

Meadowdale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132010
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	315902
Inspection dates	22–23 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Scott
Headteacher	Sue Hunnings
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2003
School address	Meadowdale Road Market Harborough LE16 7XQ
Telephone number	01858 465479
Fax number	01858 465479

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Meadowdale is larger than most primary schools. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is much lower than average. Most children have Nursery or preschool experience before joining the Reception class and attainment on entry for most pupils is at nationally expected levels. Meadowdale is a relatively new school that opened in January 2001 and, as a result, this is the first year that Year 6 children have been in the school since Reception.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of Meadowdale is good. The school has grown rapidly since it opened six years ago. It is popular with pupils and parents because it is regarded as a caring place that encourages pupils to grow into responsible young people. A parent summing up the views of many said, 'Children have plenty of opportunities to stretch their horizons and they are encouraged to think about their responsibilities not just their rights.' Pupils enjoy coming to school. From Reception to the end of Year 2, pupils experience consistently good teaching and consequently the majority of pupils are achieving well above average standards. Achievement is good. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6, but not consistently so, reflecting some instability in the school's staffing. In Key Stage 2, standards in English and science are above average and achievement is good. Standards in mathematics are not as high as in English because pupils' ability to use and apply mathematical knowledge is not well developed. Strategies to tackle this have been effective and current standards are improving. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are already at the expected level in mathematics and well on course to exceed their targets by the end of the year. Gifted and talented pupils make good progress and pupils who have learning difficulties make the same progress as their peers. Preparation for future economic well-being is good, since pupils develop good personal qualities and make good progress in key literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. The school council is pro-active in responding to, and acting upon, pupils' views. Relationships are very good and the learning environment is safe and stimulating. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy, and participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities for sport. Pupils experience a good level of care and procedures to track pupils' academic progress are effective. The curriculum is good because it is well matched to the needs of pupils and provides lots of enrichment opportunities. The good leadership of the headteacher has successfully steered the school. She is challenged and supported by an excellent governing body. In the past, monitoring of pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 has not been as sharp as at Key Stage 1. The school is aware that provision for the older pupils needs to be developed further to ensure consistently good teaching and high standards in all subjects. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good. A secure environment helps children feel confident and happy. Behaviour is good. Children experience a good balance between making purposeful choices about their activity and being directed and guided. They are encouraged to take responsibility for simple jobs such as organising the outdoor area and self-registration. Adults use every opportunity to develop children's language and numeracy skills in their responses to questions and comments. Well-planned and purposeful activities engage and interest the children and effectively cover all areas of learning. Careful tracking indicates slightly better progress in reading than writing but overall children make good progress, and most children enter Year 1 at above expected levels. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator sets clear direction for developments and is a model of good practice.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the teaching of mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is consistently challenging to improve progress.
- Monitor pupils' progress with more rigour through Years 3 to 6 to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils build very well on the good start they make in Reception, reaching standards significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Standards in national tests have been consistently high for the last three years in all areas. Challenging and stimulating tasks well matched to pupils' ability and consistently high expectations contribute to this good achievement. Achievement continues to be good in Key Stage 2, and a high percentage of pupils are on course to achieve above average standards this year in English, mathematics and science. The majority of Year 6 pupils are already reaching the expected level in English and many are at a higher level. Pupils are enthusiastic readers and they choose words imaginatively to create interesting writing for different audiences. Handwriting and presentation are of a high standard. Attainment in mathematics is not as high and, although standards are improving, pupils do not make as much progress in mathematics as in English. Some teaching in Key Stage 2 lacks challenge and pace and this has an impact on progress. High-attaining and gifted and talented pupils achieve very well and are constantly challenged to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in class and are making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils learn to become thoughtful about themselves and sensitive to the needs of others. They confidently discuss their ideas and feelings because they know they will be valued. Their writing and the many displays around the school demonstrate this confidence. Pupils know that school dinners would not meet with Jamie Oliver's approval, or theirs. They explain that fruit and a variety of salads are not always available. They are very aware of the importance of fresh fruit and vegetables in a healthy diet. Pupils' interest in sport is developed through a varied and well-attended programme of sport and activity in the curriculum and in after-school clubs. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and their behaviour is good. They enjoy most of their lessons, and their attendance is very good. Pupils act responsibly in their school as 'reading buddies,' play leaders or members of the 'Friendship and Green Teams'. Opportunities to contribute to the wider community are less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In Reception and in Years 1 and 2, the individual needs of children are given close attention, relationships are extremely warm and supportive, and lessons have pace, interest and variety, so children flourish and make rapid progress. Some but not all teaching in Key Stage 2 matches this quality. Tasks are carefully matched to pupils' ability, expectations are clear and pupils are

challenged to collaborate, discuss and present their work. For example, in a Year 6 class observed, pupils responded swiftly to demanding guidelines and produced a convincing case proposing to ban children from eating chocolate. In a few lessons, however, pupils are not challenged because they spend too long passively listening to the teacher, or they are asked to work on tasks that are too easy for them. Assessment and marking are generally used well to move pupils forward in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils appreciate the interesting curriculum enhanced by themed days and weeks. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are well used to enrich learning in other subjects. Year 1 pupils, for example, used ICT confidently when they plotted the happiness of Cinderella on a block graph. Planning is detailed and usually well matched to pupils' abilities. The programme for personal, social and health education contributes to the strong, caring ethos in the school. Effective provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and there is a wellstructured programme in place to support the needs of gifted and talented pupils. A good range of visits and visitors enhances learning. The many clubs and activities are very popular and well attended. In the art club, pupils received a good introduction to the work of Kandinsky and contemporary art. Opportunities for learning about life in multicultural Britain are less well developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A few pupils say they are not listened to and that inappropriate behaviour is not always dealt with quickly enough, but the vast majority and inspection evidence consider the school to be a happy place where pupils are well looked after. They like and appreciate their teachers. These good relationships permit pupils to enjoy their work and be confident about the progress they make. The good academic guidance they receive gives them effective support. They understand how well they are doing and what to do to improve their work. Progress is tracked carefully and challenging but manageable targets are set. A high priority is given to pupils' welfare, and safeguarding procedures and risk assessments are well considered. A few parents feel behaviour in the school and communication with them are points for improvement, but inspectors saw only good behaviour during the inspection. The overwhelming majority of parents consider the school to be a safe, well-ordered and caring place in which their children can flourish.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads with a clear sense of purpose and direction, and Meadowdale is a happy friendly place. All staff feel valued and contribute to the well-considered plans for school improvement. These are informed by a rigorous review of all aspects of the school's work. Tracking and monitoring are good and consequently targets are used well to raise standards. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, managers are very clear about strengths and weaknesses and have put many initiatives in place to raise standards and achievement further. Monitoring in Key Stage 2 has not always been rigorous enough to ensure the very high standards reached in Year 2 are maintained at the end of Year 6, but they are on course to do so this year. Governors have an excellent view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and

this enables them to make a valuable contribution supporting and rigorously challenging the school.

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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?	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?	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	1
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

- 24 January 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Meadowdale Primary School, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7XQ Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers. We will remember how courteous and considerate you were, especially when we joined you for lunch. Thank you to all the Year 6 pupils who wrote letters explaining what they liked about the school. These are the things we liked most about your school:
- When you first come to the school in Reception, you make a good start to your education and you do well as you progress through the school, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- You continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6 but older pupils do not make as much progress in mathematics as they do in English.
- Many of you said that you think your school is good. We agree with you. Your levels of attendance reflect this.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun.
- You are all extremely polite, well behaved and consider the needs of others, and this contributes to the friendly atmosphere.
- You thoroughly enjoy school and all the activities, including those that take place outside the school day. These all help you learn to lead active, healthy lifestyles.
- Your school is well led and managed and this contributes to your enjoyment of school, and helps you feel safe and well cared for.
- Your parents work well with your teachers; this helps you to make good gains in your learning and there is effective support for those who need extra help. To make things even better we have suggested a few things that we think will help:
- While older pupils make good progress, it is not as good as that of the younger pupils, who make very good progress. We want all Year 3 to 6 pupils to work extremely hard, especially in mathematics, so that progress throughout the school can be consistently very good.
- Your leaders should check very carefully to ensure that Key Stage 2 is as good as Key Stage 1. We wish you well for the future. Marion Wallace Lead Inspector

24 January 2008



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Marion Wallace
Lead Inspector