

Mapperley Plains Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122525
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
Inspection number	314316
Inspection dates	25–26 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Blackley
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Brooks
Date of previous school inspection	11 April 2005
School address	Hazel Grove Mapperley Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG3 5LD
Telephone number	0115 9649360
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. It serves pupils from the Porchester, Woodthorpe and Mapperley areas. There is a well below average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. An average proportion comes from minority ethnic backgrounds but few have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is below average. When they start school, children have a range of levels of attainment but the overall picture is broadly in line with that expected. The school moved onto a new site and into a new building about eighteen months before the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Mapperley Plains is an effective school. Aspects of its work are outstanding and these include the care shown for pupils, the excellent behaviour of the pupils and their extremely positive attitudes towards learning. One parent said 'My child enjoys school very much and has made very good progress'. This comment reflects the views of many parents who are very positive about the school and about how well their children are doing. The school provides good value for money.

The success of the school is reflected in the good progress made by pupils. Part of this is down to their excellent attitudes. Pupils clearly enjoy being at school and happily talk about the things they enjoy doing. The school's work to develop an ecological awareness among the pupils, and the excellent link with a school in Africa, is helping to raise their awareness of wider community issues and supports their outstanding personal development. They know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. The school council and the 'eco' group provide excellent opportunities for pupils to have a genuine input into the running of the school.

Standards by the end of the Reception Year are above national expectations. Pupils continue to achieve well through Years 1 and 2 and the standards at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were above average for the second year running and have improved since the previous inspection. Good achievement continues throughout the rest of the school. In the 2007 national tests, standards were exceptionally high in English and mathematics, and above average in science. Standards in science were not as good as in English and mathematics because fewer pupils reached the above average levels. Attainment in science has also been affected by pupils relatively weaker investigation and experimental skills. There is no significant difference in achievement between different groups of pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities, and those who are higher attaining pupils all make good progress.

The good achievement made by pupils is due to effective leadership and management. The school has been led strongly and effectively by the headteacher through a period of great change as it moved to the new site. Her clear focus on high standards, both personal and academic, is reflected in the positive learning ethos. The school has had a significant number of staff changes recently but now has a strong and effective leadership team, which is clearly having a positive impact on standards. The governing body supports this work by being effective critical friends and having a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Self-evaluation is accurate and honest.

The school is an exceptionally caring place. The academic and personal guidance provided for pupils is outstanding and reflected in the excellent provision to ensure equality of opportunity. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this has a positive impact on achievement. Teachers have very strong relationships with their pupils and this helps create the enjoyment and positive attitudes that are leading to high achievement. Planning is thorough and ensures sufficiently challenging work in most lessons. The effort teachers put into enriching and enlivening the curriculum through visits, visitors and other activities is outstanding. However, the day-to-day curriculum is not sufficiently creative and does not provide the sort of cross-curricular links that help pupils use literacy, numeracy or computer skills in other subjects.

The issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. Many other improvements have also taken place, such as improved standards and work to address the

achievement of boys and this demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Unit provides a good quality education for children of nursery and reception age. Although broadly average overall, the attainment of some children when they start school is lower than expected in communication and early reading and writing skills, and in their creative skills. The teaching is good and all adults work very well together, planning and delivering a good curriculum. Children are exceptionally well cared for and their progress is good in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, almost all children have reached the expected levels and many have exceeded them. The outdoor area is used effectively for some play-based learning but is yet to be fully used in developing pupils' creativity. The accommodation and resources are excellent and very effectively used to create an interesting environment that encourages children to explore a well-planned range of activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve opportunities for pupils to use investigative and experimental skills in science.
- Develop the curriculum to include more opportunities for pupils to show creativity and make links between subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. . By the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above average. This represents a particular improvement in mathematics over the last three years. Good achievement continues through Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average. In 2007, the standards achieved in the national tests in English and mathematics were exceptionally high. Standards in science were above average The school is developing its analysis of pupils' performance in tests and has addressed issues surrounding the achievement of boys or girls in different cohorts, so that any underachievement is quickly dealt with. Standards in art and design are very good in Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make equally good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding. Pupils behaviour is outstanding in and out of lessons, and they have very positive attitudes towards school and towards learning. This positive ethos is evident throughout the school and consistently among all adults who work there. Their spiritual moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this is reflected in their excellent enjoyment of school and the relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils with each other. There are very good opportunities for pupils to show responsibility and independence, and to develop their collaborative learning skills. They have an outstanding understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Attendance is above average. The school ensures parents and pupils are aware of the importance of regular attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school has taken very effective steps to improve teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Throughout the school good use is made of a range of assessment data to ensure pupils' needs are met. Pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities are well taught and supported and make good progress as a result. Teachers and other adults create and maintain good relationships with pupils, which enable them to enjoy school and develop their self-confidence. In the best lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching styles to make sure all pupils are fully involved and enjoy learning. In a few lessons the pace is too slow and some pupils do not achieve as well as they might. Teachers' planning is effective and identifies learning intentions and success criteria. Teaching assistants generally provide good support although their role is not always made clear in teachers' planning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the range of activities that they are able to take part in during lessons and at other times. The statutory curriculum for literacy and numeracy is well planned and increasing use is being made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding of the wider world through international connections, such as that with a school in Ethiopia. There are many other partnerships and they are very effectively used to enrich the curriculum and pupils' experiences. Teachers are given time to plan together while music, languages and sports are taught by coaches and other specialists. This ensures that the curriculum is closely matched to the needs of pupils. The school has begun to develop the curriculum by planning for closer links between different subjects to make learning more exciting and interesting for pupils. However, creative cross-curricular links are not yet fully established.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils thrive in the school's very positive atmosphere because staff monitor their personal development carefully and give sensitive support and guidance to those who are in any way vulnerable. There are good arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They say that bullying and racism are rare, and that staff deal effectively with any incidents that occur. Checks on the suitability of staff and procedures for child protection meet current requirements. The monitoring of pupils' progress is highly effective. Teachers use this information extremely well to identify any pupils who are at risk of underachieving. This enables staff to give effective support to all pupils and especially to those with learning difficulties, who are fully included and progress at a similar rate to other pupils. All pupils are given personal targets and older ones know the levels that they are aiming for. Teachers' good quality marking ensures that pupils understand their targets and are well motivated to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The head teacher provides strong, purposeful leadership and is well supported by her deputy. Her commitment and determination to improve has been the catalyst for the progress the school has made since its previous inspection, even during the move from the old buildings. Very good staffing deployment decisions have been made which have contributed to the improvements in teaching and learning. The senior leadership team is now at full complement and playing an increasing role in raising standards and achievement by setting challenging targets and monitoring progress. Subject leaders are becoming increasingly accountable for the outcomes of learning in their areas of responsibility. Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for improvement and are more actively involved than at the time of the previous inspection. Governors and senior staff all contribute to the self-evaluation process, which identifies correctly priorities for the school's future development. This is a very inclusive school where equality of opportunity is outstanding.

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

27 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Mapperley Plains Primary School

I am writing to thank you for your help during our visit to your school this week, and to let you know what we found out. We really enjoyed our visit and especially want to thank the older pupils we met, who talked to us at length and so positively about the school. That helped us find out some important information, as well as discover how much you all enjoy being at the school.

We were very impressed with the outstanding way the school cares for you, keeping you safe and teaching you about how to keep yourselves safe and healthy. You have an excellent awareness about issues to do with the environment. The school council members are happy that the school listens to their ideas and they have an important impact on the life of the school. We were especially impressed with how well you behave in lessons and around the school. This helps the school be such a positive and happy place to be, and helps your teachers teach you.

You work very hard and because of this, you make good progress in learning new things. You reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time you leave the school, although we think more of you could do better at working out science problems. Your teachers work very hard as well and their good teaching helps you learn in interesting ways. They are especially getting good at using the new interactive whiteboards. Mrs Brooks leads the school very well and she clearly has all of your best interests at heart.

Even though it is such a good school, we feel there are two things the school can do to become even better. These are:

- help more of you get better at experimenting and investigating in science.
- make more links between subjects so you can use your skills in other ways and make sure enough time is given for you to be creative.

Finally thank you again for your help. Enjoy your time at Mapperley Plains and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspectors)