

Maun Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122667
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	327777
Inspection dates	21–22 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Anna Coyle

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tom McLafferty
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Haig
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2006
School address	Walesby Lane New Ollerton Newark NG22 9RJ
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons, and held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, governors and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at a sample of pupils' work, teachers' planning and assessment information, the school development plan and the arrangements for protecting and safeguarding children. In addition, 110 parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for increasing progress in reading and writing and for promoting good attendance
- the use of assessment to track pupils' progress
- the effectiveness of the senior management team and subject leadership.

Information about the school

The school has experienced a significant staffing turnover recently and several new members of staff were appointed in September 2008. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to other schools and very few pupils have English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptionally low for the children's age, especially in their use of language and vocabulary and their personal, social and emotional development. The school has received the Arts Mark Gold award for its creative work.

The school has Nursery provision for children from the age of three, which is managed by the governing body.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a good education for the pupils. It has some outstanding features in the way it cares for, guides and supports the pupils and in aspects of the curriculum and leadership. Excellent displays of pupils' good, colourful artwork enhance the school's welcoming environment.

Achievement is good overall and pupils make good progress from exceptionally low standards on entry. Attainment varies from year to year between average and below average. Current attainment is below average overall by Year 2. The results of the 2008 standardised tests show that, although many pupils attained Level 2c in reading, writing and mathematics, the proportion gaining the higher levels was below average. The inspection findings confirm that many pupils have weak handwriting skills and poor pencil grip. Their spelling and use of vocabulary is limited. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress, but some who are identified as higher attainers or gifted and talented do not do as well as they could. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children do not achieve all of the expected goals by the time they leave the Reception Year because they have so much ground to make up. Nevertheless, children enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe and they adopt good, healthy lifestyle choices. Their contribution to the work of the school and local community is outstanding, as shown in the excellent work of the school council and the Eco team.

Teaching and learning are good overall in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. Notable features are the excellent teamwork amongst all staff and a good use of topics to help pupils learn. The school's good curriculum has some outstanding features in its cross-curricular links and an excellent focus on promoting high standards in pupils' artwork. However, the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is not followed through into Year 1 to extend children's opportunities to attain the expected goals before proceeding with their National Curriculum studies. Assessment procedures are good: there are secure systems in place to check how well pupils are doing. However, the use of assessment is inconsistent because teachers' planning does not always match work to the needs of the higher attainers and targets are not set out simply enough to steer pupils' learning in writing. The school provides excellent pastoral guidance and support for the pupils and their families. Staff know them very well and take exceptionally good care of them in a very inclusive, friendly environment.

A key feature of the school is the excellent leadership of the headteacher who is a strong role model for her colleagues. She uses monitoring as a powerful tool to check the quality of teaching, and self-evaluation is highly accurate. She and her conscientious deputy headteacher work in harmony to support and guide colleagues effectively. The new senior management team and subject leaders are developing their roles and helping staff to focus on raising the achievement of specific groups such as gifted and talented pupils, as rightly identified in the school development plan. The governing body provides good governance and is supportive of the school. The high level of commitment to the pupils' education and strong teamwork between the staff and governors have resulted in good developments since the last inspection and ensure that there is good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate learning and raise standards in English by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use language and develop their vocabulary through more speaking, listening and role-play activities
 - implementing a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting and spelling and ensuring that pupils hold their pencils correctly
 - providing more challenge for the gifted and talented pupils
- Make better use of assessment by:
 - specifying clearly in teacher's planning how tasks will be matched to pupils' different abilities
 - simplifying the targets in pupils' writing books to help them know how well they are doing and what to do next to improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities for children to attain the early learning goals by extending the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum into Year 1.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well in Years 1 and 2, although standards are currently below average by the end of Key Stage 1. From exceptionally low attainment on entry, pupils have a lot of ground to make up. School leaders recognise rightly that standards have been inconsistent in recent years. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well in relation to their very low starting points. Pupils who have English as an additional language also make good progress. Teachers have adopted effective strategies to increase pupils' progress and these have had a good effect on learning so that pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. However, attainment in writing is still too variable, especially amongst the higher attainers and gifted and talented pupils. This is because many pupils have poor pencil grip and weak handwriting skills. Their use of vocabulary is limited and spelling is inconsistent. Pupils achieve high standards in art and design and show confident use of colour, shape and form, as seen in their work based on the paintings of Van Gough, Reubens and Renoir.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a strong understanding of right and wrong and know how to treat others courteously. They

form good relationships with each other and are tolerant. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. Levels of attendance have improved well since the last inspection and are now average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. They contribute exceptionally well to the school community by taking on responsibilities in the classroom and around the school, such as lunchtime servers and playtime 'buddies'. They participate eagerly in local community events and raise funds for charities. Through the school council and the Eco club, pupils learn about teamwork and conserving the environment; for example, they remember to switch off lights and close doors to conserve energy. They are satisfactorily prepared for their future well-being because their skills are suitably developed in numeracy and information and communication technology, although literacy skills are less secure.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	3
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching is a notable feature of the school, and this has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Excellent teamwork amongst teachers and teaching assistants, and good relationships, mean that pupils are supported very carefully. Adults are confident and knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They make learning interesting by using exciting themes and topics to create lively, imaginative lessons in which pupils make good progress, as seen in lessons about 'The Victorians'. Teachers' skilled use of questioning helps pupils to think carefully and consider their answers. Planning is generally detailed and lesson plans have clear objectives. Pupils who find it hard to learn are guided and supported well to help them learn effectively. However, planning does not take sufficient account of the need to increase pupils' basic literacy skills by matching work more closely to the needs of the higher attainers. At times, pupils sit on the carpet for too long instead of participating more actively in speaking, listening and role-play activities.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

The arrangements for assessing pupils' work are good. Effective systems are in place for tracking pupils' progress. The new subject leader for English is keen to develop and maintain a careful analysis of data so that the school can identify successes in pupils' performance, as well as quickly pinpoint any underachievement. Clear systems for checking the progress of pupils who find learning difficult means that their needs are identified accurately in their individual education plans. Marking is thorough and detailed. However, the use of targets is inconsistent across the school, particularly in pupils' writing books.

A good curriculum is at the heart of the school's provision. Excellent cross-curricular links enable pupils to learn through well thought-out topic-based approaches. Art has an extremely high profile and is an outstanding feature of the provision. This contributes well to pupils' personal development and their creativity. A good range of visits and visitors, as well as plenty of extra-curricular clubs such as French, boccia and gardening, enhances pupils' learning well. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently adapted at the beginning of Year 1 to allow pupils to achieve the early learning goals before they move on to their National Curriculum studies. The learning environment is very vibrant and the outstanding displays of pupils' work are highly colourful and stimulating.

The school's outstanding provision for care, guidance and support means that all pupils are treated as unique individuals. They are nurtured carefully to help them build trusting relationships with adults who care for them extremely well within a highly inclusive environment. Vulnerable pupils are supported and guided particularly sensitively to help them integrate with others. The leader for special educational needs maintains comprehensive records of pupils' progress and watches over their welfare conscientiously.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads the school very well, with determination and vision. With the help of the very capable deputy headteacher, she conveys a strong sense of ambition and commitment to colleagues and inspires them energetically. Her monitoring of the quality of teaching is outstanding and the information is analysed carefully to drive forward school improvement. After significant staffing changes recently, the new senior management team and subject leaders are providing sound direction for colleagues. They are working together closely to develop their roles and ensure clear direction for the future. The detailed school development plan rightly recognises the need to increase the progress of pupils who are gifted and talented. Leaders also recognise that there is still more to do to raise standards, especially in writing.

Strong links with parents, carers and external agencies mean that community cohesion is good, and pupils and families are supported very well. Family learning courses in topics such as numeracy, cookery and life education are much appreciated by parents. The school also uses its excellent links with the National Gallery very effectively to promote high standards in art and extend pupils' understanding of the wider community. Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements and there are clear procedures to ensure equality of opportunity. The governors fulfil their duties effectively: they are frequent visitors to the school and provide a good critical eye for the staff. The school gives good value for money through its effective deployment of staff and resources.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes in relation to their exceptionally low starting points. The provision is managed well by the current leader, and staff place a very high priority on ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of the children. All staff work together as an excellent team. They work very closely with parents to ensure that children's needs are identified early and that home-school links are strong. As a result, children settle in well and are given plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities to help them learn. However, there are significant weaknesses in children's standards of communication, language and literacy skills: for example, children's use of vocabulary is particularly weak and this holds them back in their language acquisition. Nevertheless, learning and development are good. The good teaching benefits children's learning effectively because activities are well planned to provide them with a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities and free-play choices. Children use numbers to learn how to count up to five and they enjoy handling a wide range of materials when gluing, cutting, sticking and painting creatively, although their fine motor skills are limited. They particularly like tidying up and putting things away at the end of each session. Assessment is used well to measure progress on a regular basis: adults work together closely to support small groups and they make careful observations of

children's learning. Children who have specific learning difficulties are guided very carefully to help them enjoy all the activities offered.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Twenty six parents wrote to the inspectors expressing their views. The majority of parents are satisfied with the education provided by the school and say that their children are happy and enjoy lessons. They particularly like the 'enthusiastic' headteacher and the 'fantastic', approachable, friendly and helpful teachers. Parents say that the staff treat pupils as individuals and respect them. They like the wide range of after-school clubs and the strong focus on environmental issues. A small number of parents expressed concern about the lack of challenge for their children and a little bullying. A few would like more information about their children's progress and the topics covered in the curriculum. Some felt that homework is too easy and that more emphasis should be given to reading practice. The inspectors agree that the school has good links with parents and carers: children and their families are supported very well.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maun Infant and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions for each of their children.

The inspection team received 110 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 198 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	14	2	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



26 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Maun Infant and Nursery School, New Ollerton, NG22 9RJ

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school recently to see all the things you do. We had a lovely time! This is what we found out.

- You like coming to school and enjoy learning.
- You get on well together and you know a lot about keeping healthy and safe.
- All of you help local people, and the school council and the Eco team try really hard to look after the school environment. This is excellent. Well done!
- Your teachers and other staff help you to achieve well, although some of you could do even better.
- The teaching is good.
- The grown-ups take excellent care of you.

Mrs Haig and the other grown-ups want the school to be even better and so we have asked them to do a few things:

- help you to make better progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing
- make sure that you have clear targets in your English books in Years 1 and 2 to help you know how well you are doing and what to do next
- extend the links between the work you do in the Reception class and your work in Year 1.

We hope you will listen carefully to your teachers and do all the things they ask you to do so that you can learn lots of things whilst you are at Maun.

Best wishes

Mrs Coyle
Lead inspector

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