

Muscliff Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131548
Local authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	395560
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2012
Lead inspector	John Carnaghan

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracey Farwell
Headteacher	Maggie Wyatt
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2008
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	27–28 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Carnaghan

Additional Inspector

George Long

Additional Inspector

Laura Dickson

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 15 teachers over 11 hours. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at its policies, assessments, records and questionnaires from staff, pupils and 94 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Muscliff is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are fewer than average numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported by school action plus is average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because inconsistencies in teaching mean pupils' progress is good rather than excellent and the monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour is a considerable strength. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school life, show great maturity and independence and an unwavering enthusiasm for learning. Bullying is virtually unknown and pupils, parents and carers are rightly fully confident that the school is a safe and caring environment.
- Teaching has improved and is good overall, with a growing proportion of outstanding lessons. Most lessons are lively, enjoyable and run at a good pace. Thorough marking and target setting greatly assist pupils in understanding their next steps in learning. A few lessons do not adapt work sufficiently to meet all pupils' needs. Leaders undertake numerous activities to monitor teaching, but some evaluations are insufficiently focused on pupils' learning.
- Excellent behaviour and good teaching contribute to good progress throughout the school. Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundations Stage and develop skills well; they acquire excellent learning habits such as concentration and self-sufficiency. This provides a powerful launch pad for their learning; good progress continues across Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average and the inclusive nature of the school ensures the achievement of all groups is good.
- Leaders and managers share their ambition and vision for the school with staff and promote improvement well. Excellent analysis of assessment informs clear self-evaluation and perceptive future planning; it also promotes performance management. The curriculum provides memorable experiences for pupils with good enrichment opportunities and effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in their approval of all aspects of the school.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2013, build on the school's work in the monitoring of teaching so that lesson analysis is more rigorously evaluative and places a greater emphasis on pupils' learning.
- By January 2013, reduce inconsistencies in teaching across the school, ensuring that all classroom activities accurately match pupils' needs and aptitudes.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and aptitudes that are a little below expectations; good provision and effective teaching ensure they leave the Reception classes with attainment that is a little above average. Purposeful, focused teaching ensures that this good progress is maintained across Key Stages 1 and 2; pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average. A dip in attainment in 2011 has been quickly rectified through improvements in teaching and there has been a sharp upturn this year.

The school uses its assessment data perceptively to quickly identify individuals or groups of pupils at risk of underperforming. It then acts decisively to ensure that any barriers to learning are rapidly addressed. For example, specially trained teaching assistants target such pupils and offer well-tailored interventions that invariably succeed in boosting progress. In particular, those pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported by action plus are empowered to learn well. This ensures that learning is consistent and that achievement for all groups of pupils is good.

Where teaching is at its best, pupils collaborate enthusiastically in their learning and make rapid progress. Teaching has improved in the last year and there are more outstanding lessons so pupils' progress has accelerated. In an excellent Year 6 English lesson, pupils greatly enjoyed listening to a favourite pop song and rewriting the lyrics using the passive voice. Lively, engaging and well-paced teaching was supported by very clear instructions, high expectations and high quality marking so pupils were highly motivated to make outstanding progress. However, despite these strengths, inconsistencies in teaching mean that there are some variations in learning and progress over time is good rather than outstanding.

The teaching of reading is effective in engendering in pupils a love of books and there are numerous opportunities for pupils to read a variety of texts. Attainment in reading both at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is above average.

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Quality of teaching

Teachers show good subject knowledge and use a variety of strategies to maintain interest; this also contributes to the good pace of many lessons. Staff set high expectations; challenging learning objectives are provided at the outset of lessons so pupils know what they should do. Thorough planning and a wide variety of stimulating resources promote learning well. Teachers and teaching assistants are enthusiastic and this is reflected by pupils' genuine pleasure in learning and their eagerness to undertake tasks as a whole class, in groups and independently. Off-task behaviour hardly ever disrupts lessons. Pupils' work is usually carefully marked and accompanied by encouraging comments and reference to targets. In this way pupils are given a clear understanding of what they should do to improve.

Teaching assistants are well trained and know pupils' needs very well. They work closely with individuals, both in the classroom and in small groups. They are well aware of the requirements of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and offer very effective support to ensure that, for most of these groups, the pupils' progress is as good as their peers. Teachers take every opportunity to promote reading skills both in English lessons and across most other curriculum subjects.

Teachers take numerous opportunities to enable pupils to reflect on important moral issues, such as the environment. Lessons are also rich in opportunities for pupils' social development. Very occasionally, teaching promotes only satisfactory learning; this is usually when activities fail to interest pupils and are insufficiently matched to their abilities and needs.

A Reception class phonics lesson where teaching was outstanding typified many of teaching's strengths. Children 'advised' the teacher the best way to write a sentence from the Goldilocks story on the whiteboard, suggesting how to spell words, where finger spaces should be used and the right places for the capital letter and full stop. When they were stuck they quickly turned to their learning partners and, showing exceptional maturity, soon came up with the answer. Very skilled support from a teaching assistant for a group who found the task difficult ensured these children felt valued and kept them fully on board with the progress of the rest of the class.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

From the youngest age, children's maturity and positive relationships with adults and one another make an exceptional contribution to the safe and positive learning environment at Muscliff. Lessons are greatly enhanced by pupils' enthusiasm and commitment to learning. Numerous responsibilities, large and small, are keenly carried out by pupils and contribute very well to the exceptional independence they demonstrate both in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel very safe and free from bullying, one reporting, 'I know I won't be bullied.' They are well aware of the various types of bullying and know how to avoid the pitfalls of the internet and the potential issues arising from cyber bullying. All stakeholders in the school, staff, pupils and parents and carers correctly hold very positive views about pupils'

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behaviour and safety.

Pupils know how to report any concerns they may have through 'worry boxes', 'bubble time' and 'feeling pegs', and these inputs are reviewed daily by teachers who address any worries promptly and effectively. Pupils have great confidence in teachers to nip any concerns in the bud and report that they feel very safe in this friendly, welcoming environment. The curriculum ensures that pupils are well aware of unsafe situations and know the best ways to stay safe. Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual as a matter of course.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, leaders and managers share an ambition for the school with all staff, consistently communicating high expectations to pupils and teachers alike. When attainment issues arose last year the school focused its efforts, correctly identifying the need to develop teaching so that a higher proportion of lessons were good or outstanding. Regular monitoring and detailed feedback to staff have had a beneficial impact on the quality of teaching, although some lesson evaluations remain overly descriptive and insufficiently focused on pupils' learning. The school has intensified its use of assessment information. Regular checks and detailed analysis of progress at class, group and individual level have enabled leaders and managers to hold staff to account for the progress of pupils they teach. They also enable the school to offer staff the most appropriate professional development opportunities as part of performance management. Assessment information triggers well-judged interventions that boost pupils' progress and fully promote equality of opportunity. Very effective pastoral care ensures there is no discrimination.

Accurate self-evaluation gives the school a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses and enables it to plan accordingly. Leaders' and managers' reaction to variations in performance has been rigorous and achievement has moved sharply upwards in the last year. The school demonstrates strong capacity for further improvement.

The governing body is highly supportive of the school but is over reliant on information provided by leaders and managers at the expense of independent monitoring. However, members check up on safeguarding thoroughly. Safeguarding procedures are of high quality, providing a strong framework to ensure the safety of all. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, but the outside area provides only limited resources to stimulate children's engagement in all areas of learning.

The curriculum offers a wide variety of enjoyable experiences. Pupils are encouraged to develop their curiosity and their views are valued through the 'thought showers' at the beginning of topics. 'Magical starters' and 'exciting endings' are regular features that contribute to pupils' imagination and creativity. Strong cultural links to groups under represented amongst the school community do much to broaden pupils' horizons. The wholesale adoption of the UNICEF Rights Respecting School programme underpins much of pupils' excellent social and moral development.

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Highly developed links with local schools have enabled good practice to be shared to the benefit of a number of local school leadership teams. Partnerships with local businesses offer enterprise opportunities for pupils and additional resources for the school. Parents and carers become engaged with school life from the time their children start in the Reception class. Good systems, including an accessible website, ensure consistent flows of information from school to home and vice versa.

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.



29 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Muscliff Primary School, Bournemouth BH8 0AB

Many thanks for the very warm welcome that you gave to the inspectors when we recently visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to such mature, enthusiastic young people and would like to congratulate you on your excellent behaviour.

Muscliff is a good school. By Year 6 you reach attainment levels that are above average. You make good progress because you are well taught and are so keen to learn. Teaching is good. It is lively and challenging and we know you find lessons great fun because you told us.

The headteacher and her staff are very well organised in running the school and planning for the future; they make sure the school continues to get better. To help the school improve we are asking it to:

- check up on lessons more thoroughly to ensure that teaching becomes even better
- make sure that you are always well challenged and supported in all lessons.

You can help by keeping up your keen and helpful attitudes to school life. Once again thank you for all your help. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan
Lead inspector

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