

Middleton St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108002
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	337000
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Lowery HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jackie Cortney
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Graham
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
School address	Moor Flatts Road Middleton Leeds LS10 3SW
Telephone number	0113 271 7206
Fax number	0113 270 3676
Email address	grahamsm02@leedslearning.net

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. They visited 12 lessons and 11 teachers were seen, and discussions were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, the Chair of Governors and staff. They observed the school's work including reviewing policy documents, records of meetings, development plans and samples of pupils' work. The inspection took into account questionnaire responses from pupils, staff and 51 parents and carers.

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

- whether teaching is good enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress in their learning
- whether the school's thematic curriculum places a clear focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills
- the extent to which pupils with low prior attainment receive sufficient challenge.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary and principally serves the Middleton Park area of Leeds. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly higher than average.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to ensuring that pupils make more rapid progress in order to raise attainment, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

On joining the school pupils' skills and abilities are well below the levels expected for their age. Progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Here children receive particularly effective support and teaching is strong. One parent reported her daughter 'couldn't wait to get to school'. Older pupils, in particular at Key Stage 2, make slower progress. Results in the Year 6 national tests have overall been low and consistently so in mathematics and science. Evidence from the school's testing in 2010 indicates that in these subjects the downward trend has continued and that results in English indicate a slight improvement. However, standards of literacy across all groups remain weak. Pupils' work demonstrates that their writing skills, spelling, punctuation and grammar are below expected levels. This inhibits pupils' ability to move on successfully through secondary education and their future economic well-being. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall, in particular as a result of increasingly effective additional support. Teaching assistants give good support in lessons and provide effective additional support beyond the classroom for pupils whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable. Frequent changes of teachers for some groups have led to a lack of continuity in some pupils' learning and diminished their confidence in their ability to become successful learners. However, the school is conscious of this issue and is now confident it will be fully staffed for the new term. While pupils report that they enjoy school, inspectors judged their achievement to be inadequate.

The headteacher and senior staff are determined to raise standards and have a clear vision for the further development of the school. They appreciate the school's strengths and weaknesses and have recently secured improvements in a number of areas. Behaviour has improved as a result of better management in the classroom. However, pupils' engagement in their learning varies; levels of concentration are too frequently poor. On occasions where teaching is insufficiently challenging or when it fails to motivate pupils, their attention dips and progress slows. The quality of teaching is improving. As a consequence of well-planned and effective staff training, there is better monitoring of pupils' attainment, more accurate assessment of their progress and

confident use of technology to support learning. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve, in particular the most-able, are too low. Teaching is not sufficiently tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils. Staff give careful thought to planning a thematic curriculum, opportunities to enrich pupils' learning and to develop an appreciation of different cultures. However, there is insufficient priority throughout the curriculum placed on strengthening basic skills.

The quality of care, guidance and support provided to pupils is a particular strength. Pupils report they feel safe and appreciate the individual support they receive from staff. One Key Stage 2 pupil commented that the other pupils were 'always friendly' and that staff 'help you'. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are particularly well cared for, as are the social and emotional needs of all pupils. Particularly effective support is provided as children join the Nursery. Older pupils receive secure guidance as they prepare to transfer onto secondary school. Partnerships with parents and carers are strong. However, the school recognises that there is still more to do to help parents and carers to support their children in developing positive attitudes to learning.

Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage, the management of behaviour, attendance and teaching, combined with stronger systems for self-evaluation, all indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further development and improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science, so that at the end of Year 6 a greater proportion of pupils are securing at least the expected level of attainment, by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - increasing the focus on applying basic skills across the thematic curriculum
 - ensuring higher standards of presentation and handwriting, and better accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - providing more opportunities to draft, redraft and produce extended pieces of writing
 - further developing strategies to assist parents and carers to support their children's learning beyond the school.
- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching, in particular at Key Stages 1 and 2, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment data to fine-tune lessons' activities to better meet the needs of pupils of all abilities and ages
 - sharpen questioning skills in order to develop pupils' deeper understanding and provide challenge to the most-able
 - increase pupils' engagement in their learning through providing carefully planned and stimulating learning activities.

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

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils make satisfactory progress; however, there is little evidence of this improving, especially in the development of pupils' competence across a wide range of subjects in literacy and numeracy. By the end of Year 6 attainment overall continues to be significantly below average. While pupils are happy in school they are not always sufficiently engaged in their learning. Standards of literacy and numeracy skills are particularly low. Pupils demonstrate strong skills of creativity and enquiry, and most can work well in teams. The vast majority have good information and communication technology skills and these are increasingly put to good use in their thematic studies. Pupils are confident users of digital cameras to enhance their work. Pupils also have a sound knowledge of e-safety which contributes to their strong understanding of how to keep safe. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are polite, courteous and keen to take on responsibility; they are proud to welcome visitors to their school. However, too often, a minority of pupils have a poor attitude towards their learning and do not always demonstrate a pride in their work. Behaviour is strongest when lessons are stimulating and fire pupils' imaginations. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. The school has a strong relationship with the church and assemblies provide a good opportunity to reflect; pupils are thoughtful towards each other and demonstrate good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

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

The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

There is a clear focus on strengthening teaching. Whole-staff training and coaching for individual staff have removed instances of inadequate teaching. All lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory or better. The school's monitoring shows a steady improvement in the quality of teaching. Effective use is made of systems for managing behaviour and relationships between staff and pupils are good. However, in the less effective lessons staff do not make systematic use of data on prior attainment to tailor work to specifically meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Here there is insufficient challenge for the more-able, in particular questioning can be undemanding and there are missed opportunities to encourage deeper thinking. Too frequently staff do not have sufficiently high expectations for standards of literacy and presentation. Opportunities for pupils regularly to produce extended pieces of writing are limited. Teaching is strongest in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in practical lessons. Staff have worked hard to develop the thematic curriculum to broaden pupils' knowledge and encourage creative skills. Pupils have a good opportunity to develop skills in learning another language. In one particularly effective languages lesson, Year 5 pupils were challenged to communicate and play a competitive game in Spanish. They clearly relished this challenge and, as a result, made good progress. However, insufficient priority within the thematic curriculum is allocated to developing and applying literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils welcome the broad range of extra-curricular activities from golf to break dancing and cooking to netball; participation rates are high. Effective systems ensure that good support is provided to individual pupils and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There is good emphasis on developing pupils' social and emotional skills, enabling them to cooperate successfully with their peers, enjoy school and adopt a calm approach to their learning. The breakfast club is popular with pupils and provides a good start to the day. The school works well in partnership with the local authority and external agencies to provide additional support where this is required. Rigorous systems are in place to improve attendance, especially for those who have patterns of persistent absence. The school is continuing to develop its systems to track pupils' progress and identify those in need of additional support. Effective guidance is provided on transfer; older pupils spoke with confidence about their impending move onto secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior staff are highly ambitious for pupils. This is strongly reflected in the school's development plan. Clear strategies are in place to raise standards. However, these strategies' impact on raising attainment has not been sufficiently rapid. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is accurate and is carefully used to inform staff's training. However, many of the initiatives to improve teaching have not been fully embedded to secure a consistent rise in pupils' achievement. The governing body is aware of the improvements that are required and has provided the headteacher with effective support in developing the accommodation. The recent extension to the Nursery and the redesign of the small classrooms has had a significant impact on improving provision. The headteacher and governing body have a clear commitment to promoting equalities and tackling discrimination. Statutory policies are in place and their impacts are monitored. The school makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion, working closely with other local schools and community organisations. Pupils' appreciation of different cultures has been strengthened through their participation in a European funded partnership and the project on global sport. There are effective procedures to ensure safeguarding; systematic training in child protection takes place and systems to ensure site security are particularly strong. The headteacher has rightly placed a priority on working in partnership with parents and carers; responding to their requests to help to support their children's learning with the introduction of learning logs. Parents and carers report they feel encouraged to come into school. Leaders recognise they need to continue to work alongside parents and carers in assisting them to engage their children better in learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy a positive start to their schooling and join a bright and vibrant Nursery. Well-organised home visits ensure that children's needs are carefully assessed and good partnerships are established with parents and carers. This early assessment is used to plan appropriate additional support and ensure a smooth transition into school. Partnerships with parents and carers are further strengthened by the increasingly popular 'stay and play' sessions provided to help them to support their children's play and learning at home. While most children start with skills that are well below those expected for their age, they make good progress in their learning and development. Children benefit from the stimulating learning environment. There are carefully planned and well-resourced activities that support all of the six areas of learning. Children successfully learn to share, take turns and compromise and are forming friendships. They clearly show they feel safe, confidently leading and directing their own play and learning alongside skilled and effective staff. There are good opportunities to move freely between indoor and outdoor learning. Adults provide good support in the development of communication, language and literacy skills through well-structured phonics teaching. However, the majority transfer to Key Stage 1 with skills that are below national expectations. The school rightly identifies that pupils' calculating, writing, and personal, social and emotional skills remain a priority for further development. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong. Staff work well as a team, focusing sharply on the individual needs of every child in order to support children's progress and promote their welfare.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

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

While the number of questionnaires returned during the inspection was relatively small, almost all parents and carers are happy about their children's education. A few expressed concern that the school did not always deal effectively with issues of poor behaviour. During this inspection, the inspectors judged that the new systems for managing behaviour were consistently applied and instances of poor behaviour were rare.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Middleton St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 398 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	61	19	37	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	57	20	39	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	47	25	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	51	21	41	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	59	19	37	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	45	25	49	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	43	27	53	2	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	21	41	27	53	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	39	26	51	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	29	30	59	2	4	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	27	32	63	1	2	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	24	47	23	45	1	2	3	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	49	24	47	1	2	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



07 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Middleton St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Leeds, LS10 3SW

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, taking the time to show us your work and talk to us during the recent inspection. We were impressed by how proud you are of your school. It is clear you feel safe, get on well with your staff and enjoy the broad range of opportunities available. Many of you are keen to join in the various lunchtime and after-school clubs. Your teachers are good at helping you to lead healthy lives and encourage you to share your ideas for improving the school. Adults are keen to ensure that you are well looked after and happy and give you extra help or support when it is needed. Nursery children have a good start to school life. You behave well around school, but some do not always listen in class or always try their hardest with their work. Too many of you are not always careful with your writing and spelling. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 do not make as much progress as they could in their literacy and numeracy work. To make the school better, we have asked the school to do two things.

- Help you to make better progress to reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Make sure that the teaching you receive is interesting and not too easy, so that it meets your needs and helps you to work hard.

We have given your school a 'notice to improve'. This means that inspectors will visit your school again to see how you are getting on. We know your headteacher is keen for you to do well. You can all help by listening carefully to what teachers say and always looking to do your best with your writing.

We wish you well with your future studies.

Yours sincerely

Paul Lowery

Her Majesty's Inspector

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