

# Maids Moreton Church of England School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110438
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310304
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graham Lee

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	42
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Owen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Patricia Ainsworth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Avenue Road Maids Moreton Buckingham MK18 1QA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01280 812058
<b>Fax number</b>	01280 812058

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This very small school serves a relatively advantaged rural community. It draws most of its pupils from beyond the village. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Whilst the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average, it has increased significantly in recent years. The percentage with statements of special educational need is higher than average and this includes a few pupils with physical disabilities. All children have some experience in a pre-school setting before joining the Reception class. The school has recently gained an Activemark award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

'Maids Moreton is a very special place. It provides young children with a secure, caring and nurturing environment', commented one parent, illustrating the high regard that parents have for the school. They are right to be proud of the school because it provides their children with an outstanding education. The inspirational headteacher leads by example and works in close partnership with her dedicated team to provide excellent care, guidance and support for pupils based on a strong Christian ethos. Consequently, pupils feel extremely safe and secure and enjoy all that school has to offer. They behave very well and are considerate of one another. They become confident and eager learners and achieve exceptionally well.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and make extremely good progress in their three years in the school, whatever their starting points. By the time they leave, they reach standards that are exceptionally high in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They also develop very good skills in information and communications technology (ICT). Together with their very positive attitudes to learning, these outstanding basic skills give them an excellent grounding for the next stage of their education and the world beyond. At the heart of pupils' success is highly effective teaching and a carefully constructed curriculum designed to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. This is supported by very effective systems to track the progress of every pupil. These allow teachers to identify quickly any pupil in danger of falling behind and to set challenging targets for all. The carefully planned and flexible grouping arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy help teachers to get the best out of every pupil. The school welcomes all and this is illustrated by the excellent support provided for those with learning difficulties and the few with physical disabilities.

Pupils' creativity and enjoyment of their education are enhanced in many ways. Many take advantage of the very good range of additional opportunities they are offered. Sporting activities, in particular, contribute to pupils' extremely good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Themed weeks, for example related to literacy, healthy living and places around the world, help to bring the curriculum to life for pupils. Some were disappointed that the inspector had not turned up in costume as they had recently been visited by a 'school inspector' as part of their work on the Victorians!

Staff work very closely together. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and put in place effective strategies to bring about improvement where necessary. For example, a successful focus on writing in recent years has helped to close the gap between reading and writing. Governors are dedicated and supportive and offer a highly effective balance of support and challenge. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully which, allied to the drive and determination of all associated with the school, gives it an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with wide ranging skills and understanding that vary from year to year. They make good progress and reach standards that are above average in most areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. The school has rightly identified that children do not do as well in creative development. A range of measures have been put in place to address this issue but it is too early to assess their impact. The welcoming and stimulating

environment helps pupils to settle quickly and to become confident learners. Teaching is very good and provides pupils with a range of stimulating activities, designed around themes, which develop their skills in all areas of learning. For example, children were very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about dinosaurs and were proud of their 'museum', which provided opportunities to develop their speaking, listening and counting, as well as deepening their knowledge and understanding of the world. The outside area is generally used well to develop learning although the school recognises that it could be developed even further to enhance creativity. Assessment is detailed and rigorous and ensures that children's progress is tracked very carefully.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve pupils' creative skills in the Reception class, both within the classroom and the outside area.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Assessments at the end of Year 2 have placed the school in the top five percent of schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics for the past three years. The proportion reaching the highest possible level is much higher than average, indicating that more able pupils are doing better than they were at the time of the last inspection. Similarly in science, as a result of a successful focus on developing the investigative aspects, standards are now much higher. Pupils make very good progress to meet their challenging targets. The few with learning difficulties do very well and often reach the expectations for their age because of the good support they receive.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' evident enjoyment of their education is illustrated in the enthusiastic way they talk about all aspects of school life. When asked what they like best about the school, several replied, 'All of it!' Their attendance has improved since the last inspection thanks to the school's efforts. However, too many parents still take their children on holiday during term time. Children make a very good contribution to the school community through the school council, for example. They are particularly proud of the new toilets, which they helped to design. They are also involved in the church and village community. Their work with the conservation group, for instance, develops their understanding of environmental issues. Their understanding of living in an ethnically diverse society is more limited. Pupils all say that they feel very safe in school because staff 'look after us so well' and demonstrate their understanding of safety issues through, for example, their carefully constructed posters about the dangers of electricity. They talk knowledgeably about the importance of a healthy diet and the dangers of 'junk food'.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are of a consistently high quality. Teachers and support staff work very closely together to teach pupils in small groups according to their needs. They have excellent relationships with their classes and use a variety of strategies to encourage pupils to do their best. Consequently, pupils are engaged, feel secure and want to succeed. In a Year 1 lesson,

for example, pupils really enjoyed the story of Jack and the Beanstalk retold in animated form using the interactive technology. They were able to identify very clearly the features of a traditional story. Teachers use questions very effectively to probe and deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson on multiples of five, the teacher skilfully built on pupils' existing understanding to help them develop their ideas further.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum provides extremely well for pupils' academic and personal development. As well as the focussed weeks and clubs, the curriculum is enhanced through a wide range of visits and visitors. The effectiveness of the school's provision for basic skills is evident in the high standards reached. This is enhanced by links with other schools. Year 2 pupils, for example, take part in a science fair organised by the local specialist secondary school. The school is also part of a learning community, which gives more able, gifted and talented pupils the opportunity to work alongside similar pupils in sport, music and art for example. ICT is used very effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, during the inspection pupils were using the internet to research information about Louis Braille and their posters about the dangers of electricity and healthy living demonstrated very good computer skills. These illustrations indicate the prominence given to pupils' personal development in the curriculum, as does the focus on sustainable development and the local community.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Parents are unanimous in their view that staff take great care of their children. As one put it, 'The happiness and welfare of the children are always put first.' Vulnerable pupils, especially those with physical difficulties, are extremely well cared for. The school has excellent links with a range of outside agencies, which allows these pupils, in particular, to play a full part in the life of the school. The school works in very close partnership with parents and one remarked that 'Maids Moreton has been a solid rock for us'. Academic guidance is also strong. Teachers use the information they have about pupils to set them challenging social, literacy and numeracy targets. Pupils are clear that 'they help to remind you of what you need to do to get better'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher has created an ethos where all staff work tirelessly as a team to improve the quality of care and education and to raise standards even further. This is evident in the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. The monitoring of teaching is supportive, and yet rigorous, and has resulted in teaching of a consistently high standard. All staff have a number of responsibilities which they carry out enthusiastically and effectively. For example, the science coordinator has led the drive to raise standards in science over the last few years with great success. The school is also outward looking and works in close partnership with other local schools and providers to enhance the quality of education for its pupils. It also encourages staff to develop their skills and careers. For example, one of the highly skilled teaching assistants is training to be a teacher. She has also made an outstanding contribution to the exciting developments in ICT in the school.



## Annex A

## 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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maids Moreton Church of England School, Buckingham, MK18 1QA

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago. I am writing to thank you all for being so friendly and helpful. I really enjoyed my day at Maids Moreton and I thought you would like to know what I found out.

You and your parents are right to be proud of your school because it is outstanding. You told me how much you enjoy school and what a friendly and caring place it is. I agree with you. Staff look after you all very well. Teachers plan many interesting things for you to do. You really enjoy the extra activities you have to do and I enjoyed looking at the photographs of your work on 'around the world' and the Victorians. It looked like great fun! I thought you all worked hard in lessons and tried to do your best. You were all very polite and well behaved. Well done!

You make a good start in the Reception class and carry on doing very well in Years 1 and 2. Most of you meet your targets and you are reaching very high standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT by the time you leave. This means that you should do well when you move on to your next school. Those of you who find things a bit more difficult, or need more support, get lots of extra help so that you can do well.

Your headteacher and all the staff and governors work very hard to make the school as good as it is. They know all of you and your families very well. They want to work with you and your parents to make the school even better. I have asked them to do one thing, which they already know about, but I think might help.

- In Reception I want children to use the inside and outside areas even more to make things, to play and to explore.

Best of luck to you all.

Yours truly

Graham Lee

Lead Inspector