

Mawsley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134211
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	328854
Inspection date	19 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Linda Killman HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	245
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Harmon
Headteacher	Elaine Wright
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Scholars Row Mawsley Kettering NN14 1GZ
Telephone number	01536 799182
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following:

- the impact of the school's initiatives to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics
- aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being, especially the way their cultural development is promoted
- the features of the curriculum that have a particular impact on pupils' achievement.

Evidence was gathered from assessment data; the school's records and documents; parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire; observation of the school at work; scrutiny of pupils' work; and discussions with staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This average-sized school is situated in an expanding development of new-build housing. The proportion of pupils joining the school mid-year is well above average. The school reorganises classes each year to meet the demand of growing numbers, and some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The majority of pupils are White British. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills are broadly as expected for their age. The school has achieved the national Activemark award and Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In five years, from a greenfield site, this school has flourished as a thriving, popular and inclusive school providing good – and in some respects, outstanding – education and care for its pupils. The journey to reach this point has been challenging. The school has adapted and been reorganised on an annual basis to accommodate growing numbers of pupils arriving as new houses are released for purchase. This has been managed excellently by the headteacher, who, supported by a hardworking and skilful team of professionals, has secured pupils' good achievement. This is captured succinctly by a pupil, who commented, 'We have gone through an amazing journey. Our teachers really believe in us.'

Throughout the school pupils' personal development is excellent and a significant strength. The pupils speak passionately and enthusiastically about their learning, which they enjoy enormously. They work and play harmoniously, demonstrating exemplary behaviour and manners. Some train as play leaders to organise games on the playground at lunch time, act as playground friends or actively participate as school councillors. The whole school is involved in a plethora of voluntary and fund-raising activities that enable pupils to make an outstanding contribution to communities close to home and abroad. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles. They feel extremely safe and secure, having high levels of confidence in the adults working with them. The school has effective systems in place to promote good attendance. Nonetheless, a small minority of parents take their children out of school for holidays in term time and this adversely affects learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. In the last inspection report cultural development was an identified weakness, but it is now an overwhelming strength. Good links with other schools in Northampton and abroad promote pupils' awareness and understanding of diversity in faith, culture and differences in socio-economic backgrounds. This, as well as the good skills they develop in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology, prepares them well for future life in modern society.

The school's outstanding curriculum ensures that there is always something for pupils to look forward to. In many ways it is at the cutting edge of effective curricular design. For example, the introduction of 'Brain Boost Friday' develops pupils' thinking skills and creativity whilst they explore, for example, car design, film making, business and finance. The schemes of work developed industriously by the teaching staff are tailor-made to excite and engage all learners. They ensure that pupils learn everything they should through the relevant and exciting range of well-planned opportunities provided. Before, during and after school, pupils benefit from an exemplary range of clubs covering a wide spectrum of interests. Pupils participate in many residential trips and visits to places of interest from a very early age. This extends their life experiences and contributes to their passion for learning.

Pupils' achievement is good, regardless of their different starting points. From Reception to Year 2 they make rapid progress as a result of good quality teaching, and most pupils reach exceptionally high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in Key Stage 2 are currently above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics, but this is largely because a significant proportion of these pupils joined the school part-way through Key Stage 2. The outstanding curriculum provides them with plentiful opportunities to practise their literacy skills extensively in all subjects and they gain ground quickly. In mathematics, the impact of high mobility is most evident as some arrive with particular gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. The school has taken targeted, restorative action. For example,

pupils in mixed-age classes are now taught mathematics in ability groups and there has been a whole-school drive to improve pupils' understanding of multiplication and division. There is tangible evidence of improvement in the proportions of pupils now exceeding expected progress, but this has yet to translate into significant gains in results in mathematics in the national tests.

Teaching is good in nearly all respects. Lesson planning is linked to a current assessment of pupils' prior learning and takes learners' differing needs into account. Teaching is inspiring with excellent use of practical activities that place learning in context, deepening pupils' understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson the classroom was transformed into a pizzeria restaurant where pupils took on the role of chefs using real pizzas to explore equivalent fractions. Pupils benefit from good guidance and support in lessons, although sometimes there is too much adult intervention and this holds pupils back from taking responsibility, using their initiative and develop as independent learners. Nonetheless, in all lessons seen, the majority made good progress. Pupils know their targets and enjoy achieving them. The quality of marking to signpost improvement is inconsistent. Pupils' well-being is always fully taken into account, monitored closely and sensitively supported.

The driving force behind the school's successful short history is the high level of ambition for the school, communicated by the headteacher in pursuit of the highest standards. Morale is high and runs through the school's success at all levels. Progress since the last inspection is impressive with steadily rising standards and significant improvement on development points. Growing pupil numbers have generated new opportunities for staff at senior leadership level, and they are beginning to share the load in strategic planning for school improvement. Copious amounts of data on pupils' progress are regularly gathered by a range of staff, but as yet they are not arranged coherently so that progress over time can be effectively monitored and evaluated. Governors are well informed, receive regular training and are avid supporters of the school. Safeguarding regulations are fully met and health and safety checks are regular. The school provides good value for money and the school's leaders and managers provide good capacity for sustained improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

All the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements are fully met and arrangements for pupils' welfare and safety are excellent. Provision is good because the lead teacher knows how young children learn best. From broadly typical starting points the children make good progress and thoroughly enjoy learning, reaching above average standards by the time they move into Year 1. Throughout the year staff keep a watchful eye on children's progress and use this information to carefully plan the next steps in their learning. Records are meticulously kept and parents receive regular updates with evidence of their child's achievements in the six areas of learning. Parents are actively involved in the children's learning, identifying their child's achievements beyond school, and reading with them regularly. Children's proficiency in writing and their obvious delight in story writing are very impressive. This is because the teaching of phonics (letter sounds) is effective and children use their knowledge extremely confidently to build words independently. This high level of independence is not always matched in some creative activities, where opportunities for children to freely explore tools and materials, take risks and make choices are limited. For example, in making art, the children are inclined to follow an adult's lead. This constrains opportunity for creativity and originality. There is a broad range of well-designed indoor play activities for children to choose from, ranging from computer software to role play areas that encourage fantasy and make-believe play. Nonetheless, some

activities do not always provide sufficient range to tempt both girls and boys and encourage mixed-gender play. Outdoor play has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now challenging and full of exciting activities, including weaving, digging, climbing and using wheeled toys to try on a variety of surfaces.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop an effective and accessible tracking system to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress over time.
- Develop pupils' confidence to learn independently in lessons by encouraging them to do as much as they can for themselves, whilst exercising prudent and timely adult support and intervention.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

20 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mawsley Primary School, Mawsley, NN14 1GZ

You may remember that two inspectors visited your school recently to see how well you are learning. We were both very impressed with all that we saw and heard. We would like to thank you for welcoming us into your classrooms and telling us about your work and what it is like to be a pupil at Mawsley. We think that your school is a good one and that the teachers provide you with an outstanding range of learning opportunities that excite you and help you to make good progress. You also make excellent progress in developing superb personal qualities that will help you to grow up as confident young citizens and good learners.

Your parents speak highly of the school, and rightly so. Your teachers work very hard on your behalf and want each one of you to shine during your time at the school. Your headteacher is always looking for ways to improve the school and because all staff and the governors support her in this, the school is getting better and better. They would like the school to become outstanding in all respects as soon as possible. We have given two points for the school to work on that will help them towards achieving this. We have asked them to:

- find a way of recording your progress as you move from year to year so that they can see if you are making enough progress over time
- encourage you to do as much as you can for yourselves in lessons so that you become even more independent as learners.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. As one of you remarked, 'We have gone through an amazing journey.' I agree and I hope that you and the adults will celebrate how well you all have done during the short history of Mawsley Primary School. I hope that you will always enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Best wishes

Linda Killman

Her Majesty's Inspector