

Mousehold Infant & Nursery School

Mousehold Avenue, Norwich, NR3 4RS

Inspection dates 16–17 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school has maintained the high standards seen at the time of the last inspection.
- Children make outstanding progress in the Nursery and continue this into the Reception class and in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils achieve high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. They say reading is a favourite activity.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are continually reinforced in other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress because they are very well supported.
- Support is highly effective for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for pupils who join the school at other times than the usual starting dates.
- Teaching is outstanding in many lessons and never less than good.
- Lessons are well planned. Activities are adapted during the lesson and this means that pupils' work is usually very closely matched to individual needs.
- Behaviour is exemplary in lessons. Pupils are eager to learn and always keen to get on with their work.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Parents and carers agree.
- Pupils welcome opportunities to contribute to the work of the school.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She is highly effective in maintaining an outstanding quality of teaching and high standards.
- The headteacher is very well supported by subject leaders, governors and the senior leadership team.
- Leaders are rigorous in checking the work of the school and their insistence on high standards.
- Subject leaders work closely together to ensure that pupils always make rapid progress in all subjects.
- The governing body is very well informed. Governors bring a high level of skill to their work with the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely well promoted.
- Pupils benefit from an interesting range of subjects and many opportunities to be creative.

Information about this inspection

- Members of the inspection team visited 19 lessons taught by 11 staff and observed a range of support activities with individuals or small groups of pupils. Five joint observations of teaching were conducted with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff and two groups of pupils. An inspector spoke with parents in the playground before school. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority by telephone during the inspection.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 16 staff.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work. They also looked at the school’s improvement and development plan, data on pupils’ progress and achievement, monitoring and evaluation procedures, a wide range of policies and procedures, and arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils. An inspector attended assemblies and the end of Year 2 production for parents, carers and pupils.

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Hibbert	Additional Inspector
St John Burkett	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized infant school.
- The large majority of the pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average but has increased recently.
- A small number of children join the school at times other than the usual starting dates.
- A very small number of pupils are educated in specialist resource units at Bluebell, Sprowston and Heartsease Primary Schools in Norwich for short periods of time. These placements offer specialist support for children with autism, speech and language and behaviour difficulties.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion who are supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The headteacher has been in post for four years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is outstanding by:
 - refining planning and delivery of lessons to make sure challenge to pupils is always at the very highest levels
 - providing all teachers and teaching assistants with more opportunities to observe the very best practice in the school and elsewhere.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the school with attainment which is below, and frequently well below, that typical for their age. Meticulous planning, in which the children are involved, meets the needs of each individual child. They make outstanding progress in the Nursery and enter the Reception class close to age-related expectations and are able to apply the skills they have learned to their play activities.
- A large number of the children come from other settings or without pre-school experience and enter the Reception class well below the standards typical for their age, especially in speech and language skills. These are effectively improved with the help of a speech and language therapist.
- Children make at least good, and often excellent, progress in the Reception class and leave it in line with, or sometimes above, national expectations. This includes a growing number of children who speak English as an additional language. Some arrive with little or no English during the course of the school year. These children are well supported by a specialist who comes in one day a week to ensure these children make consistent and rapid progress. Key workers and playground buddies help new arrivals with social skills, and parents and carers are closely involved in the process of integration into the school and lessons. This means that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn.
- Results at the end of Year 1 in the screening check for letters and sounds (phonics) were below national expectations last year but have increased significantly this year with the help of the local authority's phonics adviser. The methods used to help pupils learn letters and sounds have improved greatly and are more consistent. They are accompanied by high expectations and close assessment of any gaps in learning. Word games, such as a treasure chest with real and imagined words, motivate children well.
- Rapid progress continues throughout Key Stage 1 with results at the end of Year 2 now well above those achieved nationally in all subjects. High expectations and calm, orderly routines mean pupils are always fully engaged. Numeracy and literacy skills are reinforced by the use of practical activities to develop mental mathematics and sharing of ideas with other pupils before writing begins, including through drama and role play.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least similar progress to others because they are well supported by highly trained and effective teaching assistants. Where necessary, additional support is provided through outside agencies. Small group work at regular intervals increases pupils' readiness to contribute in lessons.
- Pupil premium funding is astutely used to ensure that eligible pupils make similar progress to that of their peers. Gaps in English and mathematics have decreased rapidly and are now almost non-existent. Careful support, individually or in small groups, and additional on-going work with specialist staff have helped to raise results in reading and writing, and have made these pupils more confident as they approach new tasks.
- Pupils make excellent progress in reading. Many pupils spoke of reading as their favourite subject. They make very effective use of their skills in linking sounds and letters to work out difficult words. Books are chosen for readers with a careful eye to providing an on-going challenge with reading.
- The pupils who are educated elsewhere make similar progress to their peers because provision is

carefully monitored, the school receives regular reports and takes prompt action in response to any concerns, including making sure families are involved fully.

- Pupils feel they are making very rapid progress in school because support is always available in lessons and they have many opportunities to work independently. They are persistent in their approach and ready to concentrate for long periods. Parents and carers also feel that their children's progress is always good or better.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is never less than good and often outstanding. Teachers make excellent use of questioning to test pupils' knowledge and understanding and adjust tasks whenever necessary. This detailed probing is reflected in the high quality of lesson planning. All activities begin with a re-cap on previous learning. Teachers make excellent use of the outside areas, especially the forest school, to enrich their work.
- Where teaching is best, pupils have a constantly changing variety of tasks which build up levels of challenge for all groups. They have frequent opportunities to take a lead in presenting their ideas, assess situations and report back. Pupils in Year 2 did this very well in a mathematics lesson about the rate of growth of the beans, which they planted earlier this year. The teacher took care to link subjects with each other; mathematics, science, information technology and English all blended seamlessly.
- Literacy and numeracy are very well taught because of the strong emphasis on 'doing', such as in the regular sessions on maintaining very high levels of mental calculation skills. Equally, pupils' 'Creative Learning Journey' booklets make them eager to write. In one lesson, a careful blend of extended writing with visual stimuli linked to the wonders of the world that might be experienced on a pirate voyage.
- Best practice in the classroom is increasingly shared among staff. The school is now seeking to learn even more from other schools so that staff can develop the highest quality skills relating to teaching and assessment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well supported in lessons because their needs are quickly identified, regularly monitored and subtly pushed forward by adults. These approaches are modified quickly and effectively whenever necessary.
- The teaching of reading is outstanding. Pupils become independent readers very rapidly because teachers provide constant opportunities to read aloud or silently in class. All adults have high expectations that pupils will read well and fluently from a wide selection of books and so they do. One boy said, 'It's the best thing in the school' and his views were echoed by others. Teachers transmit their own enthusiasm for reading to pupils, who read with equal expression as a result.
- Marking is always good, and often exemplary, with careful guidance towards next steps in learning and encouraging comments. Pupils have regular opportunities to assess their own and others' work. Assessment procedures are aimed at ensuring that every child makes at least good progress. Presentation is of a very high standard.
- Where teaching is slightly less effective, challenge, while still good, does not always meet the needs of individual pupils closely enough to ensure attainment is always at the very highest level.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning. The variety of tasks and approaches used in lessons ensures that they are invariably absorbed in their learning. Pupils respect the right of others to work and learn, as shown by the purposeful atmosphere in all classrooms. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.
- Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are used to regulating their own behaviour. They are proud of their school and displays of their work in all areas are of high quality. Pupils in Year 2 showed this pride during the inspection in an end-of-term performance for parents, carers and staff. Parents and carers agree that behaviour is always of a very high standard.
- Pupils feel safe. Parents and carers share this view. Pupils say there is little, if any, bullying and know what to do 'if anyone did anything you didn't like'. Pupils know that there is always an adult to turn to and that it is important to sort out issues. As a pupil in Year 1 said, 'we try to be friends with everyone'. This statement underscores the school's determination that all pupils will have equal opportunities and that there should be no discrimination of any kind.
- Behaviour is always very well and consistently managed. Pupils value the opportunity to aim for class certificates, gold stars and other recognition of high-quality behaviour and attendance. Racist incidents and exclusions are very rare.
- Attendance is in line with national averages following intensive work by the school with parents, carers and outside agencies to promote regular and good attendance. As a result, persistent absence rates, centred on a few families, have more than halved. In conjunction with the local authority, the school has been relentless, and increasingly effective, in ensuring that all parents and carers are fully aware of the school's stringent expectations. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very effectively with families to reinforce these expectations in her added role as parent support adviser.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has worked successfully with her eye constantly on the pursuit of excellence so that pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching have been maintained at the high level seen at the time of the last inspection.
- She has assembled a strong senior leadership team, with a sharp focus on accurate self-evaluation and continuing improvement through shared activities like the analysis of pupils' work in their books and regular, sharply focused meetings about pupils' progress.
- Subject leaders check their subjects rigorously, including the progress of every pupil. They are at ease with leading developments in their subject areas, for example, in the introduction of more practical work to support learning in mathematics and science and more emphasis on pupils' spoken contributions in literacy lessons. Approaches are consistent because subject leaders meet regularly together, and with all staff, to discuss planning and the lessons to be learnt from current approaches to learning.
- The school offers a broad and well-balanced range of subjects. Teachers plan a careful blend of visual, written and spoken prompts so that pupils are always engaged by their learning and have many opportunities to be creative. Few tasks last too long. The subjects are tailored to pupils'

interests, a point reflected in the creative work which pupils assemble from the Nursery stage onwards. The school enhances learning with a large number of visits and visitors, and a range of clubs which it is working to increase.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and enables pupils to rapidly develop a good understanding of the world around them. Assemblies provide excellent opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect upon their feelings. Their curiosity is stimulated by areas set up regularly for role play, such as Cinderella's cellar in the Reception class. Links with Spain and Ghana are developing. Pupils encourage each other's efforts as part of the emphasis on social skills from an early age.
- Procedures relating to the performance of staff are rigorous, closely linked to the school's improvement and development plan, with an additional focus on developing individual teachers' skills and interests. Movement up pay scales is carefully reviewed and linked to national standards and the progress made by the teacher's class.
- Links with the local authority are 'light touch' and aimed at maintaining the present high levels of achievement and teaching.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is outstanding. Governors bring a wide variety of in-depth skills to their work, including through work in various educational areas and in school improvement. They have a high level of understanding of data and how to use it, especially in comparing the performance of this school with others, locally and nationally. Governors regularly visit the school to check on progress and monitor the quality of teaching. The governing body makes clear challenges to the staff in the drive to maintain the highest standards. Reviews of teachers' performance in the classroom are rigorous and designed to maintain the present high quality. Use of the pupil premium funding is carefully assessed and reviewed to ascertain its impact on pupils' progress.

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	120945
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	412431

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Hanke
Headteacher	Rachael Judd
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2008
Telephone number	01603 427012
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