



St Matthew's Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110750
LEA CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278501
Inspection dates 14 December 2005 to 15 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Martin Newell LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	19 Norfolk Street
School category	Community		CB1 2LD
Age range of pupils	5 to 12		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01223 568838
Number on roll	416	Fax number	01223 568839
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Julian Jacobs
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr. Roger Marcon

Age group 5 to 12	Inspection dates 14 December 2005 - 15 December 2005	Inspection number 278501
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an above average sized primary school. Although most pupils live close to the school, a significant minority travel from further afield. Some classes have experienced high levels of pupil mobility. The school has had three headteachers during the last twelve months and staff absences in middle management positions. The current situation is far more settled and stable. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is a little below the national average whilst the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is similar to the picture nationally. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than found in most schools and many of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It has good capacity for further improvement. These views are shared by the school and the inspectors. The acting headteacher provides good leadership and has put in place rigorous initiatives to make the school a better place. Pupils and parents speak well of the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Children start school with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are a little above average. All children achieve well in the Foundation Stage with standards being above average by the end of the reception year. Standards are currently above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement for pupils of different abilities and backgrounds is satisfactory overall, often good in Years 1-2, but could be better for the more able in Years 3-6. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some examples of good and outstanding practice. Pupils behave well, contribute much to the school community and thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers. Some older pupils however, do not take enough responsibility for their own learning. There are other strengths in school life. These include a high level of racial harmony, enrichment opportunities, how well pupils are cared for and how the school encourages pupils to keep fit, safe and healthy. Strong links with outside agencies support pupils with learning difficulties and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds well. The school has started to check the quality of teaching and learning in different subjects more rigorously and is improving its assessment procedures. These initiatives are not yet fully embedded in school practice to have the biggest possible impact on pupils' achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils always achieve as well as they can. - Make the best use of assessment information to track how well pupils are achieving. - Make sure the quality of teaching and learning is checked regularly and rigorously. - Encourage pupils to take more initiative and responsibility for their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's knowledge, skills and understanding on starting school are a little above average overall. Children of all abilities and different backgrounds achieve well in the Foundation Stage. Standards are above average by the end of the reception year. Test results for Year 2 pupils, generally show attainment to be above average in English, mathematics and science. Inspection findings show a similar picture. The achievement of pupils is never less than satisfactory and at times good. The picture in Years 3-6 is more complex. Test results for Year 6 pupils for the last two years show standards in English, mathematics and science to be close to the national average. The value added score from the end of Year 2 to Year 6 for these pupils was significantly below the national average and indicates that they underachieved. This was mainly due to factors

such as high pupil mobility and numerous changes of teachers because of long term absences. Inspection findings indicate that standards in Year 6 are currently above average in English, mathematics and science. Data suggests that the current Year 4 and 5 cohorts are stronger and the school is on track to attain its best test results in 2007 and 2008. Achievement in Years 3-6 is now satisfactory overall but there is still room for improvement in how the more able pupils attain and achieve. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties or from differing ethnic minority backgrounds is similar to their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They appreciate the efforts of their teachers to make lessons interesting and enjoyable, although some older pupils are not always ready to take initiative for their own learning. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and attendance is similar to the national average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is successful in developing pupils' awareness of life in a multi-cultural society and a sense of racial harmony envelops the life and work of the school. Pupils relate well to one another and to adults and are always ready to resolve any conflict amicably. Behaviour is good. Pupils point out that bullying is not an issue in their school and they feel there is always someone to go to if they have a problem. Pupils are friendly, courteous and polite and are very aware of the wider world. They make a good contribution to the community, for example, raising significant amounts for charities through running stalls and events which also add much to their sense of economic well-being. Pupils are successfully encouraged to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle. The revised school dinner menu and emphasis on healthy eating contributes well to this.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good practice in Reception to Year 6 and some outstanding practice in nursery. Teaching in nursery and reception is good overall and engages the children well. At times teaching in the nursery is exceptionally good where learning is brought springing to life through exciting and vibrant activities that enthral the children. Teaching in Years 1-6 is satisfactory with some good features. At its best teaching rattles along at a good pace and work is challenging for all pupils. Teaching is good when pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves or instigate their own investigations. Teaching is not as effective when the work set for the more able pupils, particularly in Years 3-6, is too easy or pupils are not encouraged to take initiative for their own learning. Pupils are generally managed well across the school, relationships are good and teaching assistants add much to the quality of pupils' learning. Assessment is satisfactory. Good procedures have recently been

introduced to track pupils' progress in different subjects and to ensure that pupils are achieving well. However, over time this has not always been the case. The school is addressing this issue well. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory and good when pupils are made well aware of what is needed to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has re-organised its curriculum provision in Years 5 and 6 so that literacy and numeracy are taught in single year groups. This is proving a successful initiative, particularly when work is accurately matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to develop their computer skills and the school has started to plan greater use of these in different subjects of the curriculum. Provision in the Foundation Stage is stimulating and captures the interest of the children. Pupils' personal, social and health education is promoted well. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and for pupils acquiring English as an additional language. There is still work to be done in the provision the school makes for gifted and talented and the more able pupils and the school is tackling this well. At times not enough activities are planned that would extend their learning. The school provides a good range of visits, visitors and clubs both at lunchtime and after school. These activities bring an added dimension to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory overall. The school provides good levels of care for all its pupils. Pupils genuinely feel they have a voice in school that is listened to and taken on board. The school council and pupil questionnaires on school life are telling examples of how pupils' views are canvassed and acted upon. Provision for ensuring the health and safety of all pupils is good. The school promotes a good awareness of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Child protection procedures are robust and the school works well with outside agencies to support pupils when needed. Staff know pupils well and the individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated. The school however recognises that there is still work to be done in how well pupils' academic progress is tracked and supported.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall with that of the acting headteacher being good. He is well supported in this by the deputy headteacher. They have brought stability and a shared vision to the school after a period of considerable changes in personnel. In his short time in post the acting headteacher has wasted no time in tackling issues such as improving assessment and providing greater challenge for the more able pupils. These efforts are having an increasing impact on the work of the school although there is still work to be done. However,

strong team work, is now a feature of the school and greater staff stability indicates that the school is very well placed for further improvement. A strength of leadership is the good quality school self-evaluation. It is honest and frank and takes account of the views of staff, pupils, parents and governors. Its assertion that this is a satisfactory school is borne out by inspection findings. The leadership of the school know what is needed to make it a better place for the pupils. This includes the further development of the role of subject leaders in checking on the quality of teaching and standards in different subjects. This role has not been effective enough in all subjects. The school has a good commitment to inclusion. Governance of the school is good. Key members of the governing body know the school well, are supportive and challenging and are well aware of the school's weaker aspects. The school makes satisfactory use of its available resources and provides satisfactory value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children You will probably remember that we visited your school before Christmas and I am now writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would first of all like to say thank you for making us feel so welcome and making our visit so enjoyable. I have told your teachers how polite and helpful you all were and I know that they are very proud of you. Through our discussions with you it was good to hear how much you enjoy school, the after school clubs and the other learning activities on offer. It was particularly good to hear that bullying is not an issue and that there is always someone to turn to if there is a problem. We found that there are a number of good things about your school. Teachers are always trying to make learning fun and interesting. There are lots of visits and visitors, the school always makes sure that you are cared for and helps you to learn about the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Another strength is the way that the headteacher runs the school and the fact that the staff want to make the school an even better place to learn. But another strength of the school is you. The way you behave, how you all get on with each other so well and how you are always ready to help to make the school a better place are all strong features. We have talked to your teachers about how to improve the school further. Teachers are going to make sure that work is always challenging enough and check out more closely how well you are all doing. You can play your part as well by always being ready to find things out for yourselves and not always relying on your teachers. I would like to finish by saying that all of the inspection team wish you every success in your futures and we all feel that it was a pleasure to meet you! Martin Newell Lead Inspector