

# Muskham Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122663
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327776
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Newell

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	193
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jo Wright
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gillian Kent
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Main Street North Muskham Newark Nottinghamshire NG23 6HD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01636 702254
<b>Fax number</b>	01636 702254

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how the school is embedding a more creative and innovative curriculum where pupils have greater independence for their own learning; how well leaders at all levels, including governors, monitor and evaluate the work and performance of the school. Evidence was gathered from: lesson observations, sampling of pupils' work, scrutiny of school documentation, assessment, tracking and target setting data and information, and discussions with the headteacher, pupils, key staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Muskham is a smaller than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below that found nationally. These pupils have, for example, moderate learning difficulties, behavioural or emotional difficulty or sensory impairment. Although most pupils are from White British backgrounds, other minority ethnic groups are represented in school, but none of these pupils is at an early stage of acquiring English. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is made for children in the Reception class. There is a privately run playgroup for two days a week which is held on the school site. Another provider runs a holiday club and a daily after school club in the village hall.

The school currently holds the following awards: Activemark for sport, Investors in People, National Association of Advisers for Computers in Education (NAACE) mark for quality in information and communication technology, and the intermediate level of International Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Muskham Primary is an outstanding school that provides a first class quality of education for all its pupils. The school is held in high regard by parents and the comment made by one summed up that of many others, 'The school has provided my child with phenomenal support, encouragement, opportunities and fun. He has enjoyed every day of his school life.' The heart of the school's success is that it never rests on its laurels. Under the exceptional leadership of the headteacher, it is innovative and provides a vibrant range of learning opportunities that enthuse and motivate the pupils who, ultimately, achieve very high standards. The school's commitment to, and outstanding track record of continuous improvement, show that its capacity for yet further development is excellent.

The school is at the hub of village life and reaches out to parents and other members of the local community. Many parents are actively involved in school life, and the local community are seen as partners and a valuable and valued learning resource. Pupils participate in a wealth of village activities and events and work alongside community members on environmental issues within the locality to raise awareness of sustainability. The school is equally successful at instilling in pupils a sense of community beyond their locality. Pupils have a real understanding of belonging to a global as well as local community through excellent work on celebrating cultural diversity, raising awareness of moral and social issues, and providing opportunities for pupils to instigate fund raising for national and international charities. There are active links with schools in Canada, France and New Zealand.

When children start at the school, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations and a little higher in their personal and social skills. Children make excellent progress in the EYFS. By the end of Year 2, standards are usually significantly above the national average and by the time that pupils leave the school, standards are consistently very high and in some years are exceptional. In 2007, national test data indicated that the rate of progress between Year 2 and Year 6 placed the school in the top 4% of all schools nationally. The picture is one of exceptional progress and achievement from pupils starting to leaving school. This is the case for the higher attaining pupils, ethnic minority pupils and those who find learning more difficult. Current performance makes it crystal clear that this trend is continuing. Much of this is a consequence of outstanding teaching and the excellent systems that are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the very challenging targets that are set. Pupils' progress is tracked rigorously, and teachers are held accountable for the progress of pupils they teach. Any pupil falling behind is quickly spotted and high quality intervention and support programmes are put in place so that lost ground is quickly made up. Pupils have a very good awareness of their individual targets and what they need to do to improve, although, occasionally, some do not act on the excellent pointers for improvement, which are often given in teachers' marking. Older pupils are actively involved in setting some targets of their own.

The strengths in academic guidance are added to significantly by the exceptional level of pastoral care. Safeguarding procedures are robust and the care and well-being of pupils is afforded the highest priority. As a result, pupils feel cared for, respected, and have a voice that is listened to. Staff know the needs, both academic and social, of all pupils, and go the extra mile in meeting them. When all these factors come together, it is plain to see why pupils leave the school as confident, articulate, well-rounded individuals who are exceptionally equipped to face the next challenges in their educational lives.

The quality of teaching is excellent because it helps pupils accelerate their learning at rapid pace and keeps them on their toes and highly motivated. Lessons are regularly well planned and provide work that is very well pitched to the differing ability levels of the pupils. Even so, very occasionally, the level of challenge could go up a notch. Teachers use their subject knowledge very effectively to engage the pupils and receive an enthusiastic response. Relationships are excellent and there is a real buzz of productivity around the school. Teachers have very different styles, but all are effective, and simply add to the broad tapestry of learning. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils who find learning difficult, and add much to the warm sense of community within the school.

Pupils benefit equally from a vibrant and exciting range of learning opportunities. The breadth can be seen in pupils' books and in some excellent displays of their work around the school. There are outstanding examples of how well pupils' writing skills are developed in subjects other than English. Environmental and social issues are addressed, and pupils' knowledge in mathematics and science is put to the test in practical investigations. The school provides specialist teaching in sport, and also gives pupils the opportunity to play a musical instrument and to learn French. Add to this the wealth of enrichment opportunities through visitors, including many from different ethnic minorities, trips and residential visits, and numerous and varied after school clubs, and the blueprint for an outstanding curriculum is complete. The school is setting even higher expectations of what pupils should achieve. Consequently, it has accurately identified the need to develop further pupils' enquiry, thinking and decision-making skills to enable them to take more ownership, independence and initiative for their own learning.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and, as one pupil said, 'Everyone knows and follows the rules.' They show an infectious enthusiasm for all the school has to offer and their love and enjoyment of it is reflected in their excellent attendance. They are extremely polite and courteous and are more than happy to talk about their work and learning experiences. Pupils show a fervent desire to do well. Older pupils are always looking out for the younger ones. All have an excellent understanding of what is needed to live healthily and safely. They say with certainty that bullying is not an issue at their school, and that there is always an adult to talk to if they have any concerns. The school provides many opportunities to take on responsibility and to contribute to the local community. Pupils thrive and flourish on the responsibilities entrusted to them and invariably rise to the challenges set.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership in constantly taking the school forward and maintaining high standards but never losing sight of the quest to make the journey a thoroughly enjoyable one. She has instigated rigorous procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching, analysing data and accurately evaluating the performance of the school. These procedures are applied with flair, creativity and innovation so that learning remains vibrant and fresh for pupils and staff. She benefits from the excellent support of a senior management team who have a range of skills that are utilised extremely well to give depth and impact to leadership. The picture is completed by high quality governors who are very supportive yet challenging of the work of the school and play their part in making Muskham what it is - an outstanding school.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children get off to a flying start in the EYFS because of the outstanding quality of education, especially teaching. The teaching provides exciting learning opportunities that stimulate and enthuse the children and the high quality environment oozes a child friendly invitation to learn

through play and exploration both in and out of doors. The focus on developing children's communication, mathematical and other key skills through direct teaching is tackled in an equally impressive manner. Assessment procedures are excellent and the information is used very well to plan the next steps in children's learning. As a result of the excellent quality of education, from starting points that are broadly those expected nationally, children make outstanding progress, resulting in their skills and knowledge rising to be above expectations by the end of the Reception Year. Children behave extremely well, rapidly learn to work cooperatively with others, but also develop a real sense of independence. These attributes contribute much to their outstanding personal development. Children's welfare is promoted extremely well. Excellent induction procedures help them to settle very quickly into school routines, and their welfare is of paramount importance. Children are helped to make decisions about healthy snacks and are reminded about playing safely both in and out of doors. Leadership and management are outstanding. The EYFS leader and her team work together extremely well in ensuring a high standard of education. Communication with parents is excellent, and they are regularly consulted about their children's progress. Provision is highly inclusive. Although creative development is of a good standard, the EYFS leader has rightly identified this as an area where children's progress could be accelerated.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide and embed more opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop their enquiry, thinking and decision-making skills so that they take greater ownership of, and are more independent in, their learning.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

27 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Muskham Primary School, Muskham, Newark, NG23 6HD

Many thanks to you all for making our visit to your school so enjoyable and worthwhile. It is one that we will remember for a long time. We greatly appreciated the opportunities to talk to you about work and school, especially the Year 6 pupils and the school council who met us to discuss their views. It was helpful to hear how much you love school and all the exciting activities you take part in, both during and outside the school day. It was good to hear how safe and secure you feel, that bullying is not an issue, and that there is always someone to talk to if you have any concerns.

I found so many good things about Muskham School that I have to say that it is an outstanding school and a great and fun place to learn. Teachers and other staff make learning exciting and in doing so help you achieve exceptionally well. The curriculum is exciting, with many interesting activities on offer and lots of visits, visitors and after-school clubs. The school is excellent at helping you keep safe, fit and healthy and the way that it cares for you is outstanding. Mrs Kent is a terrific headteacher and the teachers, staff and governors are a premiership team in providing a high quality of education for all of you.

There is another fantastic strength that I have not mentioned yet and that is you - the pupils! I thought your behaviour, enthusiasm and desire to do well were all outstanding. The contribution you make to the life of the school is something to be proud of. Add to this your knowledge about healthy lifestyles and just how well you all get on together and it is true to say you are excellent ambassadors for the school. Well done!

Even outstanding schools like yours can get better. I have asked Mrs Kent and the teachers to help you develop further your thinking and decision making skills and how to find different things out - all so that you can become even better and more independent learners. I know you will want to continue playing your part in the success story that is Muskham Primary School by working as hard and behaving as well as you do now. I wish you every success in the future. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead inspector