

Mitton Manor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115566
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	311980
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Isobel Randall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Hall
Headteacher	Christopher Hyatt
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2004
School address	Carrant Road Tewkesbury GL20 8AR
Telephone number	01684 273451
Fax number	01684 298657

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a below-average-sized primary school in which most pupils are of White British heritage. They come from an area of relative social advantage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The pupil population is very stable in relation to national averages. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Mitton Manor Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education, although school leaders believe that their effectiveness is good. There are particular strengths in the good care for pupils resulting in their strong personal development and well-being. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and love coming to school. Standards in Year 2, especially in mathematics, have risen as a result of action to address identified weaknesses. Pupils in Year 6, whose standards are above average, have made satisfactory progress from their higher-than-average standards in Year 2. Although the school has identified pupils at risk of underachievement and targeted them for extra support, there is still too little evidence that this has raised achievement overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities now learn well.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Good features that have a constructive impact on learning are positive relationships, interesting activities, good pace in many lessons and questions that encourage thinking. Pupils know their end-of-year targets. Marking celebrates what they have done, but does not always tell them how to improve. Although work is planned for pupils with different levels of ability, the highest attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. The school takes very good care of pupils, making sure that they are safe in every way.

Whilst their achievement makes pupils' preparation for the future satisfactory, good relationships throughout the school make their personal development and well-being a real strength. Pupils report that all the teachers are friendly and helpful. They behave well, treating each other with consideration. They like coming to school and attend well. As one parent wrote, 'My daughter's confidence has grown in leaps and bounds.' Pupils enjoy the broad and lively curriculum that has a good impact on their range of experience. They are proud of their high standard of musical performance. Excellent sporting activities and food education contribute significantly to their healthy outlook. Pupils enjoy the many ways in which they are able to lead activities and organise their classes. Their contribution to the community is outstanding, showing their strong moral and social development.

Leadership and management have a satisfactory impact on pupils' progress. The school is well regarded by parents. Self-evaluation has given too little weight to evidence that pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good. Monitoring of teaching focuses more on staff actions than on their impact on pupils' learning. There has been too little analysis of assessment information to identify where progress needs to accelerate. Governors are supportive and committed to the school, but do not provide enough challenge about raising achievement. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage learn well because of the rich range of learning opportunities. All areas of learning are covered well. Particularly good provision is made for their personal development and their learning of language skills. Children make good progress from starting points that are generally a little above those expected on entry. As a result, nearly all reach the national goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, and a significant number exceed the goals. They benefit from good teaching that captures their interest. Assessment is thorough and effective so that learning rests on identified needs. There is a good balance between teacher-led

activities and opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play and self-chosen tasks. The good leadership is well supported by teaching assistants and parent helpers. Although opportunities for outdoor play have improved since the last inspection, leaders recognise the limitations on space and have well advanced plans to rectify this situation.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress in English and mathematics.
- Improve planning so that lessons consistently challenge the full range of pupils, especially the most able.
- Thoroughly analyse assessment information to identify and address areas for improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in the present Year 6 are above the national average. Their achievement is satisfactory as these pupils were above average in the earlier national tests and school assessments.

Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because of support provided by the special educational needs coordinator. The highest attaining pupils make only satisfactory progress, because they are constrained by too little challenge in lessons. The school has acted to remedy the falling standards last year in mathematics. The impact of these measures is not yet clear throughout the school but the present Year 2 are making better progress than in the past.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

In this happy and harmonious school, pupils get on well together. Very positive relationships between pupils and staff make them feel valued and secure. Pupils are generally keen to learn and their attendance rate is above the national average. They are well mannered, their behaviour is good and they usually concentrate well on their tasks. On occasion, their attention wanders when teachers talk for too long, when they need more focused guidance, or if they are not required to respond in whole-class discussions. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They work together amicably, respect the feelings of others and have a well developed sense of fair play. Pupils respond very well when given responsibility, for example, as members of the active school council, as school receptionists or class monitors and when leading early morning exercise sessions for other pupils. They are safety conscious and are concerned for the welfare of others. Their excellent awareness of healthy living is apparent in their enjoyment of a wide range of physical activities and the pride they take in growing produce for their healthy school meals. They have very strong social and community awareness, raising funds for a range of charities. These constructive relationships with others and satisfactory academic achievement help them to be soundly prepared for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some real strengths. Pupils enjoy learning because of good relationships in class. The school is using national initiatives to improve approaches to teaching and learning. Planned activities are usually well paced, varied, purposeful and interesting. Teachers' instructions and explanations of ideas are clear. Sometimes, teachers do not give pupils enough scope to think out issues for themselves. Usually, teachers check pupils' understanding at each point in a lesson, although they do not always make sure that every pupil is attentive and engaged. Some pupils therefore are not ready to work independently when asked to do so. Teachers' planning meets the learning needs of different groups, but the most able pupils are not always challenged to develop their understanding further. Lower attaining pupils are well supported so that they make good progress. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. While some pupils receive well judged feedback on their efforts, others do not receive clear guidance on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The inspiring curriculum has a very good impact on pupils' personal development that gives them a lively interest in learning. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a rich range of learning experiences that help them to make a good start at the school. Provision for literacy and numeracy is sound in Year 1 to Year 6, and the school is working to improve the quality of planning which now generally builds well on previous learning. The use of information and communication technology is well developed. However, the most capable pupils are still not sufficiently challenged by their work. Across the school, curriculum arrangements for pupils' personal development are very good, with key strengths in the provision for healthy food, physical education and music. They have outstanding encouragement to contribute to the school and the community around them. Pupils enjoy a very good range of clubs, visitors and visits that broaden their cultural awareness and help them to learn new skills. Year 1 pupils spoke enthusiastically about a museum visit, marvelling at their experience of life without electricity.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, with key strengths in the quality of care and support for pupils' personal development. Pupils feel safe, knowing that staff will listen if they have any problems. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after at school. All procedures for the care of the children are robust. The school works closely with external agencies to support children. Pupils settle in quickly and are confident on transfer to the next stage of education because of the school's thorough and effective procedures. Good support for pupils' personal development is reflected in their positive attitudes and behaviour. Pupils know their targets in English and mathematics, although their understanding of them is not always clear.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher enjoys good support from staff, governors and parents who value the school's stimulating range of opportunities to broaden pupils' perspectives. Effective leadership of Key Stage 1 during the last year means that it has moved on faster than Key Stage 2. Senior leaders have an appropriate focus on improving learning by using national initiatives in numeracy and literacy to develop teaching styles. Teaching is monitored but with a greater emphasis on teachers' actions than on their impact. The analysis of assessment information has yet to clearly identify all the reasons for the continuing satisfactory achievement, especially that of the most able pupils. Targets set are not challenging enough to promote good achievement.

Some developments have a positive impact on learning. Alerted by a fall in standards at Key Stage 1, leaders have acted successfully to improve basic mathematical skills in Year 2. New support arrangements help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to progress well. Since governors' challenge over the issue of achievement is less effective than their strong support for the school, their impact is satisfactory. The school has satisfactorily addressed issues raised during the last inspection. Secure management ensures that the school provides satisfactory value for money. The school's self-evaluation has not been sufficiently effective in accelerating progress, as leaders focus on pupils' standards and good personal development rather than their satisfactory achievement over time.

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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?	3
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

20 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mitton Manor Primary School, Tewkesbury, GL20 8AR

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and hearing all that you had to say. Your teachers told us how polite, friendly and helpful you are, and we agree with them. Your school gives you a satisfactory education, which means that it does its job! We found a mixture of things the school does really well and some that need to be improved.

Here are some of the parts of the school that we liked:

- You are given lots of exciting ways to become caring, healthy people. This makes you interested in things around you.
- The school gives you many clubs and activities that you like very much.
- You enjoy lessons because your teachers plan them well.
- The school gives help to children who find it hard to learn.
- You have a lot of ways to learn how to take charge in school.
- You get on well with your teachers and with each other.
- The school takes good care of you and keeps you safe.

In order to get even better, the school should:

- Help you to learn more quickly in English and mathematics.
- Give all of you, especially those of you who find learning easier, tasks that make you think really hard.
- Use assessment of your work to find out how and where pupils need extra help or challenge to improve.

You could help by always thinking about what you are learning, and showing that you are all keen to answer in class.

Yours sincerely

Isobel Randall Lead inspector

20 May 2008

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Isobel Randall
Lead inspector