

Michael Drayton Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125512
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	363991
Inspection dates	9–10 May 2011
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	458
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Brown
Headteacher	John Buxton
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 22 lessons or parts of lessons and observed 17 teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including monitoring, evaluation and assessment records, policy documents, the school improvement plan, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. A wide range of documents and records was scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils, including case studies of vulnerable pupils. Inspectors took into account the results of questionnaires returned by 142 parents and carers, 250 pupils and 33 members of staff.

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

- How well are pupils capable of higher attainment and the gifted and talented progressing and could the attainment of these pupils be higher?
- How effective is the quality of feedback to pupils on their progress and do pupils understand how well they are doing in school?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized junior school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none is at the early stages of learning English. The percentages of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average. The school has been awarded Healthy School status, ICT Mark, Safety in Schools – Gold Award, Eco Schools – Silver Award and Activemark.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Michael Drayton Junior School is an outstanding school. It is exceptionally well led and managed and enables its pupils to achieve excellent outcomes. The school is very well thought of by the parents and carers of pupils, who made comments such as: 'Fabulous school with great teachers and a brilliant head', 'My child is making excellent progress and is well supported by staff. I would recommend this school to any other parents' and 'My child has progressed greatly since starting this school in September.'

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently above the national averages in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress. Even though many of these pupils have starting points that are below those nationally expected for their age when they join the school, the majority reaches the national average level by the time they move onto their secondary school. However, those pupils who are more able do not all make this amount of progress. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels in end of key stage tests is above average, the percentage reaching the higher level matches the national average. This is because assessment information is not used sufficiently well by some teachers in planning learning activities that challenge and extend the learning of more-able pupils. A few capable of higher attainment find lessons insufficiently challenging.

The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding. The staff provide an outstanding level of care, guidance and support. This aspect of the school's work is particularly notable for the support given to pupils and their families. Although the school is large, pastoral staff know each individual pupil and over time have built strong relationships with their families. The school's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. However, despite the school's best efforts to reduce absence, attendance remains stubbornly at the national average.

The curriculum promotes and enables outstanding outcomes in most areas of personal development, good achievement overall with outstanding achievement for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The curriculum is adapted to provide intervention for individuals and groups. Curriculum strengths include information and communication technology, where innovative practice provides increasingly memorable learning opportunities for pupils involved in animation and media projects. As a leading school in information and communication technology, support is given to other schools in the county. Music is a strength where the

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curriculum and enrichment opportunities include a Samba band, extensive provision for instrumental tuition, excellent singing training for all pupils and a strong cultural dimension. The school's provision for physical activity is very strong and supports excellence in the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, as reflected in external awards in this area.

Teaching is good overall and the large majority of teaching seen during the inspection was of a good or outstanding quality. Teaching seen in Year 6 was consistently outstanding. This is reflected in the rapid progress pupils make in their final year. Inspection evidence supports this view. One parent wrote, 'My child's progress in Year 6 has excelled. This year her confidence and ability have improved dramatically.'

The outstanding outcomes and quality of education stem from excellent leadership at all levels, and particularly from senior staff. Highly positive responses to the staff questionnaire confirm a strong and unified approach at all levels and total commitment to providing high quality. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are done well, but records of observations contain too much description, which detracts from the focus on what teachers do well and what they need to improve. There has been a significant level of improvement since the previous inspection so the school is judged to have a good capacity to improve even further. It provides excellent value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils capable of reaching higher academic levels are consistently supported to achieve their full potential by:
 - using assessment information in lesson planning to always include activities that are matched to these pupils' learning capabilities
 - ensuring that all learning fully engages the more able through high levels of expectation and challenge, rapid pace and the provision of extension activities
 - making sure that pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to achieve high quality in their work.

- Improve attendance to levels that are above the national average by working more effectively with the welfare agencies to chase up absence.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils enter school with attainment that is broadly average. They achieve well and by the time they move onto their secondary schools, attainment is above average in English and mathematics. Because of excellent curriculum provision and good or outstanding teaching, standards in information and communication technology, music, art and design and physical education are much higher than those nationally expected for pupils of this age. Pupils show great enthusiasm for, and enjoyment in, learning. When preparing multi-media presentations on 'super heroes', Year 6 were

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fully engaged and showed high levels of enthusiasm, concentrating fully over extended periods of time. They were keen to get started and reluctant to pack up at the end of the session. Similar levels of enjoyment and willingness to take part were seen in music lessons. The whole of Year 5 sang together, very quickly progressing to high standards and rapidly learning to sing some songs in two parts very competently. Year 6 thoroughly enjoyed learning to play percussion instruments, including samba drums, and very quickly moved to a performance standard. Pupils are prepared well for the future, with good core skills and a very positive attitude to learning.

Behaviour is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to good learning. Behaviour is excellent out of lessons and supports the very high levels of safety pupils feel. Pupils are very proud of their school and are eager to take on positions of responsibility, such as play leaders and team captains, in order to raise the quality of day-to-day life at Michael Drayton. The school council is very active, with clear mechanisms for gathering opinions from all classes, and has a significant impact on school life. Pupils are very involved in the local community and, for example, extend a warm welcome to a local 'over fifties' group who visit the school to take lunch or afternoon tea. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' moral and social awareness are very well developed, as seen by their excellent behaviour and the quality of relationships and interactions with each other and adults. Their multicultural understanding is developing well through the recent introduction of curriculum areas with a cultural and multicultural dimension and through their links with schools with a contrasting pupil profile.

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	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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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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How effective is the provision?

Teaching is successful because it is effective in engaging pupils in the learning process. Teachers use learning objectives well to explain the purpose of lessons. These are usually understood by pupils, but occasionally a lack of explanation leads to some pupils, including those capable of tackling harder work, not really knowing what they need to do to produce their best. The marking of pupils' work is generally good but does not always provide developmental comments to help pupils improve. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are skilled in their areas of expertise. Explanations are very clear and where they lead by demonstration, such as in music, expectations are clearly high. A strong feature of teaching is the use of varied learning styles. Very effective transitions from full-class listening to group and pair work or independent work add interest and variety to learning. Teachers are mostly skilful in using questioning to assess understanding, extend pupils' reasoning skills and deepen understanding. Teaching assistants work well with individuals and groups to develop understanding and give pupils the confidence to achieve success.

The curriculum prioritises English and mathematics, but curriculum planning is well organised and structured to ensure a strong creative dimension. Themed activities and opportunities for learning in real world contexts add interest and stimulate an enthusiasm for learning. These are structured within a flexible timetable and provide opportunities for cross-curricular provision, further extending opportunities to develop good skills in English and mathematics and outstanding outcomes in information and communication technology. The school values opportunities for memorable learning and is increasingly using the local community as a focus for learning. The varied programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities enrich a curriculum that contributes very well to skills development and offers an international and cultural dimension through links with schools in Mumbai, France and Birmingham.

Transition arrangements are firmly in place and are very effective in ensuring a smooth start for Year 3 pupils and that those in Year 6 move onto their secondary education confidently. The school is highly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Strong care, guidance and support are effective in enabling excellent academic and social progress for these pupils. A number of pupils who have not succeeded in other schools, due to emotional or behavioural difficulties, have settled well into Michael Drayton Junior School and make excellent progress in developing social skills.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where	1

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relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy and assistant headteachers. They have established a very strong core of leadership over a long period of time, which enables and encourages other staff to develop their own professional skills, contributing significantly to the outstanding overall effectiveness of this school. There are clearly defined roles for senior and middle managers, year and subject heads, and well-defined structures for communication between different levels in the hierarchy. Monitoring and evaluation of school performance clearly defines areas in which the school requires development and informs effective school improvement planning.

Over time, the staff have established exceptionally strong partnerships that support pupils' learning and well-being. These are particularly strong in helping the school support vulnerable pupils. There are strong links with other schools and professional services that add significantly to learning in physical education, music and information and communication technology. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and goes out of its way to support all pupils and families. However, the issue relating to the learning and progress of pupils capable of higher attainment means that the schools promotion of equality of opportunity is good.

Governance is good. There is a very effective core of governors who have a high level of involvement in the school, are proactive in monitoring the school's performance and in challenging leaders to account for outcomes. Some other governors, for example those responsible for safeguarding, are not as effective in promoting their area of responsibility, such as in seeking and using parents' and carers' views to inform practice. Safeguarding is therefore good. All adults who have unsupervised contact with pupils are fully checked for suitability. Child protection is exceptionally strong and highly effective. Health and safety of the site and risk assessments of school activities are fully in place.

The school promotes community cohesion well. There is a clear understanding of the socio-economic, religious and ethnic context and the school has taken a series of planned actions to respond to this. There is recognition of limited diversity within the school population, and action to increase pupil and family experience of a more diverse ethnic community includes links with a school in Birmingham, a school in Mumbai and a school in France. The school has established extensive links with the local community. There are opportunities for family learning, instigated as a response to parent questionnaires. However, provision is not even across the three strands of community cohesion, the emphasis being on actions that develop socio-economic cohesion. The impact can be clearly identified, mainly through informal evaluation and the school has plans to formalise this evaluation of impact, including pupil perceptions.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Just over 30% of parents and carers sent in questionnaires and this response is similar to that usually found. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and there was strong agreement for all statements in the questionnaire. Written comments outlined a small number of concerns, particularly relating to the lack of challenge for able, gifted and talented pupils. Inspectors looked carefully at this issue and found this to be an area in which the school could usefully focus its strategies for improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Michael Drayton Junior 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 142 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 458 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	58	59	42	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	96	68	45	32	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	68	48	70	49	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	74	52	61	43	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	80	56	59	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	44	70	49	6	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	44	78	55	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)	60	42	76	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	71	50	66	46	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	37	75	53	7	5	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	39	72	51	3	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	85	60	55	39	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	64	49	35	2	1	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 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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">■ 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 pupils' 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.



11 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Michael Drayton Junior School, Nuneaton, CV10 0SZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you showed us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you in lessons and in the group discussions with you. Your views were exceptionally helpful and it was clear that you are very proud of your school. Your pride is justified because you go to an outstanding school.

You all make good progress and the standards in your school work by Year 6 are higher than those found among many other pupils in similar schools. You do particularly well in music, information and communication technology, physical education, art and design. Those of you who receive extra support because you find learning a bit more difficult make excellent progress. Your personal qualities are outstanding. We noticed you have a sensible and mature approach to school life. We noticed you enjoy school a great deal and behave exceptionally well. Adults who look after you make sure that the school is a very safe and pleasant place for you to learn and make friends.

The school is so well led and managed that the headteacher and his staff are always looking for ways to improve Michael Drayton even more. We have asked your teachers to pay extra attention to two areas to help raise standards further and to ensure the school maintains its outstanding effectiveness. We have asked them to ensure that those of you capable of reaching higher academic levels are consistently supported to achieve your full potential by providing you with work that challenges and extends your learning and that you all know what makes high quality work. We have also asked that attendance is improved from average to at least above average.

Congratulations on helping your school achieve this status. We are confident that you will do all you can to help further, particularly by coming to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman

Lead inspector

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