



Mickley Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112676
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289370
Inspection dates 30–31 January 2007
Reporting inspector Andrew Cook HMI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Milton Avenue
School category	Community		Stretton, Stretton
Age range of pupils	3–7		Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 6GG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01773 832707
Number on roll (school)	47	Fax number	01773 832707
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Marianne Rawson
		Headteacher	Miss Sara Street
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a small community just outside Alfreton. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. A very small number of children come from minority ethnic groups.

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. Children flourish because teaching is good. Underpinning everything is a focus on helping children to be kind, thoughtful and good learners.

Children make good progress, although girls make better progress than boys. In the nursery and reception class, children get off to a good start. Teaching is good and children quickly grow in confidence and make good progress. When children move up to the Year 1 and 2 class they continue to make good progress. Teaching in this class is also good and by the end of Year 2 children have reached average standards and some above average. Children's targets in reading and writing have recently been introduced but are not yet improving standards effectively.

Overall, the quality of care, support and guidance is satisfactory, although the care children receive is very good. As a result, the school is a very positive place. Children enjoy school and their attendance is good. A strength of the school is the caring way in which children are helped to develop social skills. As a result, children's personal development and behaviour are good, they share, work and play well together and make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. The midday dinner break is an important time of the day when children enjoy very healthy meals and then get chance to exercise as they run around and play games outside.

The curriculum is good, although the school is in the process of making sure it better matches the needs of boys. Recently the school has developed the way they use information and communication technology (ICT), and both classrooms now have interactive white boards. These have already improved lessons through the use of videos, pictures and sounds.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has been in post for a short while and has made a positive start. She is working well with the team of staff and has some good plans to further improve the school. The governors provide satisfactory support for the school. However, they are not involved enough in checking how well the school is doing nor sufficiently involved in making decisions about how things should improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of boys so that more reach above average standards.
- Develop further the use of targets so that children know what they need to do to improve.
- Develop the role of the governors so that they become more involved in finding out about how well the school is doing and then provide effective support and challenge.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From a below average starting point children make good progress, achieving average standards by the end of Year 2. Children get off to a flying start in the nursery and reception years and make good progress. In 2006, the standards reached by Year 2 were the best results in the last five years. Boys do not do as well as girls, especially in reading and writing, with few attaining above average standards. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress in writing and mathematics but, like other children, do not do as well in reading. The school has set some challenging targets for the Year 2 results in 2007 and children are on track to achieve these.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children flourish in the school because all adults constantly encourage them to be kind, thoughtful and well behaved. Children's moral and social development is a strength of the school. Children's behaviour is good and children work and play together well, creating a happy atmosphere around the school. Attendance is good. Children's spiritual development is good, encouraged in assemblies when they are given time to reflect and pray. Cultural development is satisfactory because children only have limited experiences of the rich diversity of different cultures. Children know about keeping healthy and talk about eating fruit and fibre, taking exercise and drinking plenty of water. At dinner times children do just this. Children also get regular opportunities to exercise in physical education lessons and the school has successfully adapted to having limited use of a hall. The older class, who act as the school council, have the responsibility of discussing how well the school is doing and reports get back to the headteacher, who takes appropriate action when needed. Everyday a VIP is chosen from Year 2 to take on tasks such as giving out the fruit and taking the register back to the office. These responsibilities, along with the skills children learn in English and mathematics, give the children a good chance to do well in their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good in both classes. Very good relationships between adults help children to feel confident, work well and make good progress. For example, in one lesson seen, the teacher encouraged children to have a go and asked, 'Does it matter if we get it wrong?' to which the children all replied, 'No, because we learn from our mistakes.' Teaching helps children develop speaking and listening skills effectively. Teachers explain things clearly, ask children good questions and encourage them to listen and then think carefully about how they say things. Teaching carefully builds on what

children already know. However, some opportunities are missed to extend activities or ask more able children challenging questions. Boys find it more difficult to concentrate in lessons and do not always make as good progress as girls. Teaching assistants work alongside teachers and are very effective in teaching small groups of children. Good use is being made of ICT, for example, to help children with their spelling work. Teachers' lesson plans are generally detailed but do not always make it clear as to how more able children will be challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is changing to better meet the needs of boys. Underpinning everything that is taught is an emphasis on teaching children good social skills. The use of ICT is improving and the recent installation of interactive whiteboards is making a big difference to lessons. Recently, good work has been done to improve the curriculum for boys, especially in reading by getting more books in that will interest them. A small number of clubs take place in the summer term, and, along with a range of visits and visitors, enriches the experiences children have.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, the quality of care, support and guidance is satisfactory, although the care children receive is very good. Children are happy in school and they know they can turn to an adult if they are worried, have a problem or have hurt themselves. They also know that if they have a worry they can write it down; put it in the worry box and a teacher will sort things out at the end of the day.

Children do not think bullying is a problem. The school carries out all procedures to check for health and safety satisfactorily. When necessary, the school works with outside agencies, for example health, to ensure children are supported. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities receive a good level of support.

The use of targets for reading and writing is at a very early stage, and targets for mathematics have yet to be introduced. Children are aware of their reading targets, although the target sheet is more a list of books that have been read rather than a target to be achieved. The use of targets is on the school improvement plan and work is underway.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The recently appointed headteacher has made a sound start to building on the success of the school. She has a clear vision for the future, has evaluated the effectiveness of the school accurately, and has begun to make improvements. For example, she has good plans for further developing ICT, having already organised the installation of interactive white boards in both classrooms. Many of the new things she has introduced

have not been in place long enough to be able to measure how successful they are in raising standards further. However, the focus on helping boys do better, work on ICT and the regular checks on how well children are making progress are well thought out and have begun to have a positive impact.

The staff in the school work effectively as a team and although teachers have different responsibilities, much of the work on developing the curriculum is done together. This team approach, along with the enthusiasm of the new headteacher, proves the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Governors provide satisfactory support and challenge to the school. Although they discuss the work of the school they do not allocate specific areas of the school's work to individual governors, nor have they got involved yet in a programme of visiting the school to see it in action.

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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	3
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	3
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	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

1 February 2007

Mickley Infant school, Milton Avenue, Stretton, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 6GG

Dear Children

I am writing to tell you what I found out when I visited your school recently. First of all I found out that you are all very friendly, well behaved and work and play well together. I really enjoyed talking with you and you all told me how much you like school. This is a list of some of the best things I found out about your school:

- When you are at school you learn how to share, be polite and helpful.
- Your behaviour is good.
- Your dinners are very healthy (I really enjoyed my dinner when I was with you).
- You make good progress.
- Your new headteacher has some good plans to make your school even better.
- The teachers and teaching assistants are good at helping you learn.

When I was there I asked Miss Street if she could make sure that everyone in your school works hard to improve three things:

- Boys need to work even harder so that they really do well in all of their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants need to give children some learning targets to help them improve their work.
- The governors (the people who work with your headteacher in organising and improving the school) need to visit more and help with all the important decisions.

Thank you again for making my visit so enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector