

Melbourne Infants

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112594
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	310938
Inspection dates	10 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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	4 - 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	138
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Nicola Smith
Date of previous school inspection	12 - 13 May 2003
School address	Packhorse Road Melbourne Derby DE73 8JE
Telephone number	01332 862325
Fax number	01332 862325

Age group	4 - 7
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Inspection number	310938

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This slightly smaller than average-sized infant school serves the small town of Melbourne in south Derbyshire. The large majority of children are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language. The proportion currently eligible for free school meals and the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. The school holds the National Healthy School's, Activemark, Basic Skills, Investors in People and anti-bullying awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. This judgement exceeds the school's more modest evaluation of its own effectiveness. The school provides outstanding value for money and has excellent capacity to continue to improve. Parents are highly delighted about the quality of education and care offered and, as one aptly notes, 'The school is well led and doesn't sit on its laurels. It always has a forward looking approach and the staff seem to have an endless supply of enthusiasm.'

One of the main reasons for the outstanding quality of education is the sheer dynamism of the young and enthusiastic staff who work extremely well as a team. They spur each other on to constantly reflect on what is provided and share a willingness to be self-critical and challenge each other. Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is a pivotal reason that the staff feel valued and are so enthusiastic. She is very ably supported by a senior leadership team who are recognised as advanced skills teachers, and who share the infectious commitment and determination to improve. Subject leaders perform their roles outstandingly well by monitoring and evaluating planning and teaching. They also check samples of the children's work in a very regular manner using rigorous criteria. Governance is very good: whilst being highly supportive of the school the governors also act as critical friends, questioning what the school does and why.

Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are slightly above those normally expected for their age, except in communication skills, which match those, expected nationally. Many have good levels of confidence, which enables them to make rapid progress. When they enter Year 1, their skills are above, and sometimes well above, the national expectations. By the age of seven, standards are well above average. In several recent years, standards have been very high. However, while still above national averages standards dipped slightly in 2007 because children did not do as well in reading and writing as in previous years. Currently, children across the school are making excellent progress and standards are well above average. All groups of children achieve very well.

Children's personal development is outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They really enjoy their time at school. They are very well behaved and extremely knowledgeable about leading a healthy lifestyle. They enthusiastically take part in the many excellent opportunities before school, at lunchtime and in after school sports. The school also helps children to thoroughly understand the benefits of healthy eating, and the school council awards stickers for healthy packed lunches. Children have a very good knowledge of how to keep themselves and their friends safe, and playground 'buddies' promote positive relationships. Anti-bullying weeks make a clear impact upon the children who can all remember the messages given. Children make a very good contribution to the school and wider community through the many and varying roles they undertake. They enjoy fund-raising activities and taking part in concerts, the local arts festival and carnival. All of these activities, along with the development of a wide range of basic skills and growing confidence, enable the children to prepare very well for their future. Attendance is well above average.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations of children's behaviour and achievement. A particular strength is the very careful planning of activities. This ensures an excellent level of challenge for all groups of children of different abilities. Staff are enthusiastic in their approach to lessons and make very good use of time to ensure that the pace of learning is stimulating. Staff teach literacy or numeracy to the whole year group on alternate weeks. This is a very successful strategy and ensures not only equality of access to a challenging curriculum but also that staff work as subject leaders even more effectively. Learning is very well supported by parents who are keen to help with activities so that children meet their targets.

The curriculum is outstanding. The day-to-day curriculum including topic work is stimulating and well matched to children's interests and needs, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. There is an excellent range of additional activities to enrich learning, including an admirable number of high quality sports activities and an excellent use of visits to places of educational interest. An extensive programme of visitors brings the curriculum to life, as richly reflected in the numerous high quality displays of work as well as photographs and artefacts around the school. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good but opportunities for creative play are not as good as they could be.

The care, guidance and support of children is outstanding and a very strong element of the school's success. Pastoral care is excellent. Staff know and care for the children very well. The checks on the adults who help in school and the procedures to support health and safety are all secure. The academic guidance given to children is outstanding and a key feature of on-going improvement. Assessment routines are a model to others. These are characterised by the very regular and careful moderation of the quality of children's work. The tracking of children's progress and subsequent target setting is exemplary. This helps to ensure that children, parents and staff all know what is needed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. It has several outstanding features. Children enter the Reception classes with widely ranging early experiences and skills which overall are slightly above expectations for this age. This is particularly evident in their personal, social and mathematical development. Their communication skills are largely meeting expectations. Children settle quickly, get on well together and are enthusiastic young learners. All groups make excellent progress so that when they enter Year 1 the standards are above, and often well above the expectations for their age. This is particularly notable in their social development which enables them to grow in confidence in all areas of learning. Personal development is excellent and children are eager to learn what their friends and siblings already do. The quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. The school places a clear emphasis on the early development of literacy and numeracy skills. However, curricular planning does not always emphasise the practical nature of activities and the aim of learning through creative play. Because of this, the outdoor play area is not as stimulating as it might be. The care, guidance and support and the leadership

and management of the Foundation Stage are excellent and mirror the many strengths in other parts of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the children in the Foundation Stage have more opportunities to learn creatively through structured play activities, especially in the outdoor area.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	1

¹ Grade 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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



11 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Melbourne Infants School, Melbourne, DE73 8JE

Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, at lunchtime and when I spoke to members of the school council. I think your school is great: it's outstanding!

These are some of the best things about your school:

- I think it's a very happy place to be and your parents are right to be proud of how much you learn.
- The staff are a really enthusiastic team and expect a lot of you and themselves.
- Mrs Smith's leadership is excellent and she makes sure that everyone asks what else they need to do to improve.
- Targets are used really well to tell you what you need to do to reach the next level.
- The staff check what happens in lessons and in your work to see that it is hard enough for you.

This is what that I think could be improved:

- Those of you in Reception could have more chances to learn through playing.

To help your school, keep trying hard all the time. I would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall
Lead inspector