of them is satisfactory. However, more able pupils do not always make enough progress because they are not challenged consistently and pupils do not have enough opportunity to write independently across the curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory because, whilst teachers insist on good behaviour, and prepare well for lessons, they do not always expect enough from the pupils, especially in their written work. Leadership and management by the headteacher, other members of staff and governors are satisfactory. There is a shared understanding of how the school should be developed, though the school is more generous in its self-evaluation than the inspection team. The school is in a secure position to make the necessary improvements and provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards in writing by ensuring that pupils have enough opportunity to write independently across the curriculum
- increase teachers' expectations, especially for the more able pupils
- use the information kept on pupils' progress to help them learn more quickly.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children in the reception year make good progress, especially in their personal, social and emotional development, and most meet the expected targets by the end of the year.

In Years 1 to 5, pupils' attainment is broadly average. Achievement is satisfactory overall, with the best progress being made in Years 3 to 5. Pupils make good progress in reading and speaking and listening, but make slower progress in writing, where test results are consistently lower than in other subjects. More able pupils do not always make enough progress and whilst the school sets reasonably challenging targets, these are not always achieved.

Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well, with particularly effective programmes being used to develop their speaking and listening.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are confident, sociable and articulate. They are very happy at school and this is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils are polite and courteous and get on well with each other. They work very hard and behave very sensibly throughout the school day.

Pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils take responsibility well. The school council makes a good contribution to school life and manages its own budget well. The council recently carried out a survey of pupils and this has helped to make the school even safer. Pupils show good initiative by organising fundraising events, road safety quizzes and selling drinks. These activities, together with pupils' well developed social skills, prepare them well for the world of work.

Pupils take a very active part in the many sporting and musical activities offered by the school. They know why it is important to take exercise and to eat healthy foods and they explain how the 'Huff and Puff' activities help them to 'concentrate in lessons'. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community by looking after the environment by recycling waste and by deploring the negative effects of vandalism.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Whilst the quality of teaching differs in some year groups, it is satisfactory overall. The best teaching is in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 5. In the reception classes, teachers are well organised. They plan interesting work that meets differing needs well and helps children to acquire new skills quickly. In Years 3 to 5, teachers use questioning well and give pupils good opportunities to talk about their work. This approach helps pupils to improve their speaking and listening and their understanding of what they need to learn next.

Throughout the school, teachers work hard and plan carefully for each lesson. They make good use of resources, including interactive whiteboards, to make learning interesting. However, there is sometimes insufficient challenge for more able pupils and occasionally the pace of learning is too slow, leading to work being unfinished and too little progress being made. Consequently, some pupils do not always fulfil their potential, especially in writing, where the demands of work are not high enough. Teachers do not always use the information kept on pupils' progress to help them learn more quickly.

Teachers are very successful at developing pupils' personal skills and have very high expectations of how pupils should behave. They have very caring relationships with the pupils and respect their ideas and suggestions, helping to make lessons enjoyable.

Skilful teaching assistants are used well to support the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, helping to ensure that they make good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and includes good additional activities, especially in sports and music. The school has been successful in gaining the prestigious 'Activemark Gold' for its sporting opportunities and pupils give concerts using a wide range of instruments. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. For example, pupils grow their own vegetables in the school garden and learn to take regular exercise. Pupils learn how to become responsible citizens by taking part in whole class discussions and the school council. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified and met well.

The opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across the curriculum are insufficient and this results in standards that are not high enough.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are good. All members of staff are caring and have good health and safety systems for the pupils, including the procedures for child protection. The school has trained some older pupils to act as mediators when friends 'fall out' on the playground and to reinforce school rules before a member of staff becomes involved. This helps pupils to learn to solve problems for themselves and raises their self-esteem effectively.

There are good procedures to help new pupils settle into school life quickly. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is monitored especially well, and these pupils are supported effectively by teachers and teaching assistants. However, whilst the school monitors the progress of all pupils and sets individual targets, not enough is done to make up for lost time when targets have not been achieved.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, other members of staff and governors have a shared understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The comprehensive information from monitoring standards, teaching and learning is used satisfactorily to plan school development. However, whilst senior managers and governors are hardworking and committed to the school, reasonably challenging targets set for the year do not always result in enough improvement in pupils' progress.

Day-to-day management of finances and the support and care for individual members of staff and pupils are well organised and lead to a calm and happy school. The headteacher and governors enhance support for pupils' learning by maintaining high staffing levels and improving resources such as computer equipment.

The two coordinators for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities work together effectively, providing pupils with innovative learning programmes that support their achievement well.

The school works hard to maintain interesting and attractive buildings and grounds and these have a positive impact on pupils' well-being. The school considers parents' views and, as a result, parents are keen to offer their support. Most parents are very positive about the school and are especially pleased that they are kept well informed about events and that their children like school. Parents have a positive impact on their children's education by raising money and providing practical support for clubs and improvements to the buildings and grounds.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 welcoming us to your school and for being so friendly and helpful.

What we liked most about your school

- You like school, behave very well and play together sensibly.
- Your teachers are kind, look after you well and help you to learn.
- The headteacher, other teachers and governors know how to make your school even better.
- Your parents are very pleased that you come to this school.
- We were impressed by the way the school council manages its own budget.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Help you to improve your writing.
- Make sure that you are always given work that is neither too easy nor too hard.
- Check that you are learning quickly enough.

Yours sincerely

A Cartlidge, K England and M Capper Inspection Team