



Moggerhanger Lower School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109473
Local Authority BEDFORDSHIRE
Inspection number 288390
Inspection dates 6–7 February 2007
Reporting inspector Roger Brown

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

Type of school	First	School address	Blunham Road
School category	Foundation		Moggerhanger
Age range of pupils	4–9		Bedfordshire MK44 3RD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01767 640270
Number on roll (school)	61	Fax number	01767 640270
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Max Hill
		Headteacher	Mr Paul Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small village school serving the local community and the surrounding area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although there are a small number from other backgrounds including some traveller children. The area is mixed both socially and economically. Fewer than average pupils are eligible for a free school meals but the proportion that have learning difficulties or disabilities is average. Attainment on entry to the school varies widely, but is average overall. The school has secured an award for Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It recognises that it forms an important part of a small village community and works hard to try and meet this responsibility. The standards are above average and pupils' achievements are now consistently good across all key stages. Recent staff changes have been managed well so that there is a growing coherence to the school's work brought about by the complementary nature of the strengths, knowledge and understanding of the individual teachers who all work together well. Variations in pupils' attainment have either been addressed or, as in the case of the relative weakness of the pupils' performance in mathematics, are developing.

The school works well in partnership with others to support and develop learners' understanding and their wider skills. It has a lead role in developing the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) project in the local area. This has proved very effective in strengthening pupils' good personal development. The pupils are happy in school and attendance is average. They enjoy the responsibilities they are given, particularly in relation to the development of playtime. The older pupils would welcome an even wider role in influencing the way the school is changing.

Teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants are positive in their attitudes to the pupils. This is the key to the high quality relationships in the school which in turn form the basis for successful learning. The staff are not afraid to innovate and change, but some of the most recent developments have not yet had time to make a measurable impact. The school's commitment to extending and developing the use of information communication technology (ICT) is one example of this. A further example is the nature and organisation of the curriculum which is satisfactory. At present, some opportunities are missed to reinforce learners' use of skills and understanding from one subject in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils get good support and advice about their learning. The school has made wise investments in systems to support the tracking of pupils' progress. These are beginning to be very effective in helping teachers to set accurate targets for development and to analyse the next steps in learning.

The good leadership of the school is open and inclusive in its approach, and is well prepared to listen to a range of views and opinions both from within and outside the school. All staff are given responsibilities and encouraged to develop their ideas. The good teamwork fostered by this style of leadership is clearly one of the keys to the school's success. The majority of parents are very sympathetic to the school's work. 'My children have always been given excellent support and encouragement from the teaching staff' is a typical parental view. However, a small number raised a range of diverse issues with the inspector. These show that not all parents are fully aware of, or fully understand the school's systems and processes. Nevertheless, because of good management systems including rigorous financial controls, alongside a good range of high quality resources in a good quality environment, the school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics to match those in English.
- Help pupils to reinforce skills from one subject by applying them in others.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The children's skills, knowledge and understanding at the end of their Reception year are good; many children achieve beyond the goals for learning expected of this age. By the end of Year 2, teachers' assessments show that overall standards are above average in all respects. Standards in reading and writing are above national and local averages. In mathematics the results are above national averages, but only in line with those of other local schools. A similar pattern of achievement continues into Key Stage 2 with standards in reading still good and almost as high in writing. Although pupils' progress in mathematics improves, it is not yet in line with standards achieved in English. In 2006, most pupils met the challenging targets they were set, but they did not achieve results that were as high as previous years. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities as well as those with special gifts and talents make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils enjoy school and value the high quality environment that it provides for them. They feel safe and cared for. Pupils' behaviour is good and managed well in the classrooms. Older pupils are now beginning to take some responsibility for everyone's behaviour during outdoor play. 'Playground friends' actively lead play activities and are learning to intervene when there are difficulties or disputes. The school council is seen to have an important role and is proving a positive influence in helping to improve the attitudes and understanding of the pupils. The school's lead role in the introduction of the SEAL project is an important strength. This work has had a constructive influence on pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development which is now good. Pupils talk thoughtfully about the choices they make for themselves concerning their personal goals, their relationships with others and what they know of events in the wider world. The school is working towards a Healthy Schools award and this has enabled pupils to have a good understanding of how their diet and the way they exercise can contribute towards a healthy lifestyle. The development of pupils' basic skills is good and along with the good links with the local community gives them a good level of understanding about adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching across the school is now promoting good achievement at all stages. The current team of teachers is working towards developing a consistent pattern of practice. Their approach is enhancing pupils' attainment; however, important elements such as the improved use of ICT and a coherent planning format are still evolving. High quality positive relationships between adults and pupils encourage pupils to make adventurous choices about the way they learn and to be confident enough to make mistakes and learn from these. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and plan lessons which are enjoyable and engage pupils' interests. This helps to motivate them to want to succeed. Teachers use assessment information effectively in planning lessons so that the learning needs of pupils at all levels of attainment are well met. Pupils clearly understand what their teachers expect of them as there is a good system of target setting which helps all pupils, especially the older ones, to understand what they have to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is a good range of stimulating learning activities for children in the Reception class which provides them with a good start to their education. The school works hard to extend and enrich the curriculum for all pupils, and this element of the school's work is good. Pupils get many opportunities to go on visits, meet interesting people and take part in a wide range of different activities and events. Nevertheless, with all the changes and developments that have taken place at the school, the broader curriculum, although satisfactory, is not planned to blend skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of areas. Because subjects tend to be taught as discrete elements, opportunities are occasionally missed to reinforce earlier learning or to extend and capitalise on pupils' interests and knowledge from one subject through another. The school has sensibly made a significant investment that will substantially improve the level of use of ICT, and intends to use this to lead further developments of the wider curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of pastoral care and support is good because there is a strong emphasis on nurturing and developing each individual pupil. Pupils feel safe and secure in school and have confidence that adults will help them should problems arise. Teachers and classroom assistants know the pupils and many of their families well and make the school a secure and inviting place in which to learn. Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and well-being are securely in place and understood by all staff. Pupils of all abilities including those with specific needs or with special gifts and talents are well

supported and encouraged academically because there are good procedures for checking and tracking their progress. A good system for setting and reviewing personal targets gives pupils a clear understanding of how to improve their work. The school works closely with outside support agencies to ensure that pupils who need extra help receive the necessary support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team makes good use of the school improvement process, particularly performance management, to evaluate and assess what works well and what needs to be improved. The teachers are now playing a fuller role in leading the work of the school and have valuable insights as to what the school can do to improve further. The governors are effective not only at supporting and promoting the school, but also act as critical friends overseeing developments and checking progress. Financial management is good; the school seeks to ensure that it always secures best value for money in its expenditure. The school was judged good at the time of the last inspection and has continued to improve. With the latest developments it is well placed to continue to do so.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 February 2007

Dear children,

Moggerhanger Lower School, Blunham Road, Moggerhanger, MK44 3RD

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school. It was a real pleasure to be with you. I enjoyed watching your classes, and I really enjoyed talking to you about your work.

I thought that the things that were good about your school were:

- the interesting and exciting way of learning in Reception
- the impressive way in which you know and use your goals and targets to achieve what you want to do
- the fact that you enjoy your school, you learn well, and think learning is fun
- the great choices you have made about improving playtimes.

However, I would like your teachers to:

- help you to achieve even higher standards in mathematics
- help you to practise skills you have learned in one subject by using them in others.

Many of your parents wrote to me, and most of them said that they think that you go to a good school, and I agree with them. I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent with you in school.

Best wishes for the future.

Roger Brown

Lead inspector