

Mickleton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115533
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338599
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Welford
Headteacher	Sally Geary
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents who were present at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work and looked at its improvement plan, information on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 47 parents and 47 pupils.

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

- the progress that pupils make in Key Stage 2
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals
- how well teachers inform pupils about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in bringing about improvements in the outcomes for all pupils.

Information about the school

Compared to other primary schools, Mickleton is a small school. A new head teacher was appointed in January 2009. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than typically found. Privately managed childcare provision occupies premises on the school site, and this is subject to a separate inspection report.

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

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Although attainment and progress slipped in recent years, standards have started to rise since the appointment of the new headteacher. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress as they pass through the school. The headteacher, with governors and other senior staff, is committed to moving the school forward more rapidly, building on a number of strengths. The key ones are:

- the good start which children receive in the Reception class
- the positive relationships formed between staff and pupils
- the good behaviour and enjoyment of pupils, promoted by a shared set of values based on care and consideration throughout the school
- a welcoming ethos where pupils are happy and confident and have positive attitudes towards their learning and each other
- a well-kept, attractive environment inside and out which stimulates curiosity
- a good enrichment and extra-curricular programme which promotes creativity and good aspects of personal development
- the strong leadership of the headteacher, which is leading to better outcomes for pupils.

Children get off to a flying start in the Reception class and their good progress continues into Key Stage 1. However, in Key Stage 2, their progress slows and is satisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 6 dipped to below average in 2008 but improved in 2009. Inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory overall with some lessons that are good. It is better at Key Stage 1, but more variable at Key Stage 2. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, teachers do not match work well enough to the needs of individual pupils, nor do they consistently use probing questions to make pupils think. The headteacher has begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion, and has brought a 'breath of fresh air' to the school, as one colleague commented. Effective measures have helped to raise standards and have improved behaviour and attendance.

The headteacher has ensured that all staff have a thorough understanding of how well the school is doing and what needs to be improved. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate. This, together with recent improvements, shows the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. However, the roles and responsibilities of middle managers have not yet been developed well enough for them to be accountable for standards, progress and care in their respective areas.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress that pupils make through Key Stage 2 from

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satisfactory to good by:

- making sure that at the end of each lesson pupils have a clear idea of what they have learnt
- giving detailed feedback to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that there is a sharper match of work to pupils' different abilities
 - sharing learning objectives with pupils so that they know how to be successful
 - using more probing questions to challenge pupils' understanding.
- Ensure that middle managers become accountable for standards and progress in their respective areas by:
 - ensuring that they carry out regular monitoring to inform and update their action plans
 - tracking progress in their subjects and identifying potential underachievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of satisfactory progress, with pupils working at levels expected for their age. Improvement in 2009 is evident from the significant increase in those attaining the higher level 5 in test results. Progress in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 was seen to be good for all groups of pupils, especially in writing and mathematics, because teachers have high expectations and have rightly focused on developing pupils' basic skills. Progress slows in Years 3 to 6 as the quality of teaching is more variable amongst some groups and, until recently, the school had poorly developed systems in place to check pupils' progress. Detailed plans are in place to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they make similar progress to their classmates.

In discussions, pupils are very clear about how to stay safe and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They relish being active and show this through their eager participation in activities before school, at break times and in clubs. Although pupils from all backgrounds work and play together well, their awareness of different ways of life in other communities is not so well developed. The school has worked with parents and the community to reduce the number of days lost from school. In the last year these steps have brought a significant improvement in attendance which is now above average. Punctuality has improved. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills. However, while improving, pupils' average attainment in key skills in English and mathematics means that, at present, they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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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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	3
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?

The quality of teaching and learning in all lessons seen was at least satisfactory, and in just over a half it was good or better. Teachers enjoy very warm relationships with pupils and manage behaviour very positively. Where teaching is good, the pace of learning is vigorous, work is well planned to meet the different needs within the class and teaching assistants are well deployed to support this. In a particularly effective numeracy lesson in Key Stage 2, all groups of pupils made good progress because of the teacher's very high expectations and her searching questions which prompted all to think. However, weaknesses in some teaching, particularly in parts of Key Stage 2, are restricting pupils' progress. Teachers do not consistently use their good subject knowledge to direct questions at pupils to probe and challenge their understanding. The objectives of the lesson are not always shared well to ensure that pupils understand what they are meant to be learning. At times there is insufficient planning for the different ability groups within the class. Expectations for some pupils are not matched well enough to their ability level, and so their progress slows.

Assessment procedures to check pupils' progress have improved recently. Consequently, teachers are now more aware of the progress different groups of pupils are making, including those who need to make up lost ground. However, some pupils are still unclear of the precise steps they need to take to make the improvements needed to reach their targets. Pupils are at an early stage of evaluating their own progress towards these targets.

The curriculum enables pupils to make steady progress in developing basic skills. The school is developing themed and topic approaches at Key Stage 2 which are

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beginning to increase the variety and diversity of the curriculum and so offer more challenge, especially to more able pupils, to accelerate progress in all subjects. However, the good enrichment opportunities planned in the curriculum contribute well to the development of creativity and individuality through art, sport and music. A wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities do much to reinforce pupils' enjoyment and confidence.

Pupils are well supported as the staff know each learner as an individual and are responsive to personal needs. Parents view this aspect of the school's work very positively. The school's strong emphasis on promoting pupils' emotional well-being results in them feeling safe, secure and well looked after. In the words of Year 5 and 6 pupils, 'We are a big team... one happy family who enjoy being together.'

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?

Since her appointment in January 2009, the effective headteacher has embarked on a mission to take the school from satisfactory to good by setting a precise path for improvement. This is based on accurate and constructive self-evaluation and embedding initiatives which have begun to make a positive difference to pupils' achievement and standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. The headteacher works tenaciously to improve all pupils' educational opportunities and communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff. In this way, the school promotes equality for all pupils.

Middle leaders are eager to take real accountability for their respective areas but have too little responsibility for monitoring progress and the quality of teaching and learning, which is holding back improvements. The governing body gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and brings a wealth of relevant experience to its deliberations. Suitable safeguarding procedures are in place. Governors are growing into the role of critical friend by asking the searching questions necessary to hold the school sufficiently to account. All requirements regarding the safety and protection of children were fully in place at the time of the inspection. Pupils are actively involved in the local community and are encouraged to some extent to become involved in the wider community. They have links with others from different ethnic groups and cultures such as a primary school in Kenya. However, this aspect of the school's work is not yet well developed and so community cohesion is no more than satisfactory.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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	3
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	3
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

Well-planned induction and good links with pre-school settings and parents help children to settle well. Parents are secure in the knowledge that the attention given to their children's welfare is given a very high priority and they are cared for outstandingly well. Outstanding leadership is leading to highly effective teamwork which focuses well on meeting the children's needs through thorough home visits before they begin school. This ensures that children's needs are identified quickly and support targeted so that they start to make progress straight away. Leaders are fully aware of the strengths and areas they wish to develop. They have created a vibrant, stimulating learning situation both indoors and outside. Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are close to those expected of their age. The good progress they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that they begin Year 1 working securely within the early learning goals, and exceed them in communication and mathematical development. Occasionally opportunities are missed to develop children's mathematical skills in the outdoor area.

Children are helped to learn and develop well because:

- there is a very good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities
- all activities are very well planned, open-ended, exciting and varied
- good planning leads to purposeful play and exploration both in and outdoors, such as investigating 'ooey goey' foam following a rhyming story
- adults question children well, leading to them being very keen to contribute
- relationships between adults and children are strong, warm and productive.

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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	1

Views of parents and carers

The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of those parents who returned the questionnaire. Almost all respondents felt that the school keeps pupils safe and helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A number of individual comments reflected the good care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors agree with these views and also with concerns of a minority who felt their children were not making fast enough progress in Key Stage 2. A small minority of parents speak of concerns regarding a few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. However, inspectors found pupils' behaviour to be good overall and exemplary in most lessons.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mickleton 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 86 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	65	15	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	63	16	35	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	48	21	46	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	50	19	41	4	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	48	24	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	54	19	41	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	46	25	54	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)	21	46	22	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	41	26	55	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	35	25	54	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	33	23	50	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	48	19	41	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	54	20	43	1	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



2 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mickleton Primary School, Chipping Campden GL55 6SJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us on our recent visit to your school. We judged that your school is satisfactory. This means that we found good things in the school but also some things that need improving. You make satisfactory progress in your work and reach average standards by the time you leave.

These are the good things that we found out about your school.

- All staff care for you well and encourage you to do your best. As a result, you feel safe in school and you feel that there is someone to help you if you have concerns.
- Your behaviour is good. You learn and play together well.
- You have learnt a great deal about how to be healthy and it was good to see you putting it in to practice at break and lunchtimes.
- Your school and its grounds are lively and stimulating places, which help you in your learning.
- You told us how you enjoy lessons where you are active and learning with others and we saw many of you doing this.

We have asked the school to do the following to make it even better for you.

- Make sure that far more of you make faster progress as you move through Years 3 to 6 by making sure that you all know just the right things to do to reach your targets.
- Ensure that all of your lessons are as good as the best by making sure that when teachers plan work for you, it is not too easy nor too hard, but just right for you.
- Make sure that teachers that are responsible for subjects, check on how well you are taught and how well you are doing.

Mrs Geary, the staff and the governors want the school to continue to improve. You can help too by making sure you work hard all the time and always do your best.

Yours faithfully

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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