

Mundesley Infant School

Trunch Road, Mundesley, Norwich, NR11 8LE

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Standards remain average overall and pupils' progress requires improvement. Recent improvements in teaching and the curriculum have not yet had an impact on the levels pupils are reaching in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils, especially boys, are not developing their writing skills at a fast enough pace. Many pupils do not form letters accurately and neatly, and the younger children do not have sufficient opportunities to practise writing.
- Too few pupils are stretched by mathematical activities and the most able do not have sufficient opportunities to extend their knowledge and learning.
- Although there is some good and outstanding teaching, and the amount of this is rising, the quality remains inconsistent and this means pupils' learning is too variable.
- Leaders have been successful in raising standards in reading but have not done enough to raise standards in writing and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Better teaching is helping children to link sounds and letters (phonics), and has already led to pupils making better progress in reading.
- The new headteacher has already identified where changes are needed and has started to make improvements, particularly in the teaching of reading.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and this has a positive impact on their attitudes to learning. Pupils are very positive about school and clearly enjoy their lessons.
- The pupils who attend the special resource base benefit from good provision and make good progress, often in a very short time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons and parts of lessons, some in the school and some in the specialist resource base. Most of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised. Some pupils read books with the inspector.
- The inspectors analysed and took account of the school's past surveys of parental views, as well as the 24 responses to the online survey (Parent View).
- Responses to nine staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspectors looked at key inspection documents, including performance data produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, self-evaluation work, reports to the governing body and the school improvement plan.
- During this inspection, the inspectors asked additional questions to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Godfrey Bancroft, Team inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mundesley Infant School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of the pupils is White British. There are no pupils currently at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The governing body, on behalf of the local authority, manages specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This special resource base makes short-term provision for pupils from four to seven years old who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. This provides for up to 10 pupils at any one time. Currently, five pupils attend, usually for a period of four days a week. On the fifth day, they return to their 'home' school.
- A children's centre and pre-school setting share the school site but these are inspected and reported on separately.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and the quality of teaching by:
 - providing tailored training and professional support to improve the quality of teaching in writing and mathematics
- Raise standards in writing by:
 - ensuring that the youngest children have enough opportunities to write
 - improving the quality of pupils' handwriting and the care shown in its presentation
 - narrowing the gap between boys' writing skills and those of the girls.
- Ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels in mathematics by:
 - providing the most able pupils with work that makes them think and develops their independence
 - providing more demanding activities for those pupils who finish tasks quickly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards in writing and mathematics have been consistently around average for a number of years with little sign of improvement. Standards in reading are rising rapidly due to new teaching methods and recent staff training.
- When pupils begin in the specialist resource base they are usually about a year behind where they are expected to be with many having joined their main school with standards that were very low for their age. They make good progress. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Even so, pupils' progress in acquiring the basic knowledge of word and letter sounds, and of basic number skills, is good.
- Most children in the Reception class start school with personal and social skills, and language and communication skills, that are below those expected for their age. Children make the progress they should and quickly become used to school routines and expectations. However, there are too few opportunities for children to choose and experiment with writing activities, both inside and outdoors.
- Progress in writing, including accuracy and presentation, is not fast enough because pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise. The quality of boys' writing remains below that of the girls and is almost half a term behind that of boys nationally. Progress in mathematics requires improvement because too few pupils reach the higher levels. There are missed opportunities to extend the use of their skills in problem solving and more independent activities.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs often make good progress. In 2012, those in Year 2 achieved better than similar pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the result of good, well-taught small intervention groups and one-to-one work, both within and outside the classroom.
- The 2012 national test results show that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals performed less well than similar pupils nationally and other groups within the school. In 2012, these pupils were the equivalent of more than a year behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. This was quickly recognised and the latest assessments made of these pupils show much improved progress in all three subjects.
- Progress in reading is accelerating under much improved and more consistent leadership, and more effective teaching. Improvements have been made to the teaching of how letters and sounds are linked. In one good intervention group, for example, Year 1 children created words with an 'air' sound in them, and wrote good-quality sentences. Boys now have much more positive attitudes to reading because of improvements to resources and topics that have greater appeal for them. Those who read to inspectors talked about books and showed pleasure in their skills.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is better at meeting the needs of the large majority of pupils, although not enough is done to extend the learning of the most able, especially in mathematics. This is because teachers do not always provide suitably demanding activities for pupils who have finished their work quickly. Insufficient opportunities are provided to improve writing skills, especially among the boys.

- Where the teaching is less successful, tasks do not provide pupils with time to work on their own enough or extend and deepen the thinking of the most able. Teaching assistants often provide very effective support for pupils but, at times, provide too much help rather than questioning to extend and encourage pupils' thinking. Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations for how pupils should present their work.
- The best teaching is extremely well planned and supported by good resources. Lessons are lively and interactive and the pupils are fully involved in their learning. In Year 2, for example, an excellent link to a reading text provided a motive for solving a witch's problems with a range of mathematical calculations. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils developed their descriptive vocabulary well when describing a range of imaginative settings.
- The teaching of reading has improved. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved following extensive training. New methods of teaching and updated resources are providing pupils with more appropriate activities to help develop their skills.
- Since the last inspection, good improvements have been made to the marking of pupils' work and the quality of feedback. Comments from teachers praise good work and suggest improvements and next steps. Good improvements to the way targets are set and shared with pupils on an individual basis have had a very positive impact on helping them to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Teaching in the specialist resource base is good. Teachers and teaching assistants prepare work that is matched precisely to the particular needs of each individual. Basic skills are taught well, although there are times when teachers too readily provide pupils with the answer to questions and do not extend their thinking sufficiently. Reading is taught well. Assessments of progress are accurate and used well to plan the next steps in learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour around the school, including in the specialist resource base, is good. Pupils are extremely polite and thoughtful about others.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and many of the activities in which they take part. The smiles on all faces during a dance session in a physical education lesson were evidence of this. Pupils speak positively about others' behaviour and their views are supported by most parents and carers. At lunchtime and break time, pupils generally play together well. Breaks are well supervised and any bumps or accidents are dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. This is supported by the views of parents and carers. Pupils talked unprompted about how and why, on a visit to the post office, they had to walk on the inside of the path with the adults on the outside.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare and are confident that, if it occurred, it would be dealt with well. Pupils have a good awareness of safety through learning about 'people who help us', and through activities such as visits to the fire station and visits from a dentist.
- The pupils who find it more of a challenge to behave well are provided for effectively through the specialist resource base. Those who access this provision and return to the school show much improved social skills. This helps them to make better progress when at school because they are more settled.

- Pupils are safe and well cared for in the specialist resource base. They benefit greatly from the commitment of staff to promoting their personal development and raising their self-esteem by consistently praising and recognising their efforts and achievements. Given the challenges these pupils face, their behaviour is remarkably good. They show interest in their work and talk with enthusiasm about the things they do, although most struggle to sustain their concentration without direct adult support.
- Attendance is broadly average. The school works hard with parents and carers to encourage full attendance.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good because standards remain no better than average, especially in writing and mathematics, and the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. However, the headteacher has begun to address weaknesses and recent improvements are evident in teaching and pupils' achievement, especially in reading. These improvements, backed by her good, strong leadership demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.
- The headteacher has made good use of focused training, performance targets and advice and support for individual staff to ensure a firm focus on improving pupils' progress. This has had a positive impact already in reading, but the recent sharing of best practice is at an early stage and inconsistencies in practice remain. Leaders recognise that they need to provide more training for teachers and other staff so that their teaching of writing and mathematics is more effective.
- The money available through the pupil premium is used effectively to help pupils known to be eligible for free school meals to take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and adult time. The progress made by these pupils is closely monitored and the data clearly indicate that gaps in attainment are narrowing.
- The school has improved the way that subjects are planned and taught. Planning provides links between subjects so that pupils can use the skills learned in different ways. For example, in one topic, dance and music were linked well to a history theme based on the Great Fire of London. Activities support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The specialist resource base is led and managed well. Activities and programmes of work are tailored to pupils' needs and, especially, for reinforcing improvements to pupils' behaviour. Liaison with parents and carers, and with the schools at which pupils are based, is good.
- The local authority has an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It is providing effective support and is working closely with the newly appointed headteacher to support the continuing improvement needed at the school. It has provided a range of training for governors and teaching staff and this has had a good impact on provision. It has also had a positive impact on the support provided for the headteacher in understanding and using available data regarding pupils' progress.
- The education of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well led and managed. This is reflected in their good progress. The teaching provided for them is well organised and focused, and their progress is closely tracked. Links with parents and carers are positive.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has had a significant number of recent changes to its membership. Governors are having extensive training to ensure that they can challenge leaders more successfully. Governors match available expertise to specific tasks. Useful 'Governor Days', when they visit the school to take part in activities and watch children at work, help governors to see the impact of their decisions. They have an appropriate understanding of the school's performance management and appraisal systems, and how these have been used in the past. Decisions about teachers' pay are more closely linked to performance and responsibilities, so the system now meets requirements. Governors track finances well, including the use of the pupil premium money. They support the school in deciding how this money is to be used. Their understanding of data gives them an appropriate awareness of how well the school is doing.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120835
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	405966

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Beck
Headteacher	Barbara Sudlow
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2010
Telephone number	01263 720401
Fax number	01263 722906
Email address	office@mundesley-infant.norfolk.sch.uk.

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