

Mount Street Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120694
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	313718
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Norman MacDonald
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Paine
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	Mount Street Lincoln Lincolnshire LN1 3JG
Telephone number	01522 527339
Fax number	01522 827103

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this large infant and Nursery school are of White British backgrounds. A few speak English as an additional language. The majority of pupils enter the school with knowledge and skills in line with those typically found nationally. An average proportion is eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The school has a particularly stable population and almost all children stay in the school from when they enter Nursery to when they leave at the end of Year 2. The school has received a Healthy Schools Award. A daily pre-school and after-school care facility is provided by an outside provider at the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Due to effective leadership and management and good teaching, the quality of education provided for pupils is good. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Excellent school assemblies, mostly led by the headteacher, make a strong contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual and moral development. Pupils are proud of their school and the vast majority of parents are strongly supportive. One parent captured the views of many when she wrote, 'Mount Street is a warm and welcoming school where children enjoy learning.' Pastoral care and support are excellent. Older pupils show a strong sense of responsibility and readily help and consider others. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Pupils appreciate the efforts staff make to ensure learning is interesting and fun. The school regularly assesses and carefully analyses each pupil's progress and directs extra help to those who are not achieving in line with the expectations for their ages. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they frequently receive carefully tailored support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Standards are above average. In writing, speaking and listening they are above average. In reading and mathematics, they are broadly average, but rising. Teachers plan lessons well so that they meet the learning needs of all pupils, including those capable of doing harder work. Teachers and pupils confidently use interactive whiteboards and this adds clarity and interest to lessons. Relationships are very good and expectations of behaviour are consistent and clear. Consequently, pupils behave well in lessons and this helps them achieve well and make good progress in their learning. The school has introduced a system for providing pupils with targets for their next stage of learning. Despite this, some pupils show insufficient knowledge of these. Targets are too often vague or written in language that pupils do not understand. Teachers often ask pupils to remember too many things or marking provides insufficiently clear guidance on where improvement is needed. Consequently, especially in mathematics, pupils are sometimes unclear about what they need to do to improve.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong and clear direction for the work of the school. They have worked well to help staff raise standards, particularly in writing and speaking and listening. They have also ensured that staff are effectively taking greater responsibility for leading aspects of the school's improvement. The school has a clear understanding of its strengths and where improvements are needed. The school's success in improving provision and raising standards indicate that it has good capacity to continue to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle happily into the Foundation Stage because of good induction procedures. Progress and achievement are good in the Nursery and Reception classes. Parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and say 'I couldn't have asked for better care' and 'My child loves school'. Teaching and learning are good. As a result, children currently in Nursery and Reception are on track to attain standards which are overall above those expected by the time they transfer into Year 1. Standards are best in writing, reading and in personal, social and emotional development. The main reason that standards are rising in the Foundation Stage is because the school has introduced much improved ways of checking the progress of each child. Children who are not performing as well as they could are swiftly identified and

given extra help until the problem is resolved. Similarly, children who show the potential to achieve above expected levels are given every chance to do so. The school has appropriately identified both the need to develop the curriculum for outdoor learning and also to further raise standards in children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' learning by making sure they know their learning targets, by ensuring that teachers' marking helps them see where they need to concentrate their efforts
- Ensure that pupils are only asked to concentrate on improving a few things at a time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Results from 2007 National Curriculum assessments for Year 2 pupils indicated that pupils attained average standards. Current work and school records show improving progress and that standards are rising. Pupils are frequently asked to hold discussions with partners or in small groups and as a result have good skills in speaking and listening. Older pupils are confident and articulate when talking to each other or to adults. Standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are good and in the main, pupils' writing is above the standard expected for their ages. Standards in mathematics and reading, although still broadly average, are rising. The few pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make good progress and quickly become confident when communicating with others in English. Because the school is giving greater attention to challenging higher attaining pupils, more pupils are attaining above the levels expected for their age group.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils personal development, including their spiritual and moral development are outstanding, largely due to the strong support for these aspects provided in lessons and assemblies. Pupils' social and cultural development are good. Pupils are helped to make a contribution to making decisions about school life and they take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for taking responsibility. They believe bullying is not an issue at their school and say they can always talk to an adult if they have a problem. Because of this they feel safe. They show a clear understanding of how to act with consideration for the safety of others. Pupils make a strong contribution to the community by raising funds for charities. Pupils' excellent personal development and improving literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for their future lives. They show a clear understanding of the diet and activity necessary for a healthy life and enjoy the regular opportunities provided for exercise in school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are interesting and thoroughly planned to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Teachers work together to ensure that pupils in each of the three classes in each year group have the same learning opportunities. Teachers explain to pupils how they are going to judge that their learning is successful. This is sometimes effective, but on occasion criteria for work is expressed in terms that are difficult for pupils to understand. Resources such as interactive white boards

are used well to make learning interesting, exciting and clear. Opportunities to reflect on or discuss aspects of lessons are frequent and help pupils develop their speaking skills and further their understanding. Marking is regular and encouraging but does not give pupils sufficient, clear information of how to make their work even better. This is particularly the case in mathematics and helps explain why standards are a little lower in mathematics than in writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well balanced. English and mathematics have appropriately high emphasis but good attention is also given to other aspects of the curriculum such as art, music and physical education. Provision for promoting pupils' personal development is good. This includes teaching them about staying safe and leading a healthy lifestyle. Learning is made interesting and relevant by a number of well-planned visits to places such as local museums and by visitors to school. A good range of additional clubs further enhances the curriculum. The school has identified the need to develop outdoor and investigative aspects of the curriculum further so that, for example, skills in science can be improved.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Academic guidance is good and pastoral support is excellent. Older pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Child protection, including the safe recruitment of staff, and risk assessment procedures are effective. There are also good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress. These are used as soon as children join the school. Carefully planned extra programmes are then provided for those at risk of not achieving as well as they might. Although individual targets are set for each pupil, too few pupils can confidently explain what these are, especially in mathematics. Consequently, too few pupils show a clear understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a strong lead. She has ensured that strategies for judging the school's effectiveness are comprehensive and accurate. The deputy headteacher has introduced much improved ways of checking the progress of pupils. All staff, through their membership of subject improvement teams, play an important part in improving the aspects of the school for which they are responsible. Staff mostly adopt a consistent approach to their work, although a few inconsistencies remain, for example in the way pupils' work is marked. The Chair of the governing body has for many years, provided strong and loyal support for the work of the school. Governors provide effective challenge for leaders and are well-informed about the quality of provision. Parents find the school open and accessible and many appreciate the school's excellent web-site which supports effective communication between school and home. The school improvement plan is effective except that it does not provide sufficiently clear criteria to enable leaders to easily judge the impact of actions taken on the attainment and progress of pupils.

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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?	2
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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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	1
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?	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?	2

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

18 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Mount Street Infant School, Lincoln, LN1 3JG

Thank you for making Mrs Barnes, Mr Perkins and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that you enjoy and are proud of your school and that your parents also think so well of it. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. We think your school is a good school. It is well run and is giving you a good education. Nursery children settle in quickly and soon start to learn to get on with each other and to read, write and count well. Adults in all classes provide good teaching and care for you so that you make good progress and achieve well. Your behaviour around school is excellent and you behave well and concentrate in lessons. I particularly enjoyed the assembly I attended and was very impressed by your singing and the sensitive comments you made about how it is to be brave.

Many of you, especially older pupils, show a strong sense of responsibility and enjoy helping others in school. You show good understanding of the importance of eating the right food and taking exercise. You clearly know right from wrong, show consideration for others and are friendly to each other.

Those of you who need extra help make good progress because the school gives good attention to helping you learn. The work you are given is often very interesting and the school works hard to give you a wide range of chances to learn, including interesting lessons, clubs, visits and special visitors to school.

We have asked your school to work on helping you know your learning targets, on checking that marking helps you see what you need to do to make your work better and to ask you to improve just a few things at a time.

With very best wishes for the future

Mr Sadler

Lead inspector