

# Moggerhanger Lower School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109473
<b>Local Authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	337298
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	54
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jo Parish
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul K Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Nine lessons were observed or sampled, together with a small group session led by a teaching assistant. Four teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with staff, a representative of the governing body and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment data, monitoring information, teachers' planning and safeguarding documentation. Twenty five questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- Whether the school has been successful in raising achievement in Years 1 and 2 and how high standards are currently in Year 2, especially in writing.
- To what extent the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are met in the mixed-age class with pupils in Year 1.
- How rigorously leaders at all levels monitor teaching and pupils' progress and use resulting information to bring about improvement in the quality of provision.

## Information about the school

The school is much smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but numbers vary considerably between different year groups. Their needs relate mainly to autistic spectrum disorders, emotional, social and behavioural difficulties, and speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is lower than in schools nationally. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language. There are very few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and so they are taught in a mixed-age class with pupils in Year 1. In the spring and summer terms, nursery-aged children attend the school in the afternoons in preparation for starting school full time in September. The school has gained National Healthy Schools Status and Activemark. It provides a before- and after-school club which is managed by the governing body.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school with a warm and positive ethos, where pupils feel secure and get on extremely well together. Staff place considerable emphasis on pupils' personal development, which is reflected in the fact that this is a lead school for social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) in Central Bedfordshire. The school has been invited by the local authority to move onto the enhanced model of the Healthy Schools programme and pupils respond exceptionally well to efforts to promote healthy living. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, have a clear sense of right and wrong and benefit enormously from the exciting opportunities to learn about other cultures. These are provided through some outstanding enrichment opportunities brought about by excellent partnerships with organisations such as English Heritage. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and enjoyment of learning contribute significantly to their good achievement.

Children join the school with attainment that is broadly in line with expectations for their age, though this varies from year to year. The small numbers mean that the performance of individual pupils has a significant influence on the school's overall results. Standards are consistently above average by the end of Year 4, where pupils do particularly well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and more able pupils reach high standards. Pupils' learning and progress are good in the school as a whole in response to good teaching, which ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. This helps to explain some variation in standards between classes. Whereas older pupils exceed their challenging targets, standards at the end of Year 2 remain broadly average. A whole school focus on developing pupils' understanding of phonics is reflected in an improvement in writing, and attainment in Year 1 is above average. In the best lessons, assessment information is used exceptionally well to match learning to the needs of different groups of pupils and to ensure that tasks are highly challenging. Where teaching is satisfactory, this stems primarily from shortcomings in lesson planning, where learning objectives for different groups of pupils are not always clear enough. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress and standards this year are again above expectations for those approaching the end of the Reception Year. The needs of these children have been met well in the mixed-age class. Provision for the nursery-aged children who attend only in the afternoons this term is satisfactory, as planning and the organisation of these sessions tends to focus more on the needs of the older children.

The headteacher and governors provide good leadership and drive improvement well. The school is outward looking and has sustained and built on the strengths found at the last inspection. It has successfully resolved the issues for action identified at that time.

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Self-evaluation is effective and development planning detailed, indicating that the capacity for continued improvement is good. The performance management of teachers includes sharply-focused lesson observations and data are used well to identify curriculum areas where improvement is needed, though individual teachers are not held regularly to account for the progress of pupils in their class.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise standards at the end of Year 2 by:
  - ensuring that all teachers work to an agreed format when planning lessons, and consistently match learning objectives and tasks to the needs of different groups of pupils
  - rigorously monitoring lesson planning and checking that plans are being implemented fully
  - formally meeting teachers on a termly basis to evaluate the progress of pupils in their class.
  - Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
    - re-organising afternoon sessions and planning in order to give greater emphasis to the learning of nursery-aged children.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in the consistently good rate of attendance and in their eagerness to succeed. They concentrate very well in lessons, apply themselves diligently to the tasks they are given, and develop an exceptionally good sense of self-discipline. Although there is some variation between the amount of progress pupils make in different classes, achievement is good overall and all groups do equally well during their time at the school, including girls and boys and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit particularly from the small class sizes which ensure they receive a great deal of individual support and make equally good progress. An atmosphere in which exceptional behaviour is the norm does much to calm pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties so that they make good progress. More able pupils reach high standards by the end of Year 4 because work is challenging and they are very clear about what is expected of them. This was evident in an English lesson in Years 3 and 4, where all pupils made outstanding progress in understanding plot and characterisation as the teacher put them on the spot, in turn, to speak as if they were a particular character. Her very high expectations, exemplary classroom management and pupils' excellent concentration led them to reach standards that far exceeded those normally seen in pupils of their age.

The school has seen a dramatic increase in the take-up of school meals following a drive to raise pupils' awareness of the importance of healthy eating. Cooking a range of healthy meals under the direction of a professional chef increased pupils' understanding

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of nutrition. In addition, they readily take part in a range of clubs, including those run through the sports partnership with a nearby secondary school. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. The school council is actively involved in making decisions, for instance, about the playground and the decoration of classrooms, and in fundraising for charity. Pupils develop good basic skills and many positive personal qualities that stand them in good stead for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The school makes good use of assessment to identify pupils who need additional support. It has put in place a range of support sessions, for example, to develop pupils' knowledge of phonics, which are already proving effective in raising standards for younger pupils. In order to raise standards in Year 2, the school has also redeployed its very skilled teaching assistants to ensure their support is used to best effect. Whether providing in-class support or leading focused sessions with small groups of pupils, teaching assistants contribute significantly to pupils' progress.

Use of an electronic system for tracking pupils' progress means that teachers have

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

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plenty of information available to them when planning lessons and setting targets. This is used most effectively in Years 3 and 4 and it generally informs lesson planning well in the Reception and Year 1 class. This helps to explain why much of the teaching in Years 3 and 4 is outstanding and why there are some very good features to the teaching in Reception and Year 1. In both classes, teaching is not only matched precisely to the next steps in pupils' learning, it is also motivating and frequently exciting. Where teaching is satisfactory, too much emphasis is placed on the activities pupils will undertake rather than on what different members of the class are meant to learn from them. In these lessons, too little emphasis is placed on making clear to pupils what they need to do to succeed and so opportunities are missed to extend their learning.

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is matched well to pupils' needs and interests. Subjects are increasingly linked through a series of themes. Numeracy and information and communication technology skills are promoted well across the curriculum. Excellent links with other schools and organisations do much to extend learning opportunities, promoting pupils' personal development and academic achievement. For example, the school sought the collaboration of English Heritage for two ambitious projects, entitled 'Slavery' and 'A Passage to India'. Through this partnership, pupils worked with composers, musicians, Chinese dragon dancers, Islamic artists and choreographers. They designed their own costumes, cooked food from different cultures, created stories and poems and put on performances for parents and the local community.

Pupils are well known as individuals and the school pays careful attention to meeting the needs of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Links with therapists and outside agencies contribute to the good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with autistic spectrum disorders and speech and language difficulties. The school promotes good behaviour exceptionally well and ensures pupils attend regularly by quickly following up any unexpected absences and communicating clear expectations to parents. It works very closely with receiving middle schools to ensure pupils make a smooth transition when they move on at the end of Year 4. Pupils really enjoy the breakfast and after-school club because activities are varied, matched well to their interests and promote many different skills.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

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The headteacher and governors are outward looking and strategic in using links with other educational establishments to drive improvement, as seen in their current work to form a trust with a group of local schools. They have also put a great deal of energy into finding a way of securing the school's position, with numbers fluctuating from year to year. The decision to establish a pre-school on the premises shows vision and reflects careful consideration of local needs. The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Arrangements for safeguarding are good, and staff are rigorous in ensuring pupils are protected, working closely with other agencies whenever a concern arises. The school itself is a very harmonious community and it promotes community cohesion well. It is at the centre of village life and has a number of developing links with contrasting schools in the United Kingdom and South Africa. The school ensures that the needs of all groups of pupils are met well. It sets very challenging targets, tackles key priorities and checks the overall achievement of different groups.

The headteacher is very accurate in judging the quality of teaching, and those with key roles have good opportunities to develop their leadership skills. All the teaching staff are regularly involved in discussions about school improvement and the positive effect of this is evident in the good progress that pupils make. Teachers' work is not always checked frequently enough, however, to ensure that practice is consistent and the school recognises that it could do more to spread the outstanding features evident in the best lessons.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**



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

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Provision is good, ensuring that children develop into excited and happy individuals who reach above expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. Children make good progress because teaching is good with some outstanding features. In the best sessions, the teacher fills children with wonder by imaginative use of resources to bring learning to life. For instance, the close study of dandelions captivated the children and acted as a very good starting point for a writing activity, and estimating the number of daisies in the school grounds led to some impressively accurate predictions. Reception children and those of Nursery age who attend part-time for this term only are well cared for and kept safe. Afternoon sessions provide good opportunities for the younger children to develop their physical and personal, social and emotional skills and form a useful transition to joining the school full time in the following academic year. The organisation and planning of some afternoon sessions provide fewer opportunities for them to gain experiences in other areas of learning. Assessment records are accurate and the high staff to child ratio means there are plenty of opportunities for children to receive individual attention. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear awareness of existing strengths and what needs to be done to improve. An outdoor area has recently been covered to give all-weather access for the Early Years Foundation Stage: its use is developing.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Most parents and carers, who responded to the questionnaire, expressed a high level of satisfaction with school's work and are happy with the experience it provides for their children. In particular, they appreciate the fact that it keeps their children safe and helps them to have a healthy lifestyle. Parents whose children have moved from other schools are very positive in their comments about the school, having noticed a marked increase in their children's progress since joining Moggerhanger Lower School. Inspection findings support parents' mainly positive views.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moggerhanger Lower 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 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 54 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	40	15	60	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	64	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	36	15	60	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	32	16	64	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	32	16	64	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	44	13	52	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	44	14	56	0	0	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)	9	36	16	64	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	32	16	64	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	32	15	60	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	24	18	72	0	0	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	9	36	15	60	0	0	1	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	56	9	36	1	4	0	0

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moggerhanger Lower School, Bedford, MK44 3RD

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school, especially to those of you who talked to an inspector and completed questionnaires sharing your views with us. We enjoyed our time with you and now I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

You go to a good school where people get on really well together and the staff care about you a great deal. You enjoy learning and say that you are very proud of your school. You behave extremely well and make good progress. By the time you leave, you reach standards that are above average and some of you do really well. I was especially impressed with how well those of you in Years 3 and 4 did in the literacy lesson in the hall, where you pretended to be characters. You learn a great deal about how to be healthy and take part in some very exciting activities. Looking at the photographs of all the work you did in preparation for the performances in Moggerhanger Park, I could see how much fun you had and what a lot you learnt.

The headteacher and governors are working hard to make things better for you. I have asked them to:

- make sure all the teachers plan their lessons really carefully so that the work is just right for you, not too easy and not too difficult
- check regularly that all the lessons are at least good and talk to your teachers every term about how much progress you are making
- plan more activities for those of you who attend Zebra class in the afternoons before joining the school full time.

You can help by always trying very hard and making the most of all the opportunities the school provides for you.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Goodchild

Lead inspector

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