

Queen Mary Avenue Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117733
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339065
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr K Young
Headteacher	Mrs M Williams
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2006
School address	Queen Mary Avenue Cleethorpes Lincolnshire DN35 7SY
Telephone number	01472 230230
Fax number	01472 230230
Email address	headteacher@qma.tlfe.org

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 20 lessons, observed all of the teachers who were teaching during the inspection, observed an assembly and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and spoke to some parents. They observed the work of the school, looked at pupils' records and assessment results and scrutinised pupils' work. Fifty parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- attainment and progress across the school, particularly for boys and minority ethnic pupils
- the impact of the work to address relative weaknesses in boys' reading and writing
- the accuracy of the identification and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how the teaching and the curriculum meet the needs of all pupils
- how leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are driving improvement.

Information about the school

This infant school is larger than average. Almost all the pupils are White British with a small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds, including a very small number who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average, as is the proportion having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is delivered in a Nursery and a Reception area which includes three class bases.

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

Queen Mary Avenue Infant School provides a good quality of education. The caring and nurturing ethos ensures that pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Under the successful leadership of the headteacher, the school has made steady improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment has improved and their progress is good, as is the extent to which they adopt healthy lifestyles, stay safe and contribute to the school and community. From starting points that are below what is typical, pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave Year 2. While this represents good progress overall, the rate of progress is uneven as pupils move through the school, particularly for some boys in reading and writing.

Although the quality of teaching is good overall, it varies and the use of assessment to support learning is satisfactory. Teaching is most effective where planned activities are carefully matched to the needs of individuals and groups. However, in some lessons assessment information is not used sufficiently well to ensure that tasks are finely tailored to meet the full range of all ability needs. Consequently, the pace of learning slows, particularly for some boys who lose interest when tasks are not just at the right level or the teacher's explanations are too long. The good curriculum is broad and balanced with a clear focus on developing reading, writing and mathematics. Recent changes to make more links between subjects are helping to ensure that pupils enjoy their learning. However, some opportunities are missed to provide materials that interest boys and there is scope to develop and practise reading and writing skills in a wider range of subjects.

The good outcomes for pupils reflect the strengths in leadership and management and demonstrate that the school provides good value for money. The improvements in attainment and the positive impact of the daily teaching of letters and sounds reflect the school's good capacity to improve further. Senior leaders know the strengths and relative weaknesses well and plans for improvement are good. However, the procedures for checking and evaluating improvements do not focus sharply enough on the impact on pupils' learning. For example, although the quality of teaching is evaluated soundly, observations do not focus on the impact of recent whole-school developments such as planning for all ability levels. Relationships and engagement with parents are good overall and have contributed to the school's work to improve rates of attendance. Although there have been some successes in reducing absence, attendance remains low. Strong partnerships with the local community are benefiting pupils; of particular note are the improved links with the partner junior school, which are helping to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve attainment and progress of boys in reading and writing by:
 - providing more activities and reading materials to better engage boys in reading and writing
 - providing more opportunities for all pupils to write and to encourage writing for different purposes
 - developing more opportunities for all pupils to use reading and writing skills in a wider range of subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - using assessment information more consistently to plan activities to meet the full range of pupils' needs
 - ensuring that all adults have a clear role in every lesson.
- Build on the existing good relationships with parents and carers to increase their involvement in their pupils' education and to improve attendance by:
 - improving annual reports to more systematically report attendance issues or successes
 - making parents aware of the link between attendance and the progress made by pupils.
- Improve the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the impact of improvements across the school by:
 - ensuring that lesson observations have a clear focus on intended improvements or areas of the school improvement plan
 - developing the skills of subject leaders in observing and evaluating teaching.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils learn well in most lessons and their progress over time is good overall. Overall, children start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are below and sometimes well below what is typical for their age. Improvements since the last inspection mean that pupils now leave Year 2 with standards that are broadly average. This represents good progress. However, there is some variability between girls and boys. Girls do particularly well in reading and writing, while the attainment of boys in these areas remains a relative weakness. This is partly because the progress of some boys slows and for some their progress stalls. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and those from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language make good progress overall.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They know the difference between right and wrong and understand the consequences of their actions. Pupils have a positive view of other cultures and those of different faiths and backgrounds. Most behave well and get on well with one another; they cooperate in

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class and in their play which is helping to develop their social skills well. Pupils are sensitive to each other's feelings and are kind and helpful. They say that they feel safe and happy. Their good understanding of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles is reflected in the enthusiasm with which they participate in physical activities, such as the daily 'wake-up and shake-up' sessions. Pupils know what foods are good for them and say they enjoy their daily piece of fruit, along with milk or water. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and discuss safety-related topics, such as the safe storage of medicines. They feel that any issues they raise will be dealt with effectively by the teachers. Some pupils have a good knowledge of environmental issues, such as recycling paper and keeping areas free from litter. Although pupils' attendance is low, their average academic skills and their good personal skills mean that they are appropriately placed to be successful at their next school.

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	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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good overall but with some variation, and some lessons are only satisfactory in their impact on learning and pupils' progress. Good relationships

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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ensure that classrooms are calm and well ordered. Pupils settle to their lessons quickly, enjoy lessons and clearly want to learn. Teachers use their good subject knowledge and a range of questioning skills to challenge and engage pupils. Planning is detailed but sometimes there are too many objectives and this makes the learning intentions less clear to some pupils. Some lessons start with an overly long whole-class session that does not take into account the different levels that pupils are capable of working at. In these lessons, not enough time is left for pupils to work independently on their tasks. Although teaching assistants are mostly used well to help those pupils who need extra help, there are times, particularly during whole- class times, when they are less effective.

The good curriculum provides well for most pupils and contributes to their achievement and progress. Recent developments have led to more subjects taught through topics and careful mapping of these ensures progression and continuity. There is a good balance between academic, physical and creative development. However, opportunities to write for real purposes are not always exploited. The emphasis on personal development is highly effective and pupils are taught how to respect and value each other. The daily, small-group teaching of letters and sounds is proving to be successful and reading skills are steadily improving. Pupils enjoy a wide range of interesting activities; older pupils say they enjoy their French lessons, the after-school clubs and visits out of school. The way that the curriculum is planned is continuing to develop and is moving towards a more creative skills-based approach. As yet, there are no procedures in place to record which skills have been gained.

This is a caring school and the staff are keen to do their best for the pupils. Parents and pupils appreciate the good levels of care, typified by one child's comment: 'I am happy and safe, if I have a problem there are lots of grown-ups to help me.' There are striking examples of effective support and guidance provided for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and their parents. Pupils with additional needs are identified appropriately and timely strategies put in place to meet them. Induction arrangements are good and parents of pupils attending the 'Lift-Off' group state that this is helping to make sure that these pupils are settled quickly and are looking forward to attending the Nursery.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
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?

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The headteacher is highly regarded by parents and leads by example. Senior leaders know the school's strengths and relative weaknesses well and school improvement planning has identified actions to bring about further improvement. Although there are some good examples of effective middle leadership, their roles and skills at checking on the effectiveness of planned improvements across the school are underdeveloped, particularly in observing lessons. The governors are fully committed to supporting the work of the school and are keen for pupils to achieve the best that they can. They generally know the school's strengths and weaknesses, though there is scope for them to develop their role in challenging the work of the school. Good relationships are fostered with parents and carers, some of whom spoke highly of the opportunities they have had to observe their pupils learning about letters and sounds. However, opportunities are missed to make parents and carers aware of the link between pupils' attendance rates and their attainment and progress, for example in pupils' annual reports.

There are many successful partnerships that are benefiting pupils, for example, the school's work with other schools and the health service. All appropriate checks are carried out on staff before they take up appointment and a single central record is now in place. Good procedures are followed and well documented for all educational visits. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment and assessments are in place to minimise risks. The school's policies and procedures for ensuring equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are good. Consequently, all pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups are fully included in the life of the school, feel safe and generally make good progress. The school leadership knows the community well and have begun to put strategies into place to promote community cohesion, such as developing a link with a school in Kenya. The extent to which this work has been formally evaluated is at an early stage.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2
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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Nursery and Reception classes and get off to a good start to their education. They settle well because of the close links with parents and the good care and support they receive from staff. The quality of provision is good overall but there is some variation. This relates to the fact that there have been some improvements to the organisation of learning in the Reception area of the school but there remains further work to be done, such as further developing opportunities for early writing. Children now have many opportunities to choose from a range of interesting activities to learn through play and good use is made of both indoor and outdoor areas, which the children access daily. They are well supported by effective questioning and challenge by adults. However, occasionally, not all teachers are deployed for maximum benefit and some opportunities to develop children's basic skills, particularly writing, are missed. Children respond well to expectations and routines in order to develop their independence as they select activities and persevere at tasks for considerable periods. Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have ensured that improvements have been made and all welfare requirements are met. The introduction of regular teaching about letters and sounds, through singing, and playing rhyming and matching games, are helping to develop children's early reading skills.

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

A minority of families responded to the parental questionnaires and a small number of these contained additional comments. Parents and carers who were collecting and bringing pupils to school spoke to inspectors during the inspection. A large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires are positive about the school. They regard the school as caring and supportive and the staff as approachable. Comments such as, 'This is a lovely school', and, 'My child seems to learn something new each day', reflect the high levels of satisfaction that parents expressed about the school. A small number of parents and carers shared with inspectors their concerns that

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the playground is also used as a car park. The inspection concluded that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage this and keep pupils safe. Inspectors shared the concerns of parents and carers with governors and with the local authority representative.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Queen Mary Avenue Infant 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 310 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	74	11	22	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	66	17	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	50	24	48	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	64	18	36	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	70	15	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	54	20	40	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	58	21	42	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)	24	48	20	40	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	58	20	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	54	22	44	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	50	22	44	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	64	16	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	82	8	16	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.



28 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Queen Mary Avenue Infant School, Cleethorpes, DN35 7SY

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently, and for telling us all about your school. You go to a good school. Your behaviour is good and you take good care of each other. You make good progress during your time there because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. You know that eating fruit and vegetables are good for you and you all seem to enjoy 'Wake-up and Shake-Up'. You told us that you feel safe in school and know who to go to if things go wrong. The grown-ups in charge of the school manage it well and they work well with your parents and carers to ensure that you enjoy school. The things I have agreed with your headteacher that can make things better for you are for the staff to:

- help some of the boys make better progress in their reading and writing
- use their knowledge of how well you are doing to plan lessons so that everyone can make really good progress
- build on the good relationships with your parents and carers to help them to improve your attendance
- check that all of the improvements are helping you to make better progress.

I am sure that you would like to play your part too by attending school regularly. You can also help your teachers by letting them know if you find the work too easy or too hard.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali

Her Majesty's Inspector

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