

Mandeville Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117305
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	326566
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Heather Weston HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	228
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Norman Brown
Headteacher	Miss Kara Hales
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	West Road Sawbridgeworth Hertfordshire CM21 0BL
Telephone number	01279 723737
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Mandeville Primary is of similar size to most primary schools and the Early Years Foundation Stage provision includes a morning nursery. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and a lower proportion of pupils have English as an additional language than most schools. An average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is also average. Most of the pupils with an identified need have speech and language difficulties.

The school has a breakfast club and provides a base for community child and adult learning. The school gained National Healthy School Status in 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'A great school led by a great team'. 'Mandeville Primary School is an outstanding school with a strong and inspired teaching team and leadership.' 'The headteacher and deputy headteacher are outstanding examples to our children'. These parents are spot on in their comments, although it should be said that all staff are outstanding examples to the pupils. All of them are highly dedicated professionals, committed not only to enabling pupils to make the very best progress, but also to helping them become independent, reflective learners. They also have a real sense of fun! It is not unusual to see school staff dress up on 'special' days, but not many site managers can be seen with an imaginary dog on a lead sporting the word 'delusional' on his T-shirt! One was spotted at Mandeville Primary, on Vocabulary Parade Day.

The outstanding curriculum, which is exciting and stimulating has a strong focus on first hand practical experiences, not just in the younger classes, but throughout the school. Theme days and weeks are part of the rich diet experienced by pupils. Key skills, not only of literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) but also personal, social and learning skills are developed in all subject areas. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They develop respect both for themselves and others, and acquire skills such as reflection, independence and decision making. Staff are skilful in meeting pupils' learning needs to enable them to make excellent progress. The school's focus is rightly on the quality of learning, which is truly exceptional. This is the result of outstanding teaching. Teachers are adept at planning exactly the right small steps in each aspect of learning and are ably supported by well-trained learning support assistants. The care, guidance and support for pupils is also of the highest quality. Each and every pupil who is in danger of falling behind, or who has particular needs is identified and given appropriate support. The last inspection found that the school was good with some outstanding aspects. Staff and governors have worked tirelessly since the last inspection to improve, and the use of ongoing assessment and of ICT, which were previously areas for development are now areas of excellence.

The standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 are a testament to the commitment and hard work of all members of the school community, adults and pupils alike. Standards are exceptionally high in all areas, and have been for some years. Pupils' progress from joining the school is outstanding. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 are high, but less so in reading and writing than in mathematics, reflecting the growing proportion of pupils, particularly boys, with speech and language difficulties.

Underpinning all this is outstanding leadership and management. Leaders have a passionate belief in child-centred education, pay close attention to detail and expect consistency of practice but also enable flexibility of delivery. Their belief and this practice ensure pupils truly build up their skills through the school. The school provides outstanding value for money and has outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Highly effective leadership, high quality teaching and very positive relationships ensure that children make excellent progress. Staff are highly committed to the welfare of the children. They work closely with parents and carers and seek their support in developing children, academically, socially and emotionally. Carefully planned induction procedures enable children

to get off to a flying start. Equally well-planned transition arrangements ensure their move to Key Stage 1 is seamless. Children's levels of attainment on joining the nursery vary considerably, although overall, are in line with expectations. However, an increasing number of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly speech, language or hearing difficulties. As a result, when they do transfer to Key Stage 1, although in most areas overall outcomes are well above expectations, children's language development is just above expectations. Teachers are aware of this. They understand the varied and individual ways in which children learn and make sure that all their needs are met, seeking further professional help where necessary. Curriculum planning between the nursery and Reception teacher is excellent, with a strong emphasis on developing children's independent learning skills. Children's personal development and well-being is extremely well promoted. Activities, both indoors and outside are stimulating and practical. They are enhanced by a range of visits: near, such as counting the parked vehicles on West Road, and far, such as going on a boat trip, or ongoing visits to a local farm where children can sow, grow and eat vegetables. No wonder the children love coming to school, thoroughly enjoy themselves, and make such good progress!

What the school should do to improve further

Inspectors could not identify any significant issue which would lead to further improvement which the school was not already successfully addressing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are exceptionally high in all areas. In 2008 girls reached higher standards than boys in English and science and boys reached higher standards than girls in mathematics. Achievement in 2008 was significantly above average for the fourth year in succession. The school's tracking data and pupils' work shows that this trend of attainment and achievement is continuing and fully confirms that the school is enabling all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make outstanding progress overall. Standards by the end of Year 2 are high. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils, particularly boys, with speech and language difficulties and the school works relentlessly to ensure that all pupils have the necessary building blocks on which to build. However, not all pupils, particularly boys, were able to overcome their difficulties in time to reach high standards by the end of Key Stage 1 in 2008. In fact, the standards reached by boys in writing were below average, although in all other areas they were above average. The school has however put in place very effective and successful strategies to improve boys' writing. These include for example carefully chosen writing stimuli to enthuse the boys.

The result is, at this key stage, all pupils make at least very good progress from their differing starting points and all are developing the skills necessary to help them attain and achieve as well as they can by the time they leave school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have a wonderful sense of community and a sense of caring for each other. They learn to share ideas, listen to one another's point of view, and to accommodate each other's opinions and ways of working. Social development is outstanding. Pupils have a very clear understanding of different cultures and religions, and a strong sense of right and wrong. Consequently, their spiritual, moral and social development is equally outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school

and this is reflected in their good and improving attendance. Pupils take great pride in their achievements and talk with particular satisfaction about their progress. They know their targets and can explain their next steps to improvement. Pupils are extremely courteous and polite; they show great respect for one another, adults and the school. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because pupils have a real thirst for knowledge so they want to learn. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. They enjoy and readily take on many responsibilities, such as 'energy champ', and make an excellent contribution to their school, for example fund-raising for charities. Imaginative activities such as 'Enterprise Week' give all pupils a real and outstanding preparation for the next stage in their learning and their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Fundamental to the outstanding teaching and learning is the partnership and excellent rapport between staff and pupils. Staff ensure that the level of difficulty for each pupil is just right. Progress is rapid because no time is wasted and everything is done for a reason. Pupils demonstrate an excellent work ethic. Together staff and pupils recognise the importance of having a clear target to aim for, agreeing success criteria for each lesson, and checking achievement. Pupils understand how important it is to know how well they are doing, and their part in checking this. From an early age they develop the skills to judge their own work and that of their peers. They develop critical thinking skills and look for 'brilliant blue' and 'growing green', that is, analysing strengths and areas for development, both during and after lessons. This clear 'Mandeville approach' gives consistency to teaching and learning and quickens pupils' progress. It is particularly impressive that pupils see mistakes as important learning opportunities, and how, in the best lessons, they are encouraged to explain their thinking to their peers. All teachers use questioning effectively, to clarify and extend pupils' thinking so that they make leaps in learning. Learning support assistants provide pupils with good support by explaining concepts, asking questions and encouraging pupils to put their ideas forward.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is lively and varied. Meticulous planning offers a very broad and balanced range of stimulating tasks that pupils soak up like sponges. Subjects are linked so that new learning in one reinforces previous learning in another. Basic skills are learnt and practised through relevant activities in other subjects. All pupils are catered for and the curriculum makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development. Very effective links with other agencies and schools extend and enliven the curriculum, whether challenging the gifted or in preparation for the next stage of learning. Visitors, visits and themed weeks, like the 'Creative Arts Week', bring learning to life and add much to pupils' enjoyment. Pupils' clear recollections demonstrate the excellent learning from these stimulating and interesting events. Pupils learn French and a very wide range of popular extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are excellent. The school is a safe and extremely supportive environment and provides the highest level of care for its pupils. All aspects of safeguarding are carried out rigorously to ensure the health, safety and well-being of pupils. Systems and procedures are evaluated as a routine and are first-rate. Pupils say they feel safe, and are confident that if they have a concern, they can seek help from an adult, and the matter will be dealt with. Good attendance is promoted well. Academic guidance is excellent because pupils know their targets and have an extremely thorough awareness of what they need to do to improve.

Inclusion is central to the school's vision. The quality of support is outstanding with the school 'going that extra mile' to make sure that each and every pupil's needs are met. The success of interventions and the progress of specific groups of pupils, including vulnerable pupils are tracked by the inclusion team. Pupils not making sufficient progress are given support by the school team, and when necessary, referred to outside agencies for further help. Links with external partners are outstanding and ensure appropriate access to services for children and their families. Although some parents expressed concern regarding the progress of their children, who had learning difficulties and/or disabilities, it was clear that this support enables all pupils to make excellent progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She is very well supported by an equally strong leadership team and by committed, knowledgeable governors. Together they provide an exemplary level of vision and direction. The school has made rapid and sustained improvement since the last inspection. Their vision, that the school should provide pupils with key skills for lifelong learning is truly realised.

Equality is also central to the vision; all members of the school community are valued equally and work extremely well in partnership. Self-evaluation systems involve all stakeholders, and are rigorous and accurate. Data are used effectively to improve standards. The school development plan outlines strategies for tackling identified issues, such as improving boys' writing. Performance management includes all staff with training linked to school priorities and individual needs. The governing body is highly effective at challenging and supporting the leadership team. It has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and an acute awareness of its role and responsibilities. Links with the local community are excellent. This, together with pupils' mature understanding of diversity and integrity and their awareness of other cultures means that the school makes a highly significant and positive contribution to promoting community cohesion.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mandeville Primary School, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 0BL

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your school recently and looking at all your interesting work. Thank you for making us so welcome, for talking to us and showing us your work. We thought that you are very enterprising and have very good business sense! Your 'Vocabulary Parade' was most impressive and looked a lot of fun! You quite clearly enjoy school because of all the interesting things you have to do. We were extremely impressed by the way you work together so well to evaluate each others work for 'brilliant blue' and 'growing green'. Your school is outstanding and the way Miss Hales and your teachers have helped you develop such a good understanding of how you can support each other is exceptional.

We also think Miss Hales and your teachers are very skilled in the way that they make sure that they plan work for you that is not just at exactly the right level, but challenges you to make sure you can all do your very best. We could see this, because the results reached by those in Year 6 are not only high but are quite exceptional.

Another reason that your school is exceptional is that we couldn't find anything that it needs to do to improve. We thought about this very hard, but everything we thought of, your school is already doing!

With best wishes

Heather Weston

Her Majesty's Inspector