

Murrayfield Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124649
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380946
Inspection dates	31 January–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	Selwyn Ward

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Paul Carter
Headteacher	Lynette Allison
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Selwyn Ward

Additional inspector

Peter Lacey-Hastings

Additional inspector

Ruth Frith

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 26 lessons taught by 19 teachers, with a particular focus on the reasons for any variation in rates of progress between the different key stages. Inspectors listened to pupils read, and spoke with parents and carers, groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school development planning, school self-evaluation, leaders' monitoring of teaching, the notes of local authority advisers and the questionnaire responses of 91 pupils, 21 staff and 53 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This school is larger than average. The majority of pupils are White British, with around 40% coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Of these, the largest minority ethnic group is Bangladeshi. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is above average. At close to twice the national average, the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The school includes an above average proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The school meets the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The headteacher was appointed in September 2011. Murrayfield is part of the Get Set Network, promoting the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. It has Healthy Schools status.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Murrayfield Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment is below average because progress remains uneven through the school. Pupils make the fastest progress in Years 5 and 6.
- The school has had commendable success in creating a positive climate for learning where pupils behave well, are mostly attentive and where they show they are eager to learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- There is variation in the quality of teaching. It is largely only in English and mathematics, and principally in the older pupils' classes, where work is matched to pupils' different abilities. The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is helping to improve younger pupils' reading and writing skills but its impact is blunted by the way in which some phonics sessions are organised and through an occasional lack of rigour in sounding out words.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school and of where improvements are needed. There have been changes made over the past year, including to improve the quality of marking and assessment. These are only just beginning to show their impact in accelerating pupils' progress, and leaders recognise that there is further to go in consolidating these recent improvements.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the start of the autumn term 2012, raise attainment in English and mathematics and accelerate pupils' progress in lessons by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what younger pupils should be achieving
 - making full use of assessment information always to match work to pupils' different capabilities, especially to challenge the more able
 - organising phonics groups so that all pupils can hear clearly the phonemes they are listening out for

- ensuring that all staff benefit from appropriate training and support in the most effective teaching of phonics
 - leaders following up in subsequent observations the points for development identified when they visit lessons.
- By the end of the summer term 2012, improve the effectiveness and impact of assessment by:
- assuring the accuracy of Early Years Foundation Stage assessments, particularly of children’s skills and knowledge when they start school and at the end of the Reception Year
 - maintaining appropriate rigour in correcting spelling and punctuation errors when marking pupils’ work in all subjects
 - consistently giving all pupils clear guidance through marking in all subjects that shows them what they need to do to improve their work
 - earmarking time for pupils routinely to read and respond to teachers’ comments.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Assessments in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including those at the end of the Reception Year, show wide year-on-year variability in outcomes. Although there has been some local authority moderation, these have not fully assured the accuracy of assessments that, for 2011, seem unusually high in relation to the attainment currently demonstrated by the pupils who are now in each of the Year 1 classes. There is a degree of uncertainty over the tracking of children’s progress through Nursery and Reception because assessments carried out when children start school in the Nursery rely on a different scale to that used in measuring attainment during and at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the lessons seen during the inspection, children made good progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in Reception. This mirrors the views expressed by parents and carers, who particularly praise the start their children get in the Nursery.

Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below average in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Leaders and staff have been successful in eliminating the underachievement that was evident at the time of the last inspection. Pupils’ achievement is satisfactory, as is the progress pupils make over their time at Murrayfield, but this progress is uneven. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but it accelerates in Key Stage 2, with particularly good progress evident in Years 5 and 6. This is because teachers in the older classes have higher expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. As a result, they demand a more rigorous pace of work. Even within ability sets, care is taken to match work to pupils’ different capabilities, so that more-able pupils, in particular, are challenged to extend their learning. This contrasts with some of the younger classes, where not enough use is made of assessment information to set work which is always of appropriate challenge. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make similar progress to their peers, although there are examples of some who make good progress. Likewise, pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, as do those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are satisfied with the quality of teaching at the school, although some express the view that work is not always challenging enough. It is, particularly, older pupils who are encouraged to challenge themselves and 'have a go' in answering questions. Pupils understand and appreciate that 'we learn from our mistakes' and, as pupils learn to confidently express themselves, this contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Lessons all start with a learning objective or 'learning question', and teachers set out success criteria so that pupils know what is expected of them. As a result of leaders' monitoring of lessons, emphasis has been placed on making this approach consistent across the school. It has given pupils a clearer understanding of what they are learning. In the best lessons, teachers involve pupils actively in self- and peer-assessment, often using visualisers (lighting and digital camera accessories) that enable pupils' work to be projected onto a screen and shared with the whole class.

Teachers have had particular success in motivating and engaging pupils so that they are eager to learn. They do not all capitalise enough on this success to convert pupils' enthusiasm into the good achievement of which they are capable. Not all teachers expect enough of the pupils. Too often, all pupils are set similar work to do, regardless of the wide range of ability in the class. Where this occurs, this can mean work that is too hard for some and too easy for others. This is especially the case in subjects other than English and mathematics. Marking in these other subjects also contributes less than it should to developing pupils' basic skills because teachers are not always rigorous enough in correcting spelling and punctuation errors. Marking is notably better in English and mathematics but, even in these subjects, opportunities are sometimes missed to move pupils' learning on. Often teachers pose pupils questions when they mark their work, but there is not a routine expectation in every class that, when a question is posed, the child will answer. The impact of teachers' hard work in marking books is dissipated when time is not set aside to ensure that pupils read and follow the advice they are given.

The teaching of phonics has contributed to improvements in pupils' reading and writing skills but there are shortcomings in the way in which phonics is taught and organised. In some classes, more than one group are practising letters and sounds at the same time. This makes it difficult for pupils to concentrate on the sounds they are listening out for. Teachers do not all correct sounds that are mispronounced and they do not always model the sounds clearly enough.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good. Pupils learn and appreciate the school's orderly routines. As a result, they mostly settle to work quickly and without fuss. They listen carefully to their teachers, even if, sometimes, they listen less well than they should to each other's contributions in class. When asked to work collaboratively or in pairs, they do so sensibly, taking turns and sharing responsibility. In a Year 2 lesson on research skills, for example, pupils worked in teams with each taking on an assigned role as team leader, researcher, presenter or resource manager. They worked together diligently and with enthusiasm, mainly using the internet to find out about the iconic

New York City landmarks about which they were compiling their presentations.

Pupils feel safe at school and they confirm their confidence that any bullying incidents are dealt with. They learn to keep safe. A notable feature of this school is that every child leaves this school able to swim. Although attendance has been low, there is evidence that it is improving this year. Absence rates for the autumn term 2011 were sharply down on those for the corresponding period in each of the years since the last inspection.

Leadership and management

Leaders and staff have demonstrated notable success in ensuring pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils, including those from different backgrounds, get on well together and treat each other with respect. They enjoy the opportunities they have to learn about life in different parts of the world. Reception children, for example, have learnt a lot about China as part of their celebration of Chinese New Year. Pupils especially enjoy the visits and sports activities that form part of the curriculum. With its own indoor swimming pool, the school is able to ensure twice-weekly swimming lessons for all pupils. Girls, last year, celebrated impressive success as seven-a-side national soccer champions. In this well-resourced school, the curriculum is satisfactory rather than better because opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils, and particularly the more able, to apply and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in science and topic work.

Leaders' monitoring of provision has helped to drive improvements over the past year, and this shows the school's capacity to improve. Lesson observations have identified common areas for development, including in marking and teachers' use of success criteria. Leaders recognise, however, that these have not gone far enough, for example in improving marking and the use of targets. There has been less rigour in systematically following up individual rather than whole-school points for development. Leaders have not made these a focus for subsequent observations to ensure staff have acted on the feedback they have been given. Equal opportunities are promoted well for pupils in potentially vulnerable circumstances and many of those with additional learning needs. During the inspection, for example, the nurture group helped pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, including those with emotional and behavioural problems, to make good progress learning about fractions as a puppet chef with an Italian accent divided up his pizzas. More-able pupils are not so well catered for when their work lacks challenge.

The governing body is supportive and its members are knowledgeable. They visit regularly, meeting with school leaders, and their notes record agreement of action to be taken to secure improvements. A recent meeting of a governor with the literacy coordinator, for example, identified the need for further training on phonics teaching for staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The governing body has ensured that arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet regulatory requirements.

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



2 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Murrayfield Community Primary School, Ipswich IP3 9JL

Thank you for welcoming us to your school on our recent visit. You told us how much you like school. It was good to see how well behaved you are, how well you get on together and how eager you are to learn. These positive attitudes make Murrayfield a happy place to be, and they also help you in your learning. We were especially pleased to see how well you listen to your teachers in most classes, although we would also like to see you listen as carefully to each other's contributions in lessons.

We found that Murrayfield is giving you a satisfactory education. You are making faster progress in Years 5 and 6 than in some of the younger classes, so we have suggested some ways in which teachers could share their ideas of what works best so that you all make the consistently good progress of which you are capable. The work you are given is not always matched closely enough to your different abilities, and that is one of the things we have asked staff to look at. You can help by telling teachers whenever you find the work you are given is too easy or too hard.

The headteacher and leadership team have made some important recent improvements, including to marking and the use of targets in English and mathematics. We have suggested some ways of building further on these so that you all get clear guidance in every subject that shows you what you need to do to improve your work. Again, you can help by always taking care to read the comments teachers write when they mark your work, and by doing your best to follow their advice.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful on our visit, and our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward
Lead inspector

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