

Misterton Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122657
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
Inspection number	314359
Inspection dates	15–16 April 2008
Reporting inspector	John Brennan

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Large
Headteacher	Mr D Herrett
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2004
School address	Groewood Road Misterton Doncaster South Yorkshire DN10 4EH
Telephone number	01427 890284
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This averaged size school serves the villages of Misterton, West Stockwith and the surrounding area. Almost all pupils are of a White British background although a small number of Indian pupils attend the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or other disabilities is broadly average. Although varying from year to year children start the school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age.

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. From a low base, standards initially rose markedly following the last inspection, reflecting purposeful and energetic leadership. However, leadership and management are satisfactory overall because having built solid foundations, the pace of improvement has slowed in recent times. Although school leaders have a broad idea what is needed to do to take the school forward, plans to build on past improvements lack some important detail. At present not enough is done to ascertain how well actions transfer into successful teaching and learning. As a result some inconsistencies exist in the quality of provision and in how well pupils do. Although there are pockets of good achievement, especially in Years 1 and 2 and for pupils who need extra help, too few pupils attain beyond expected levels. As a result, overall standards in Year 6 remain average and pupil achievement is satisfactory. This mixed picture and a slowing momentum reflects satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The school is led in a calm and sensitive manner with careful consideration given to pupils' personal development. This has improved well since the last inspection and is now good. This is also the case for the care, support and guidance given to pupils. Pupils get on well with one another and with adults so that the school operates as a harmonious community. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and at ease. This is reflected in good levels of attendance and is helped by the good range of activities pupils do beyond lessons. The school provides pupils with good pastoral care. Parents strongly support the view that their children enjoy school, feel safe, and are happy and well cared for. Staff know pupils well and pupils feel confident to talk about their problems should any arise, whether it be help in learning how to behave properly, or in getting to grips with their work, vulnerable pupils receive personally tailored support. This is helped by the tight partnerships teachers establish with effective support staff.

Elsewhere the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum are also satisfactory. Both succeed in helping pupils acquire key skills but are less successful in enabling pupils to put these to thoughtful use. Teachers manage pupils well. Relationships are such that pupils feel they can give their best. Lesson expectations are made known to pupils and demonstrations of new skills are clear and accurate. However, work pupils complete by themselves is not always demanding enough. This manifests itself particularly in the use of worksheets, which give pupils too few decisions to make, and involve too little problem solving or creative thinking.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Good induction procedures help children settle well to school life and lead to parents being confident that their children are well looked after. Improved assessment procedures give staff an accurate idea of where pupils are and what they need to learn next. This information is used well to guide activities led by adults. Teaching and learning at these times is purposeful. In the main, staff are skilled at helping children to work together and in developing their language skills. However, there are occasions when children are left to their own devices too much and in which interventions by staff lack purpose. This is particularly the case when it comes to outside learning, of which there is too little especially for older pupils. Short daily visits to a reasonably resourced outside area currently have too little learning intent. Overall, children's

achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory across the areas of learning so that children for the most part attain expected goals by the time they leave.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching and the curriculum for all pupils, but especially high attainers, provides more opportunities for imaginative and problem solving learning.
- Improve the quality of outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage, especially for older children.
- Ensure that action plans are sharply focused on short-term measurable outcomes, and that these are monitored closely at classroom level.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

After a steady start in the Foundation Stage pupils progress accelerates through Years 1 and 2 where teaching and the curriculum especially in Year 1 is lively and interesting. Pupils of all abilities achieve well so that standards begin to nudge above average, especially in writing and mathematics. The progress of pupils who find learning difficult continues to be good through the juniors, especially in English, because these pupils are well supported. However, the progress of pupils of above average ability is inconsistent. Although the school has set itself increasingly challenging targets, currently too few who reach above average levels by the end of Year 2 go on to reach this mark by the time they leave the school. Consequently, over the past three years standards in English, mathematics and science have more often than not been average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, they readily take responsibility for their actions and for improving their own work. Their behaviour is good and they look after themselves and each other. They have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and the right foods to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Playtimes are active and social occasions. Pupils are confident and polite individuals who demonstrate a strong commitment towards their moral and social responsibilities. This reflects their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Aspects of their spiritual and cultural development, including an understanding of life in multicultural Britain are not quite as strong as other areas. The school council gives pupils a voice in the school's future development, for example in planning the new wildlife area. Opportunities, such as visiting a local church to participate in celebrations and in raising money for several charities extend pupils' sense of responsibility to include the wider community. Pupils acquire satisfactorily the skills needed for the next stage of education. Although they develop their ability to relate to each other well, their progress in basic skills is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The gently encouraging manner of staff leads to calm and purposeful classrooms. Planning has clarity of purpose so that demonstrations at the beginnings of lessons are accurate and clear.

Where they are available, good use is made of interactive whiteboards to show pupils what to do. As a result, pupils are well prepared to practise new skills in follow-up group work. However, too much emphasis is given to practice and consolidation of skills rather than to helping pupils put new-found skills towards purposeful and imaginative use. In mathematics, for example, too little emphasis is given to problem solving as pupils often work their way through an unnecessarily long list of sums which can be very similar in their level of difficulty. Pupils are given good feedback on how to improve their work. Marking is often evaluative and forward looking in nature.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal and social development is helping pupils make the most of their time at school. In the pursuit of the acquisition of basic skills an appropriate emphasis is placed on English and mathematics. Finding links between subjects to help pupils hone and apply their mathematical and writing skills however, are at an early stage of development. In general, there are too few opportunities for pupils to work imaginatively and with a degree of freedom and risk. The exception to this is in art where themed days and weeks give pupils a wide range of experiences. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits, including extensive opportunities for residential visits and a wide-ranging programme of visitors to school. This is helped by the extensive partnerships the school establishes with other bodies. There is a wide range of out of school activities, particularly in sport which attract many pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for health and safety are secure, whilst the strengthening of actions to encourage and monitor attendance has seen this rise over the years. The school has developed thorough procedures to assess and monitor pupils' academic progress. These are used well to identify pupils who are not 'on track' and to help pupils see how to improve. As a result, the school provides good support for pupils who find learning hard or who need help and advice in how to conduct themselves. Their particular needs are identified early and effective action, often led by skilled support staff, quickly follows. There are productive links with outside agencies that provide additional support where necessary. However, there has been insufficient focus on ascertaining whether higher attaining pupils or those with particular talents and gifts are learning to their potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Consultation with stakeholders and the greater involvement of staff in leading the school forward ensures that a strong sense of common purpose prevails. Morale is high and a good team spirit exists. Parents are very happy with the school. Efforts to improve aspects of the personal development and achievement of less able pupils have been effective, reflecting good leadership in these areas. A broadly accurate view of strengths and weaknesses leads the school to pinpointing pertinent priorities. However, action plans by staff to take these forward are of variable quality. They do not always spell out what difference actions will make to teaching and learning and thereby pupil performance. This in turn makes it difficult for the school to assess the success of actions. Whilst some evaluative practice takes place, this is not yet

widespread enough. Checking exercises are weighted towards the scrutiny of planning and performance data to the detriment of classroom observation and the examination of pupils' work. The governing body gives the school good support, particularly when there are difficult decisions to take, but their role in checking the work of the school for themselves is still developing.

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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?	2
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	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	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	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	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?	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?	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

17 April 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Misterton Nursery and Primary School, Misterton, DN10 4EH

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. I would like to share with you what we thought and found out about your school.

You told us and we could see for ourselves that you enjoy school. This is because the staff at the school treat you well and you get on well with each other. We were impressed with your behaviour, both within the classroom and in the playground. You were very polite. Many of you held the door open for us as we passed up and down the corridors. Keeping up this good level of behaviour and concern for others will continue to make your school a nice place to be.

We could see that you worked hard in lessons and were trying hard to reach the targets that had been set for you. We were impressed with the help received by those of you who find learning and behaving difficult. It was clear that this was making a difference to how well you were doing. We did however think that some of the work was too easy for those of you who have no difficulty in reading or writing and in doing mathematics. We have asked the school to give you work more often that lets you think and make decisions for yourselves, solve problems and use your imagination. You can help in this by continuing the good behaviour and good attitudes you clearly have to this work.

We could see that the younger children were able to spend time learning indoors and outdoors. However, we thought that children in the Foundation Stage, particularly older children were doing too much learning indoors and too little learning outdoors. We have asked the school to help children in the Foundation Stage to do more outdoor learning.

Your teachers keep a close eye on how well you are doing by looking at test results. This has helped them get a good idea of what the school needs to help you to do better still. We have asked the school to write some detailed plans for doing this and to pop into each other's classrooms more often see that these plans are going well.

Once again thank you and good luck in the future

John Brennan Lead inspector