

Membury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113101
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	338095
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marilyn Burrough
Headteacher	Ruth Elenor
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2007
School address	Membury Axminster EX13 7AF
Telephone number	01404 881491
Fax number	0
Email address	admin@membury-primary.devon.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited six lessons, and a number of shorter visits were also made to classrooms to look at, for example, samples of pupils' work. Five members of staff were observed teaching. The inspector held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and pupils. He observed the school's work and looked at a wide variety of documentation including teachers' planning, the school development plan, monitoring and evaluation sheets, assessment records, safeguarding information and the reports from the school improvement partner. The responses from the pupils' and staff questionnaires were analysed, as were the responses from 12 parents and carers.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which teachers make suitable allowance for the different needs of pupils, especially the more able
- the extent to which writing skills are developed through work in other subjects
- the school's development of national and global links to enhance community cohesion
- the impact of subject leaders and governors in improving attainment and pupils' progress.

Information about the school

Membury Community Primary School is very much smaller than most primary schools. All pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. No pupil currently has a statement of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of Reception, which is integrated into one class with pupils from Years 1 and 2. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Activemark award.

The school is at present part of a management partnership with a neighbouring primary school, with the headteacher of that school acting as executive headteacher at Membury. Membury has its own headteacher who has been in post for a year.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. It has some significant strengths. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, they attend well and their attitudes and behaviour are good. They adopt healthy lifestyles and they feel safe. The school's care, guidance and support of its pupils are good, with, for example, safeguarding being a priority. Parents and carers hold very positive views about the school. One said, typically, 'Pupils at the school are confident, and, due to the size of the school, are able to be included in all activities.' When children start in Reception their knowledge and skills are usually at the expected level. Their achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and by the end of the Reception Year they reach average standards. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average overall, although attainment in writing is just below average. Their achievement is satisfactory.

In lessons relationships are good, teaching assistants are deployed well and teachers make good use of a variety of resources to make the lessons interesting. Teachers generally plan well for the varying ages and abilities of pupils in their classes. However, on occasions they do not make adequate use of assessments on how well pupils are doing to set work which challenges those who are more able. Helpful advice is given to pupils in class, although the targets provided for them, especially in literacy, do not always give them a clear enough understanding of how to improve their work. The curriculum makes a suitable contribution to pupils' progress and their personal development. For example, it helps to make the pupils very aware of the need to follow a healthy lifestyle. The school routinely reviews its curriculum, with a current emphasis being placed, for example, on the increased use of literacy and numeracy in other subjects, as these links have not been fully exploited in the past. The school has done much to promote community cohesion, both in school and locally. However, the pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity to be found within the United Kingdom and internationally is limited.

The headteacher, the executive headteacher, other staff members and governors have successfully provided a pleasant environment where the pupils can enjoy their learning. They also show a clear commitment to improving the school further, particularly recognising the need to improve the progress being made by the pupils. The quality of the school's self-evaluation is now good. For example, the weaknesses in the systems for tracking the pupils' progress were recognised and they have been successfully addressed. Current planning shows a clear awareness of the ways to take the school forward and, together with the improvements made recently, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills through the other subjects of the curriculum
 - ensuring that through their targets and comments added in their books pupils have a very clear awareness about how to improve their work.
- Make better use of assessment information to:
 - ensure that the work provided for more-able pupils is always challenging.
- Extend the provision for community cohesion by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to find out about, and communicate with, people from cultures and backgrounds different from their own, both within the United Kingdom and globally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils say they enjoy their learning, and they usually engage well in their lessons. However, on occasions, when the introductions to lessons are over-long or when pupils are given limited opportunities to contribute themselves, they engage less well and the pace of learning slows. The work seen both in lessons and in their books shows that pupils' achievement is satisfactory, with the result that their attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to others. In a phonics lesson observed in Key Stage 1, for instance, the teacher was most careful to include these pupils fully in discussions, so that they knew what was expected of them. Boys and girls perform equally well. The pupils' achievement, together with their confidence in working collaboratively with others, means that the school is making adequate provision for their future economic well-being.

Pupils clearly like school very much, and this is illustrated by their good behaviour and sensible attitudes to their work. They are polite and courteous, and they move around the school in an orderly manner. Pupils feel safe in school, and one pupil commented, 'The gates and fences keep out any strangers.' Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy. They eat healthy meals, and they benefit from a good range of physical exercise activities, including swimming in their own pool. Pupils are pleased with their contribution towards the school gaining the Activemark award. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their understanding of the multicultural society in which we live is less strong. Pupils are very keen to take on the responsibilities that the school offers them, and they recognise that they are working for, and helping, each other. Pupils are also very involved in the wider village community, through such events as Oak Apple Day and taking part in musical activities in the local church.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers organise their classrooms well, and they create a welcoming learning environment. They are well supported by their teaching assistant colleagues. They use a good range of strategies to inform the pupils, including using the interactive whiteboards, and they relate well to the pupils. However, teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to ensure that individuals are all suitably challenged in the tasks given to them, especially those who are more able. Pupils receive much help and support during lessons when they need advice. However, comments in pupils' books and the targets provided for them do not always provide them with clear enough guidance on how to improve their work. Discussions with pupils showed that they were more confident in explaining their targets for numeracy than for literacy.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about the good range of outings and clubs that enhance the curriculum. Pupils also enjoy the learning opportunities provided in the school's own small, but pleasant, grounds and in the Forest School. They enjoy participating in lessons in French. The school has begun to develop subject links to enhance the interest and relevance of the curriculum, but there is a recognition that these have not yet been fully developed, for example in relation to employing literacy and numeracy in other subjects. The good care, guidance and support provided for pupils contribute well to their enjoyment of school. Safety checks and risk assessments are routinely carried out.

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

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

Outside agencies are used effectively to support pupils when a need is identified. Effective arrangements are in place to ensure the smooth entry of pupils into the school, as well as into secondary school when they leave. Pupils are regularly reminded about the need to take care, for instance when using computers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	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?

The headteacher, supported well by the executive headteacher and other members of staff, has been successful in creating a caring and happy environment for the pupils, and good care is also taken to ensure that no form of discrimination is evident in the school. Safeguarding procedures are consistently and effectively applied. There is also clearly an ambition and drive to improve. The school's self-review has been accurate in identifying strengths and areas for development. For example, the current focus on improving standards in writing is a most suitable priority for the school. Community cohesion and pupils' understanding of cultural diversity are developing. There are strong community links both in school and locally, but, in its own evaluation, the school accepts that it has not yet enhanced this provision by significantly embracing different communities and cultures, either in the United Kingdom or around the world. However, a useful start has been made through a visit made to a school in Bristol.

Teachers demonstrate a sound understanding of the various subjects for which they are responsible, and they have supported strategies for making improvements. At present, as a result of the small number of staff in the school, they have limited opportunities to observe lessons. However, plans are firmly in hand for this to happen more frequently as different subjects become priorities for review. Governors are very supportive of the school, and they are fully involved, for example, in producing the school development plan and monitoring its implementation. They are currently working to further develop their understanding of school data, especially that relating to the performance of the pupils, so that they can more effectively carry out their role as a 'critical friend'. There are strong working relationships with parents and carers, with other schools in the locality and with the local 'Mothers and Toddlers' group. The link with the latter group successfully eases the transition of children when they join the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of the very small numbers of children present, their knowledge and skills when they join Reception vary significantly from year to year. However, these are usually at the expected level. Through the year children make satisfactory progress and, by the end, attainment is broadly average. The children are very happy in school; they enjoy themselves and they particularly value the company of the older children in the class. Their behaviour is good and they are keen to take part in activities. The staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment, and the children also benefit from the good links that are established with both parents and carers and the Mothers and Toddlers' group. Adults provide the children with a good balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for them to choose for themselves. The children tackle their work with enthusiasm, although occasionally time is lost while they choose their own tasks, which slows their learning. Staff know the children well, and the frequent observations and assessment of their progress usually result in fresh, well-matched tasks. However, sometimes the work presented is rather difficult for them, and adult support is required before the task can be completed.

A suitable range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area being used in all aspects of the curriculum, whenever possible. Although this has improved since the previous inspection, the area is small, and in particular has no covered area, which limits its use in inclement weather. However, staff work hard to ensure that this does not adversely affect learning. The leader uses her enthusiasm well in making provision for the different ages and needs of the children in the class, and other adults support her particularly well in providing for their various pastoral needs.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers were positive about the school's provision, especially in terms of the care the school takes of their children. Comments such as, 'My child has only recently started at Membury, but I am delighted at how the staff and other children have helped her to settle in so well' and, 'Parents are encouraged to become involved in school activities', confirm their view. No significant concerns were raised.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Membury Community 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 inspector received 12 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 20 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	58	5	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	7	58	5	42	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	4	33	8	67	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	2	17	8	67	1	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	6	50	6	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	50	6	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	75	3	25	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)	2	17	9	75	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	3	25	9	75	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	17	8	67	2	17	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	2	17	10	83	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	4	33	7	58	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	4	33	8	67	0	0	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). 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.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Membury Community Primary School, Membury, EX13 7AF

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. I enjoyed my visit and it was a pleasure talking to you. I enjoyed joining you in lessons as well as in assembly. I am writing to tell you what I found out about the school, what I think is good, and what I think could be made better. Overall, you are in a satisfactory school, where you are making steady progress with your work. The headteacher and other staff know what they need to do to make the school better.

These things are some of the strengths of the school.

- Teachers provide you with lessons and other activities which you enjoy.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.
- You know how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take good care of you.
- Your parents are pleased with the school.

These are things the school has been asked to improve.

- Make sure you reach higher standards in writing.
- Make sure that you all get work in lessons that suits you and is hard enough for you.
- Give you greater opportunities to become more aware of people from communities and cultures different from your own.

You can help too ' for example by telling your teacher if you think the work is too easy for you.

I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Martin James

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.