

# Little Melton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120827
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	380116
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Williams

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	88
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Linford (Acting)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joan Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Little Melton NR9 3AD
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	10–11 October 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 10 lessons, during which five teachers and a lesson led by a teaching assistant were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and a member of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its assessment records, improvement plans, safeguarding documents and those relating to health, safety and attendance. In addition, 61 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were considered, together with those submitted by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What are the reasons for the dip in mathematics results in 2011 and is this reflected in the work of current pupils?
- To what extent are more-able pupils challenged, particularly in Key Stage 1?
- How well do staff meet the challenge of planning for pupils in mixed-aged classes?

## Information about the school

Most of the pupils at this small primary school are from White British backgrounds and very few are learning to speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in receipt of a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary school education is much higher than usual, while the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than usual. The school admitted pupils into Year 6 for the first time in September 2009. It has Activemark and Food for Life status and manages an after-school care club for pupils.

**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

Little Melton Primary School provides a good education for its pupils, almost all of whom, and their parents and carers, report that they enjoy life at school. Staff know each pupil well and keep a close check on their welfare and learning. This helps ensure that pupils settle quickly, whether starting school for the first time or joining older classes. This is endorsed by parents and carers, one noting: 'The staff have played a very big part in helping our children settle in. They are very caring and kind.' Another added: 'I've been incredibly impressed at how settled and happy both my children are in such a short period.' As a result of the school's positive ethos, supportive environment, good teaching, and a rich and interesting curriculum, pupils make good progress in their all-round development, whatever their background or ability. They behave outstandingly well, feel exceptionally safe and have considerable regard for the safety of others; levels of attendance are high.

When children start school, they arrive with widely differing needs and skills, including some who have significant special educational needs. This varies considerably from year-to-year, as does the proportion in each year group who are capable of reaching the higher levels. This means that the make-up of each cohort, and their levels of attainment, varies considerably. Careful assessments help to build up a clear picture of each pupil's starting points, attainment and progress. This data, together with pupils' work in books and lessons, show that pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach above average standards. This is much higher than the results achieved in 2011, particularly in mathematics, when a large proportion of the year group had special educational needs and/or disabilities. Across the school most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well whatever their starting points.

Teachers meet the challenge of planning for mixed-aged classes well. They ensure that pupils cover the necessary ground for their year group and the work becomes progressively harder as they move through the school. Lesson plans are clear about how the work will be modified to provide extra challenge or support for those who need it. As a result, the work in lessons throughout the school is usually well-matched to meet the varying range of abilities in each class. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows when pupils find the work too hard or too easy, or when they spend too long in whole-class discussions. Staff have worked well to improve the quality of their marking of pupils' work. Consequently, pupils receive good written and verbal feedback from teachers, but opportunities for them to assess their own learning, or to respond to teachers' comments are sometimes missed.

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The school is well led and managed and this contributes strongly to its success. Leaders evaluate its performance accurately and the information gathered is used successfully to ensure that staff understand what is working well and what needs to improve. Challenging targets are set to help staff improve their practice, for example in assessment or marking, and these are pursued robustly. Leaders' track record shows they are well placed to secure and sustain further improvement. The school has the confidence of, and strong support from, the very large majority of parents and carers. Within this positive endorsement, a few parents and carers, who are otherwise pleased with what the school offers, feel that their views are not taken sufficiently into account. Inspectors found that the school uses a good range of strategies to gather parents' views but, nevertheless, staff are rightly keen to ensure that all parents and carers feel they are included.

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

- Improve teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring that all lessons proceed at a brisk pace
  - providing more consistent opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning and respond to teachers' marking.
  
- Work with parents and carers to ensure that all feel that their views are taken sufficiently into account.

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

Small numbers mean that the analysis of national test results must be treated cautiously, because the performance of individual pupils can have an exaggerated effect on the results. The scores for pupils in Year 2 have varied from year-to-year, because of the differing nature of each cohort. They fell in 2011, especially in mathematics. The work of pupils currently in Year 2 shows that they are already responding well to consistently good teaching. As a result, their progress is accelerating in English and mathematics, and pupils are on track to reach higher levels of attainment than last year. More-able pupils are challenged appropriately, which helps them to make good progress. In a successful literacy lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed a good understanding of the features of complete sentences as they planned captions to annotate their party plans. Basic skills in mathematics are developing well, too, aided by a successful revision of the school's calculation policy.

The school took part in the national tests for Year 6 pupils for the first time in 2010 and, although they were broadly average, the results in mathematics fell in 2011. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to improve on those results, with many pupils already reaching the expected Level 4 and some working beyond it. Performance in English is also improving and this is reflected in lessons. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed a well-developed understanding of the importance of formal

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language as they analysed information leaflets. More-able pupils are challenged appropriately so they achieve well, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the extra help they need in lessons to help them keep pace. The very few pupils learning to speak English as an additional language achieve well.

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a very clear understanding of right and wrong, and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and the care they take of each other. In a good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils had a mature understanding of the cultural differences between their own lives and that of 'Geoffrey Cool', a character from a book they are reading, who lives in Tobago. Across the school, pupils understand the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles and their success is reflected in Activemark and Food for Life status. They are actively involved in supporting the smooth running of the school through their involvement in the school and eco councils. Pupils make a strong contribution to the local community by taking part regularly in events. Good progress in basic skills ensures that they are well prepared for their future economic well-being. Although the rate of attendance has fallen slightly, it has remained consistently high in recent years.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Consistently good teaching is ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress, and is contributing to pupils' better performance, particularly in mathematics. Lessons are successful because teachers are clear about what they want pupils to

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

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learn. They share these intentions helpfully with pupils and provide clear pointers for how they can judge their success (known to pupils as 'success criteria'). Teachers question thoughtfully, and use pupils' responses to check on their understanding and deal with misconceptions. Steps have been taken to increase pupils' involvement in self-assessment, but this is not yet used consistently across the school. Similarly, there are many examples of good marking in pupils' books, but too few indications that pupils are responding to these comments. Nevertheless, most lessons run at a good pace, with a good level of challenge and, because pupils behave so well, they learn successfully. On rare occasions, pupils are kept in discussion too long, which reduces the time for them to carry out their tasks, or have their train of thought interrupted by tidying up before reviewing their learning.

Staff successfully meet the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities. The work is made more interesting and enjoyable by embarking on whole-school themes, such as the current focus on 'celebrations', and staff make sure that they build on pupils' previous learning. Each theme covers a range of subjects and gives good opportunities for pupils to use and extend their literacy, numeracy and computer skills. Staff have improved the way that the work is given a 'real-life' context and this has had a positive impact on pupils' progress in these key areas. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and opportunities outside of lessons, many of which are provided by staff and supplemented by outside organisations and volunteers. Provision for pupils' personal development is a particular strength.

The school takes good care of pupils and this has a considerable impact on their enjoyment, sense of being safe and their learning. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are fully included in all aspects of school life. In particular, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because teachers and support staff ensure that they fully engaged in lessons, while also promoting their confidence and independence. Systems to protect pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable are well organised and thorough. The after-school club is well organised and enjoyed by pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher works well with staff and the governing body to evaluate the school's work and identify what needs to improve. There is a strong sense of teamwork, and a shared commitment and ambition to tackle weaknesses and strive

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for further improvement. Data about the performance of pupils are used increasingly well to ensure they are making the necessary progress and identify those who might need an extra boost. Governance is satisfactory but is improving because, after a period of considerable change in its membership, the governing body is extending its role in providing challenge for leaders. The governing body and staff take their responsibility for safeguarding pupils seriously and procedures are good. Staff are vigilant and effective checks are made on potential hazards and the suitability of adults to work with children.

The school values pupils as individuals, whatever their background or ability, and tackles discrimination effectively. The provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, is enhanced by good links with outside agencies. Leaders have a good understanding of the impact the school has on local community cohesion and, further afield, has developed good links with schools in Birmingham and Nepal. This contributes to pupils’ well developed cultural awareness. As a result, the school is a very cohesive community and boys and girls from different backgrounds get on very well together.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in Reception very much and achieve well. The teacher and teaching assistants work well as a team. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress so that, from widely differing starting points, most reach and some exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the year. Children are taught in a class with a group of pupils in Year 1: they join with older classmates for some activities and work as a discrete group for others. The teacher meets this challenge



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well because she is knowledgeable about how young children learn and keeps a close check on their all-round development. Excellent planning draws on these assessments to ensure that the children’s needs are met, and the records form helpful and attractive portfolios of children’s progress, called learning journeys, which are shared regularly with parents. The children have regular access to all areas of learning and there is a good balance of activities led by an adult and opportunities to make choices for themselves. A strong emphasis is placed on developing children’s confidence and independence, and this contributes to their good learning. Children take great delight in exploring the well resourced classroom and new outdoor area and they quickly gain confidence. One reported that water flows down the guttering because, ‘It is on a slope’. Two boys confidently invited the inspector to buy at the harvest shop. Good leadership ensures that the provision is evaluated and improved regularly. The outdoor area is a good response to the weakness identified in the last report and, although small, it is well used and equipped. Children access the area in all weathers but leaders have rightly identified the need to provide shelter, and possibilities are being explored. Children’s welfare needs are well met.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The proportion of questionnaires returned was well above average for a primary school. Almost all of the parents and carers responding indicate that their children enjoy school, feel safe and are enabled to be healthy, and most are positive about each of the remaining areas covered by the questionnaire. Inspectors endorse these positive views. A few parents and carers do not feel that their views are taken sufficiently into account. Inspectors found that, while the school adopts a range of strategies to engage with parents and carers, typical of a primary school, it should explore ways of enabling all parents and carers to feel included in its consultation.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Little Melton 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 inspection team received 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 88 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	72	15	25	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	69	18	30	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	30	49	20	33	8	13	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	52	21	34	4	7	4	7
The teaching is good at this school	35	57	21	34	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	32	52	24	39	3	5	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	66	20	33	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)	32	52	19	31	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	34	56	18	30	5	8	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	49	24	39	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	52	18	30	7	11	4	7
The school is led and managed effectively	31	51	19	31	6	10	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	36	59	19	31	5	8	1	2

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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



12 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Little Melton Primary School, Little Melton NR9 3AD**

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to those who met with us to give us your views. You were very helpful. This is what we found out.

- Many of you and your parents and carers told us that you go to a good school and we agree.
- Your teachers take good care of you and help you to feel extremely safe.
- We were delighted to see that your behaviour is excellent. You attend very regularly, too. Congratulations on both of these, and please keep them up because they are two of the reasons why you learn well.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and to give you the right amount of challenge.

Even though your school is good, your headteacher and the other adults want it to get even better. We have asked them to do two things in particular.

- To make lessons even better, we want your teachers to make sure that the pace of your learning does not slow down when you change activities or sit on the carpet. We also want them to give you more chance to assess your own work and act on the comments that they write in your books.
- A few of your parents and carers would like the school to listen more to their views. We want the staff to work with your parents and carers to do this.

You can help by making sure you are always ready to learn and concentrate on what your teachers ask you to improve when they mark your books.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams  
Lead inspector

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