

Measham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120146
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313531
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Barbara Crane

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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Crooks
Headteacher	Derek Mullan
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2006
School address	Bosworth Road Measham Swadlincote DE12 7LG
Telephone number	01530 271019
Fax number	01530 272245

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average Church of England primary school serves an area in which some families social and economic challenges. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly higher than average, and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than in most schools. The overwhelming majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Close to one tenth of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. A new headteacher took up post in April 2008, after a period of temporary arrangements for the school's leadership.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils are soundly prepared for the future. The new headteacher has established a clear view of what needs to improve. The staff and governors are fully in tune with his vision. He has quickly gained the confidence of the pupils and parents through his hands-on approach and high profile in the school. One parent's comment that 'the school has come on in leaps and bounds since his appointment' and this view reflects that of many. Children start in Reception with skills that are well below the expected levels for their age. They make good progress and, although the gap is closing, standards are below average by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils' satisfactory progress thereafter means that standards are also below average by the end of Year 6. The pupils' satisfactory achievement results from sound teaching. Encouraging signs that teaching is improving are seen in the effective way that staff manage pupils' behaviour and ensure that learning is more practically based. Successful initiatives have improved the level of challenge in the teaching of writing where progress has accelerated and standards have risen. However, pupils' progress, including that of pupils with learning difficulties, is not as smooth as it needs to be to ensure effective gains in learning in other subjects. This is because teachers do not always use information from assessments to consistently build on what pupils already know and can do. Consequently, the work for pupils is sometimes too easy or too hard for them. The academic guidance offered to pupils is satisfactory but it is variable. As a result, some pupils have a good idea about their targets and how to improve their work but others are less certain. Pupils' satisfactory personal development and well-being reflects the school's sound level of care, guidance and support. Their contribution to the community and awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe are satisfactory. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reasonable. Behaviour is good in lessons but a small minority of pupils finds it hard to exercise self-control in other situations. Parents appreciate the clearer boundaries that are being set for pupils' behaviour and are pleased that this is having a positive effect. Pupils know what to do to lead healthy lifestyles and so they make good choices about food and activities to stay fit. Rates of attendance are low because a number of families do not ensure that their children attend regularly. This has a negative impact on some pupils' rates of progress. The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra activities, visits and visitors. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Self-evaluation is reasonably accurate. The recent introduction of systems to track pupils' progress is developing teachers' awareness of how well individuals are progressing. However, some managers' skills in monitoring teaching and learning and analysing information to pinpoint variations are underdeveloped. Governors provide satisfactory support and are becoming increasingly effective in their role of supporting and challenging the school. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good teaching leads to Reception children making good progress. Consequently, standards rise to below average from children's low starting points. The good relationships with staff and consistent routines enhance children's sense of security. The staff plan a good curriculum that interests children. The strong emphasis placed on developing personal and social aspects of learning means that children do very well in this area. Good leadership and management mean that all Reception staff are aware of how provision could be improved still further. Plans are in hand to develop the outside area for learning, as it currently lacks stimulation for children's curiosity about the world and their full exploration of space.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers match work to pupils' different abilities and that pupils know how to reach their targets.
- Ensure that leaders and managers check the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' rates of progress to identify any variation and to take appropriate action.
- Improve the pupils' attendance. 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

Children's progress is good in the Reception Year and so standards rise to below average by the time they start Year 1. Rapid learning in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and basic skills in literacy and numeracy provides a good springboard for the future. Over the rest of their time at the school, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are below average by the time pupils leave although the results gained in the national tests for Year 6 pupils are steadily rising. The most consistent improvement in standards is reflected in writing and pays testimony to the school's initiative to improve teaching and raise the level of challenge for all pupils. The rate of pupils' progress is not as consistent as it should be in reading and mathematics. This is because while increasingly good use is being made of assessment information to plan work and set pupils challenging targets, this practice remains inconsistent. The pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, as do pupils with learning difficulties.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are soundly prepared for the future. Their enjoyment of school and behaviour are satisfactory. Many are polite, sensible and keen to get involved in everything the school has to offer. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils show a positive attitude to work. This ensures a calm atmosphere for learning. At play times and lunch times, a few struggle to keep to the rules or settle differences amicably. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and most understand how to act responsibly to keep themselves and others safe. However, a small minority act before thinking about the consequences for others. Pupils make a sound contribution to the community through the school council and acting as 'reading buddies'. They have a good awareness of the benefits of healthy living. They organise a breakfast bar that provides a healthy start to the day. Attendance is well below average. This is because a number of families do not ensure that their children attend regularly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are many good features within the overall satisfactory picture of teaching. Good teaching for Reception children meets the children's learning needs effectively. Throughout the school, good relationships between staff and pupils mean that there is a good climate for learning. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Teachers

use information and communication technology (ICT) well to spark pupils' interest and develop their ideas. The good opportunities for pupils to talk about their ideas keep them alert and motivated and this often supports rapid progress by pupils learning English as an additional language. There are times when learning slows because teachers lack a clear view of where pupils are in their work and what they need to do next. Consequently, planning is not consistently geared to the wide range of ability and aptitudes found in all classes. Teachers' marking is not always helpful in guiding pupils towards their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school recognises that its curriculum needs improving so that it is better adapted to pupils' abilities and builds more securely on what pupils already know. At present, the curriculum does not always challenge pupils to do their best. Outside day-to-day lessons the pupils enthusiastically take up the good range of extra activities provided. They are particularly keen to get involved with sport and this supports their fitness levels. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well, helping them to learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and to appreciate the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Year 6 pupils say that their residential visit at the start of the school year helped them to understand better that boys and girls can work harmoniously together. Pupils enjoy the range of visits to places of interest and visitors to school, such as a recent circus workshop that one pupil described as 'really fascinating'. Effective partnerships with outside agencies promote pupils' understanding of how to stay healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There are sound procedures for safeguarding pupils and for child protection. Pupils say that when bullying occurs, it is dealt with and that incidents are becoming less frequent. They are confident that adults will listen to them if they have concerns. The staff work hard to establish good relationships with pupils; they provide time for them to talk about their frustrations and offer good advice. The school is now gathering a wealth of information about pupils' progress. This information is being used to highlight those needing support, but is not yet sufficiently well used by all teachers to ensure that differing needs are being fully met. There is some inconsistency from class to class in helping pupils to understand and work towards their targets. For example, the targets for pupils with learning difficulties in their individual education plans are sometimes too vague to guide teaching helpfully. After showing an improving trend, pupils' attendance has dipped and latest figures are low. The school is revitalising its work with families to promote better attendance by pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The view of the overwhelming majority of parents is that the school is improving. The staff work effectively as a team and want the best for pupils. A significant factor in the high morale of staff is the sense of optimism and energy generated by the headteacher. His vision and enthusiasm are helping the school to move forward. Already, the staff see the benefit of changes such as using ICT to support systems to track pupils' progress. This is putting the school in a better position to meet its suitably challenging targets. The school's self-evaluation is sound

and leads to a realistic view of its provision. The school's planning for improvement has the right priorities. Good use has been made of the professional development of the staff to improve teaching and pupils' skills in writing. As yet, the skills of some managers in monitoring teaching and learning and analysing information about pupils' progress are not sufficiently developed. This limits the effectiveness with which they can support fully the school's push to raise standards and further improve pupils' achievement. Governors provide satisfactory support and fulfil all of their statutory duties. They have rightly identified the need to enhance their ability to ask pertinent questions of 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?	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?	3
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	3
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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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

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

- 12 June 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Measham CE Primary School, Swadlincote DE12 7LG
Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit. We found that you go to a satisfactory school. Like you, we think that it is improving. Here are some of the other things we found out.
- You make a good start to your schooling in Reception.
- Sound teaching helps you to make satisfactory progress in your lessons. You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- Standards in your work are steadily rising but are not close enough to those in other schools nationally.
- Most of you enjoy school and feel safe and secure.
- Some of you miss a lot of school and this puts you in danger of falling behind with your work.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory. It is good in lessons but a few of you find it hard to control your feelings on the playground.
- The sound curriculum provides you with many exciting extra activities, particularly in sport.
- Adults look after you and are always ready to help you.
- The headteacher and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better. We have asked the school to do three things to help you get even better in your learning.
- Make sure that teachers plan work that is just at the right level for you and make sure you know how to make your work better.
- Make sure that people check how well you are learning and making progress.
- Work with your families to improve your attendance if you miss a lot of school. You can help the school by trying your best in lessons, and coming to school regularly. Yours sincerely
Barbara Crane Lead inspector

12 June 2008

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Inspection of Measham CE Primary School, Swadlincote DE12 7LG

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- You have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory. It is good in lessons but a few of you find it hard to control your feelings on the playground.
- The sound curriculum provides you with many exciting extra activities, particularly in sport.
- Adults look after you and are always ready to help you.
- The headteacher and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

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- Make sure that people check how well you are learning and making progress.
- Work with your families to improve your attendance if you miss a lot of school.

You can help the school by trying your best in lessons, and coming to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Crane