

Mansbridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116117
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	312183
Inspection dates	31 January –1 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Graham Stephens

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	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Iain MacGregor
Headteacher	Mr Mark Sheehan
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2003
School address	Octavia Road Swaythling Southampton SO18 2LX
Telephone number	023 8055 6691
Fax number	023 8058 2270

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than many primary schools. It serves a community that includes some areas with very high levels of social deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is twice the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is above average and is increasing. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is also above average. There have been considerable changes of staff since the last inspection. More pupils enter and leave the school at times other than the beginning of the school year than in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Mansbridge is a rapidly improving school. It presents a secure and friendly environment. Excellent systems of support and guidance ensure that pupils flourish and achieve well. 'It is a well run school that has improved greatly', said one parent. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. During that time, there have been several changes of staff and, for a period, a declining roll. However, numbers are now rising rapidly. Good and often outstanding teaching ensures that pupils now achieve well throughout the school. Pupils' progress is tracked and monitored very carefully and teachers make excellent use of this information to set challenging targets. By the end of Year 6, standards are now broadly in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics have improved very rapidly and pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards the subject. Evidence shows that pupils in Year 6 are achieving very well, making up for the slow start they experienced in Years 3 and 4 when there were significant pockets of underachievement. Teachers do not all have high expectations regarding the presentation of pupils' work and standards in this area are variable.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They co-operate well, are unfailingly courteous to adults and are keen to share their work and experiences. They move around the school in a calm and purposeful manner. They enjoy school and relish the opportunities to visit places of interest and attend the many clubs that the well-organised and stimulating curriculum provides. 'Even the children in Reception have the Happy Feet dance club', exclaimed one older pupil. They talk confidently about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and the meals provided support healthy eating well. Older pupils visit and support children in the Reception class because, as one pupil explained, 'it helps little children settle and not be afraid'. Links with the wider community are well established. Although attendance has recently improved, a small minority of pupils still do not attend regularly.

Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Resources, well matched to their needs, support learning well. Excellent systems exist to monitor and support pupils with learning difficulties relating to English and mathematics. Well-trained and perceptive learning support assistants support these pupils well. Pupils with emotional needs are well supported in the Resource class known as the 'Den'. 'If you've got any problems you just pop in the Den and they sort them out', said one pupil.

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, very well supported by his deputy, has shown drive, determination and focus to raise standards and improve achievement. All staff share the headteacher's vision and consequently support him well. The needs of the school are accurately prioritised and reflected in its school improvement plan. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and hold the school to account well for the standards achieved.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below those expected for their age. Although they make good progress, most children do not reach the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children benefit from a well-organised curriculum and good teaching. Staff understand how young children learn. They provide a good range of activities that include opportunities for children to explore for

themselves and others that are adult led. Facilities in the outdoor learning area are good. There is a strong emphasis on personal development and consequently children cooperate and play together well. They are beginning to show an increased understanding of what is expected of them. Skilled teaching of letter sounds and opportunities to write and describe the things they have done encourage the development of language and communication skills. Rigorous systems of assessment keep staff well informed of the progress children make. Staff work hard to establish good links with parents. Very good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly. They enjoy the wide range of experiences provided within a very safe and secure environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that all staff have high expectations with regard to the presentation of pupils' work.
- Ensure that the small minority of pupils who fail to attend regularly improve their attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The majority of pupils, including those who need additional support with literacy and mathematics, those who speak English as an additional language and the more able, now achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. Pupils enter Year 1 with levels of knowledge and skills that are at least below what is expected for their age. None attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2007 assessments. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 has improved and is now good. Standards are rising. Last year there was a sharp rise in standards in English and science at the end of Year 6 but not in mathematics where progress, although improving, was too slow. The school responded with vigour to increase the rate of achievement. More time is devoted to mathematics and pupils enjoy lessons because they engender a real sense of purpose. Pupils in Key Stage 2 now make good progress overall. As a result, standards have risen rapidly and are now average in mathematics as well as science and English by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions, are good. Pupils enjoy school, one saying, 'School is fun'. Year 6 'Mansbridge Monitors' care for Reception children at lunch times and gain a very good understanding of their responsibilities to others. Pupils respond well to the support they are given. Pupils from the different ethnic groups get on well together. Through visits and visitors, pupils are developing a very good understanding of their own culture and of life in a multicultural society. Attendance rates have improved and are now broadly average overall although a small number of pupils still miss too much school.

Pupils feel safe and know what constitutes a healthy life-style. The school gained the Healthy Schools Award in 2007. Year 6 pupils sell fruit and vegetables each day for snacks. Pupils contribute towards decision-making. One member of the school council said, 'School dinners are healthy because we talked about it in the council.' Pupils develop the personal qualities that will enable them to contribute effectively to the community. Standards attained make a satisfactory contribution to future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers present their lessons with confidence and enthusiasm. Consequently, pupils are motivated, listen well and respond positively to the tasks set. Teachers use the wide variety of assessment information well to ensure that they meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able, those with English as an additional language, and others who need additional guidance with aspects of their work. They have high expectations of pupils' progress. Learning support assistants successfully motivate pupils and help ensure that all play a full and active part in lessons. Teachers are skilled at asking questions that encourage pupils to reflect and explain their thinking. They also check to find out what pupils have learned and understood so that they can successfully build on what the pupils know and can do. Presentation of work varies from class to class. Teachers have an inconsistent approach to this aspect of pupils' work and do not always act as good role-models themselves when presenting work to the pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good planning, teaching and support means that children get off to a good start. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good and supports the good achievement of all groups of pupils. It is very well planned with an increasing emphasis on links between subjects to make them relevant to pupils and to give them more opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and social skills. The school's very good emphasis on personal, social and health education has led to the good personal development and well-being of all pupils. New technology is used well, with all classes having an interactive whiteboard and pupils having ready access to laptops. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that includes sports, music, drama and cycling proficiency. Pupils are especially proud to be able to grow their own vegetables, harvest and eat them. A Year 6 residential visit supports pupils' social and personal development as well as their academic work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. The excellent tracking and monitoring systems underpin the recent rapid improvement in achievement throughout the school. Links with outside agencies are excellent, and include a weekly 'drop-in' clinic for parents and carers. As one parent wrote, 'there are always people available for offering help and advice, no matter how trivial'. Effective systems and high expectations regarding behaviour have resulted in a significant decline in exclusions and an improvement in pupils' attendance. The excellent, well-attended breakfast club supports pupils' social skills very well. Well-planned intervention by learning support assistants ensures that pupils with learning difficulties related to English and mathematics achieve well. 'The Den' provides outstanding support for pupils with emotional needs. Pupils understand their personal targets for improvement and what they need to do to reach them. Health and safety procedures and child protection measures are robust and meet government requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, very well supported by his deputy, senior colleagues, all staff and governors, presents strong leadership. Together they have galvanised the school to take action to improve achievement and raise standards. This is reflected in the good progress pupils have recently begun to make, the vast improvement in behaviour and the very good learning environment created. All staff and pupils understand the school's objectives and consequently cooperate well to achieve them. Very secure systems exist to monitor and further improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, teaching has improved. However, expectations with regard to the presentation of work are inconsistent especially with regard to handwriting and the setting out of diagrams and figures in mathematics. The school acknowledges that this needs to improve. The progress of every pupil is closely monitored. Achievement against targets is discussed with teachers regularly and remedial action taken if necessary. Detailed analysis keeps senior managers well informed and confirms that progress is now accelerating rapidly. Subject leaders have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and have clear priorities for further improvement. Governors hold the school to account for the standards it achieves and support the headteacher well. Resources are deployed effectively, for example to support vulnerable pupils. The school represents good value for money.

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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?	2
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	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	3

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?	1

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

14 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mansbridge Primary School, Southampton, SO18 2LX

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and listening to all that you had to say. You really helped us with the inspection. There are many things about Mansbridge Primary School that you appreciate and enjoy.

Here are the things we like about your school.

- You are all very well cared for.
- You behave very well and are courteous and polite.
- Those of you who either visit the Den, or need extra help with your work, or are learning to speak English for the first time, receive very good support.
- You know your targets for learning and how to achieve them.
- Your teachers give you many interesting things to do and you are making good progress.
- Your school is well led and managed.

All schools, even yours, could improve and these are the things we think you could do better.

- Raise standards even more in English, mathematics and science.
- Make sure that you always present your work neatly.
- A few of you miss too much school and need to improve your attendance.

Again, it was good to meet you all and may I wish you success in the future.

Graham Stephens

Lead Inspector