

Maytree Nursery and Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116093
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	338722
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Jane Neech

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joyce England
Headteacher	Lyn Hawkins
Date of previous school inspection	3 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, observed a parents' Stay and Play session and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books and teachers' planning. The team examined safeguarding policies and procedures, school documentation, including assessment and tracking data, pupil case studies and questionnaires returned by staff and parents and carers.

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

- the achievement of pupils to determine whether they are making as much progress as they can
- the impact of assessment and marking on raising standards
- whether the curriculum is meeting the needs of pupils and raising achievement
- statutory safeguarding procedures.

Information about the school

This is an average size school situated in the centre of Southampton. Almost all of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the majority are at early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national figure.

The school admits up to 80 part-time children into the Nursery class at the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage; 62 have been admitted in the autumn term, the remainder will join in the spring term. From September 2009 the school has expanded to accommodate three Reception classes. The majority of children from the Nursery go on to join one of the Reception classes. The local authority plans to expand the school further by providing temporary buildings on the school site. Pupils are taught in single-age classes. The deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher since the beginning of the academic year. The school has the National Healthy Schools status.

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

Main findings

At the heart of this good school is the equality of opportunity for every child, ensuring they learn and develop with confidence in a warm and welcoming environment. The school is quite rightly proud of its strengths, such as the good progress pupils make from their particularly low starting points in learning English when they enter the Nursery. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. This comment is typical of many: 'Over the years the school has become a place to be proud of.'

The school's overall performance has improved since the last inspection. A particular strength is the standards reached by pupils in writing which, given their well below average starting points, represents in some cases outstanding progress. The excellent partnerships with outside agencies are a major strength of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants constantly track pupils' welfare to ensure they are happy and safe. A number of staff are bilingual and this supports pupils and families well.

A warm sense of community and partnership working permeates all areas of the school's work. During the inspection children and parents entering the Reception classes at the start of the school day were serenaded by a visiting member of staff from the music service playing the guitar. This is one example of the positive links between home and school. The impressive way the school knows its community well is helping to make the school even better. This is reflected in the school's work towards the 'Investors in Families' Award.

Another of the school's strengths is the variety in the curriculum offered to pupils. There is much opportunity for music and cultural work, such as assemblies related to Divali and Eid ul Fitr, which were enjoyed by pupils and parents. Parents appreciate the invitation to attend school presentations and this is an example of how the school is reaching out to families. Although there are strengths in the curriculum, there are weaknesses in planning and content, so that time is not always used as productively as possible. For example in 'choosing time', the activities do not always meet the learning needs of pupils. Too much time is spent on tasks that are not well planned enough to help pupils make the progress they are capable of.

Since the last inspection the attendance of pupils has improved and is now satisfactory. A particular strength is how pupils register themselves every day on the class interactive whiteboard. However, low attendance for some pupils remains a barrier to their progress, particularly for those whose families take extended holidays of four weeks or more.

School self-evaluation is good and the newly established leadership team acknowledges

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that while attendance has improved, this remains an area under constant scrutiny. Governors are hugely supportive of the school and monitor its performance well. They are aware of the issues of extended periods of absence for some pupils and have plans in place to prioritise improving attendance further. The way leaders and managers transfer their drive and ambition into action has been a contributory factor in maintaining the school's good overall performance. There are comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress, leading to clear information where a pupil is at risk of falling behind. The school has plans to develop assessment further in order to raise standards. The improvements brought about in writing, the development of pupils' confidence, the progress they make and the increased opportunities to involve families demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise standards by using sharply focused assessment to identify and rectify slower progress, so that the outstanding progress made by some pupils can be matched by a greater number.
- Review curriculum planning to ensure time is well used and activities are matched to the needs of pupils so that they achieve as well as they can.

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

Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to contribute in lessons because teachers praise their efforts and support those with less well developed skills in acquiring English. A good example of this was in a Year 2 lesson observed during inspection, where the teacher spoke in French and English to a pupil at the early stages of learning English. As a result the pupil was so keen to contribute that the teacher had to remind her to wait her turn! Many parents report how impressed they are with their children's progress particularly in their confidence and in writing. As one parent put it, they are 'writing well and moreover I see increasing confidence'. A scrutiny of work during the inspection showed older pupils writing poetry of a high quality. A Year 2 pupil had written, 'fireworks sparkling like dandelions in the sky'.

These good outcomes are reflected in the improving standards that have been attained by pupils in their national assessments over the past few years. For the majority of pupils the focus on developing language skills has led to improvements in standards in writing. Test results at the end of Year 2 in 2009 show pupils attained standards which were in line with national averages in writing and mathematics. The school exceeded targets set in writing and reading. While targets in mathematics were not achieved for all pupils, higher attaining pupils performed in line with national expectations. The standards attained by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were well below national expectations overall. However, these pupils made good, and in some cases outstanding, progress from exceptionally low starting points.

The school is a calm and orderly community where relationships are effective. Older pupils willingly accept responsibility as playground helpers. The school council helps to

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develop the role of the 'Playground Friends', leading to harmonious playtimes. Pupils respond to worldwide issues through contributions to the wider community, such as a collection for the floods in Bangladesh. Nearer home, pupils enjoy Red Nose Day and collect for the local 'Make a Wish' Foundation. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. This is reflected by responses of 'No way' to questions asked during inspection about eating chocolates! The youngest children can talk about why milk is important and how food helps you grow. Pupils take part in sporting clubs, and have a good awareness of the need for exercise. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know that adults will help them if they have worries. The school has identified that pupils have a limited understanding of how to keep themselves safe outside school, such as when crossing the roads. Through the curriculum there are plans in place to address this.

The good social and moral development of pupils means they know the difference between right and wrong and have a clear understanding of how their actions lead to consequences, for example collecting rewards for good behaviour. Any incidents of silly behaviour are dealt with quickly by staff. Bullying and racist incidents are rare. Pupils go on to the next stage of their education with skills in information and communication technology which are satisfactory, as are their developing skills in numeracy and literacy. The taking of extended family holidays and lack of daily punctuality are barriers to some pupils making as much progress as they can in their learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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.

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<p>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</p> <p>Taking into account: Pupils' attendance¹</p>	<p>3</p> <hr/> <p>3</p>
<p>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</p>	<p>2</p>

How effective is the provision?

How effective is the provision?

The evidence of good teaching skills can be found in both key stages and is leading to improvements in pupils' work. Many of the lessons seen during inspection were lively and imaginative and where lessons were outstanding this resulted in high engagement from pupils. Well-planned lessons, moving at a brisk pace, such as in a Year 2 mathematics lesson observed, ensure pupils make very good progress. During this lesson 'humber bag' resources supported learning well and higher achieving pupils were quickly moved on to more complex problems. Teachers have a good understanding of providing challenging opportunities for pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Marking of pupils' work in books is of high quality, and relates to targets and the learning objectives. However, in some lessons teachers do not assess where pupils are and do not provide enough opportunities for them to develop their thinking skills. As a result, a few pupils do not behave as well as they could or make the progress expected of them.

A particular strength is the skilled care and support from teaching assistants in small group work where pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in their listening and attention skills. This support starts at the school gate at the beginning of the day by meeting and greeting parents and children so that any problems can be sorted out before the day starts.

The good curriculum is reflected in the way in which many areas of learning begin from the pupils' experience, such as reflection on different religious celebrations. The cultural content of the curriculum is carried through into clubs and activities such as Bhangra dancing during break-times. Visitors to school, such as drumming teachers, further add to pupils' confidence and enjoyment. During inspection a Year 1 class was observed learning different rhythms on large drums. The teacher and teaching assistant encouraged pupils to join in with repeating 'spider, spider' in time to the beat. Not only did this help pupils develop a steady beat, but this activity also gave them confidence in speaking skills, and as a result everyone made good progress. Visits out of school, such as a visit to Bournemouth, support pupils' understanding of environments away from their immediate surroundings. Generally, the curriculum is well planned but there are occasions during the week which lack the rigour of focused activities so that teaching assistants are unsure of their purpose and pupils make limited progress.

The school uses its cultural diversity to maximum effect, and pupils' good cultural and spiritual development was observed during inspection in the respect they showed for different religious festivals and celebrations. Pupils celebrating Eid Ul Adha talked

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excitedly to their friends about the forthcoming visit to the mosque and celebrations.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher provides a strong educational direction for the school. Work with a range of other agencies and partners is seamless and makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' well-being. Parents and carers are particularly supportive of the school because of the hard work put in place in knowing the needs of the community. The school takes into consideration the views of parents and changes plans if necessary; for example, changing a planned future visit to the New Forest to a picnic area nearer the school to encourage parents to join the excursion. There are systems in place for self-evaluation, leading to actions for improvement such as focusing on attendance. However, the school recognises that further measures are required to ensure that every pupil has equality of opportunity and no pupil falls behind because of long periods of absence. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of community cohesion related to communities within the United Kingdom and the school has plans in place to partner with schools in rural areas. The safeguarding procedures meet national requirements. However, during 'choosing time', adult supervision is not always as appropriate as in structured activities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of education in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children join the Nursery with skills well below levels typically seen for their age. Many children are at a very early stage in acquiring language skills in their first language and English as an additional language. As a result of good induction, they settle quickly and show a good level of progress in their developing skills. This progress continues through the Reception class. Skilled support from adults means children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good, and in some cases exceptional, progress from very low starting points. The children develop independence through a range of activities, which include effective opportunities to make their own choices. The balance of teacher-led and independent activities encourages children to be active in their learning. Occasionally, however, too long is spent on activities which require children to sit for a prolonged period and they become restless. Good relationships with adults and regular assessments through observations track children's progress. Leaders new in post have a secure understanding of improvements required, such as more opportunities for learning arising from the children's interests.

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

From the returned questionnaires, it is clear that the school enjoys the overwhelming support and confidence of the parental community. Responses to each of the questions asked were very positive and a few parents and carers added comments. A very few noted concerns about supervision in the playground and asked for more one-to-one sessions with parent, child and teacher to talk about progress. The inspectors found that adult supervision was carefully managed during playtimes and that the school was actively encouraging parents and carers to come into school to see how their child was

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doing, such as the 'Stay and Play' sessions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maytree Nursery and Infants' 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 251 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	67	15	31	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	65	16	33	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	55	21	43	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	45	25	51	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	51	22	45	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	57	20	41	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	55	21	43	1	2	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	43	25	51	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	41	27	55	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	55	20	41	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	57	26	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	57	24	49	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	63	16	33	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.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maytree Nursery and Infants' School, Southampton SO14 0DY

Thank you for welcoming my team to your school. We enjoyed meeting you, walking around the school and spending time in lessons. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to school and many of you enjoy the clubs provided for you.

The highlights of our visit are:

- the way in which the school helps you to be confident and get on with each other well
- the progress you make in your learning
- how the adults in school help you to learn English
- the way the school helps your parents and carers to know what you are learning in school
- how your headteacher and all the staff work hard to make your school 'even better'.

You told us that you feel safe in school. We know you try hard and behave well. Just occasionally a few of you are silly in lessons and we believe this is because your work does not always challenge you to do your best. We have asked the adults to always plan tasks that will encourage you to think for yourselves. We have also asked teachers to keep a close eye on how well you are doing with your work so that you achieve as well as you can.

We know that some of you are away from school for long holidays and we would like to see you in school as much as possible so that you do not fall behind in your work. Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech

Lead Inspector

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