

The Middle Rasen Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120463
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313625
Inspection date	8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Robert Weeks
Headteacher	Mrs Melonie Brunton
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2003
School address	North Street Middle Rasen Market Rasen Lincolnshire LN8 3TS
Telephone number	01673 843250
Fax number	01673 843250

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this school are of White British background. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is also well below average. Most children enter Reception with levels of knowledge and skill above those expected. After a period of unsettled leadership, the headteacher took up post in September 2006. The school has received the Active Mark award for physical education. The school provides daily pre-school and after-school care.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, as are pupils' achievement and progress. Children make a satisfactory start in Reception and continue to make expected progress throughout the rest of the school. Although the school's satisfactory curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge for pupils, this is not always the case for the more able. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average, but too few pupils attain higher levels in mathematics and science. Pupils who find aspects of learning difficult make satisfactory progress because teachers make careful assessments and teaching assistants often provide additional support. Standards in reading are rising and many parents make a helpful contribution to their children's progress and enjoyment of reading.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher made a good start. She introduced much better ways of monitoring the progress of pupils, and the information provided is analysed and used to allocate additional support to those who are at risk of falling behind. She has won the support of staff and governors. The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school and feel that the school is improving. Governors appreciate that the headteacher provides good quality information and support that enables them to challenge and support the school effectively and carry out their work well. Because the headteacher has a clear understanding of what needs doing to take the school forward, the school improvement plan concentrates on improving the most important aspects. However, the plan lacks detail and does not include clear ways of measuring the effect of the plan on the achievement of pupils.

This is a happy school and pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their time in it. They recognise that it has improved recently and appreciate the good range of interesting visits and visitors used to enhance the school's curriculum. The curriculum is broad and information and communication technology is used well to enhance pupils' learning and the quality of teaching in other subjects. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is above average and pupils behave well. They show consideration for others' safety and feelings and older pupils take additional responsibilities within school. They are friendly, polite and helpful. Teaching and learning, as well as care, guidance and support, are satisfactory overall. Although the school has introduced a system to provide pupils with learning targets, too many pupils are unclear of what they have achieved to date and where they need to concentrate to improve their work further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Sound procedures for introducing children to school help them settle quickly. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning and many exceed expected standards by the end of Reception. Progress is best in speaking and listening and children listen to others, talk confidently about their ideas and feelings, and recount experiences they have had. Staff make sound use of assessment information to provide suitable work for children. The school is aware that restricted accommodation limits the opportunities to provide a broad curriculum and sufficient variety of activities. The current building programme is designed to remedy this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide extra support and challenge to help more pupils to attain standards above those expected for their ages, especially in science and mathematics.
- Ensure that pupils have a clearer understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of their work.
- Provide more detail in the school improvement plan of the actions intended and clarify the ways by which the success of the plan will be judged.

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

Recent national assessment results, school records and pupils' work indicate that most pupils exceed nationally expected standards in English and mathematics and attain in line with expected standards in science. The achievement of most pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory but a few more able pupils do not achieve their full potential because they do not receive additional guidance or challenge often enough. Progress is best in reading and many pupils exceed nationally expected reading standards. Recent improvements in the teaching of letter sounds and daily guided reading lessons are further improving the pace of learning in reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and well supported by regular personal and social education lessons. Improvements made to multi-cultural education have resulted in pupils developing a good understanding of the cultures and traditions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds who live in Britain or other cultures in the wider world. They show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life. They recognise the importance of exercise and enjoy the additional sports coaching sessions. All pupils adopt safe practices and feel safe in school. They know that they can always talk to an adult if they have a problem. They say that behaviour has improved and that there is no bullying in their school. The school's extensive links with the village enable pupils to make a good contribution to the local community through charities, fundraising and village activities. Their good personal development and above average basic skills give them a good preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

All teachers manage pupils well and consequently behaviour and relationships are good in lessons. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and sometimes provides too little guidance on where and how pupils should improve their work. Teachers' planning is thorough and indicates exactly what learning is intended for each year group in mixed-age classes. However, pupils are sometimes unclear about how to assess their work. Chances are sometimes missed, especially at the end of lessons, to analyse work and help pupils see where they have made mistakes or

where they should concentrate in the future. Teaching assistants often provide good guidance to individual or small groups of pupils. Sometimes, however, when the teacher is talking to the whole class, teaching assistants are not deployed fully effectively. All staff confidently use interactive whiteboards and other information technology equipment to enhance their teaching and pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers give appropriate emphasis to teaching the basic skills, especially reading, and pupils are provided with a broad range of interesting activities which help them enjoy learning. The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the learning needs of those who find learning difficult. More able pupils are too rarely provided with additional challenge or required to work independently. Chances are also missed to develop particular aspects of writing in subjects other than English. The school has improved its science curriculum by placing greater emphasis on developing investigation skills and this is helping improve pupils' achievement in science. A regular programme of visits, including a residential visit and a programme of out of school clubs and visitors, such as sports coaches provide good enrichment to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good and academic guidance satisfactory. Children are cared for sensitively and individually and their pastoral needs are well known to staff. Risk assessments and child-protection arrangements are effective. Ways of ensuring pupils are safe, properly cared for and well behaved in school are thoroughly planned and consistently carried out by staff. Consequently, this is a happy, orderly and safe school. The headteacher has introduced an effective way of regularly assessing and checking the progress each pupil is making. This information is used well to provide extra help for pupils who are not attaining expected standards. However, most pupils are unclear about the level at which they are working and where they need to concentrate to move to the next stage of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Sound monitoring and evaluation procedures provide the headteacher with an accurate view of where improvements are needed. She has a good sense of what is most important and is gradually and systematically improving each aspect requiring attention. The school is therefore in a sound position to continue to improve in the future. Although all subjects have designated leaders, their role in monitoring, evaluating and improving provision and standards in their subjects remains underdeveloped. The school improvement plan concentrates on the correct issues, but is insufficiently detailed and lacks ways of measuring the effect of the actions it contains.

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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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
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	3

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	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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	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

9 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Middle Rasen Primary School, Market Rasen, LN8 3TS.

Thank you all for making Mrs Hackney and me welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit and a special thank you to those who talked to Mrs Hackney about school life during their lunchtime. Yours is a satisfactory and improving school.

We found your school a happy place where people get on very well and treat each other politely and with respect. You make satisfactory progress in your work. You are getting on well enough in mathematics, science and writing, and doing well in reading. Many of your parents help you improve your reading by hearing you read at home. New children in Reception are helped to settle in quickly and are already on the way to learning to read, write and count.

You behave well and you are clearly proud of your school. You feel safe in school and know that adults look after you well. Some of you take on additional responsibilities for helping the school run smoothly and you join in with community activities.

Both you and some of your parents told us that you regard your school highly and appreciate the work the staff and your headteacher do. We saw that you enjoy school life and attend regularly. Staff are aware of your learning needs and give extra help to those of you who are not doing your best. Your headteacher and the staff are working hard to improve the school and know that there are some things that still need to be done. We have recommended that they should:

- help more of you to reach higher standards in mathematics and science
- help you have a clearer understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of your work
- improve the plan that adults use to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Roger Sadler

Lead inspector