

# Maidstone Infant School

Maidstone Road, Felixstowe, IP11 9EG

**Inspection dates** 12–13 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their below-average starting points. They reach average standards by the end of Year 2.
- Most teaching is good or outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and their marking helps pupils to improve their work. The teaching of reading is particularly good.
- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is often outstanding. Children quickly develop their knowledge and skills and achieve well.
- Teaching assistants are well used throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' learning and behaviour.
- Teaching in the specialist provision for pupils with complex learning needs is outstanding, bringing significant improvements to their behaviour and learning.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite, friendly and courteous.
- Leaders have ensured that teaching and the achievement of pupils have improved since the previous inspection.
- The school monitors pupils' progress carefully and provides support quickly when children begin to fall behind.
- The governing body is well informed and holds the school to account for its results.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in all subjects.
- Some work for the most-able pupils is not challenging enough to ensure they achieve as well as they could.
- The behaviour of the students, while good, still relies too much on direction from teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 12 lessons, of which five were jointly observed with members of the school’s leadership team. In addition a number of shorter visits were made to lessons and an assembly.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils’ work and the school’s data on their progress. Inspectors heard children read and observed one-to-one support for literacy.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of pupils were gathered from members of the school council and from other pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked carefully at documents including the school’s improvement plan, self-evaluation documents and records relating to behaviour, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors spoke with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day, as there were too few responses to the Parent View online questionnaire for the information to be available. They also considered responses to an inspection questionnaire from 25 staff.

## Inspection team

Nicholas Asker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Aileen Thomas

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Maidstone Infant school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a few from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Fewer pupils than average speak 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 of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school has an above average proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for children of service families, children in the care of the local authority and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs on site, which currently has five pupils with a variety of complex needs. This is known as the Specialist Support Centre (SSC).
- The school provides a morning nursery class and a breakfast club.
- The school works in collaboration with the nearby Causton Junior School, with the same head teacher responsible for both schools but separate governing bodies. There is a proposal for the schools to become formally federated.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
  - planning more demanding activities for the most-able pupils so that they can make more rapid progress
  - sharing the outstanding teaching practice more widely within the school so that other teachers can develop their skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's levels of knowledge and skills are below those typical for their age when they join the school. They achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and leave the school with average standards for their age. Pupils are well prepared for the move to junior school.
- In 2013 pupils' attainment was broadly in line with national averages for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. This represents a rising trend, as standards have previously been below average.
- Children's progress is monitored closely and recorded carefully in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that teachers are fully aware of each child's learning. Challenging individual targets are set using this information and these are used well to ensure children make good progress.
- In 2013, the national screening check in phonics (the sounds that letters make) at the end of Year 1 showed a broadly average proportion of pupils achieving the national standard, a significant improvement on the results in 2012.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils in the school. This is as a result of the high expectations that teachers have of them, and well-planned support and interventions that are used.
- The pupils in the SCC also make good progress, taking account of the extent of their needs, as a result of outstanding teaching and support. Their behaviour, although challenging at times, is particularly well managed by the staff. They receive specialist teaching in the mornings but often join in with other classes for afternoon activities and lessons.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding for interventions and extra teaching sessions, so that these pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, in line with that of other children in the school. In 2013, the pupils supported through the pupil premium pupils were over a term behind other pupils in reading and writing, and nearly two terms behind in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Although this gap was slightly wider than in 2012, current pupils supported through the pupil premium are on track to close the gap this year.
- The most-able pupils make good progress that is similar to their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. However, teachers do not always plan activities that are sufficiently challenging to allow them to make more rapid progress

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, both in their work and behaviour. Pupils get frequent encouragement to succeed and praise for doing well. They are very positive about their teaching and the school. They are keen to contribute answers to the class, and settle quickly at the start of each lesson so teaching can start promptly.
- The teaching of reading is a priority for the school. The teaching of phonics takes place in groups according to pupils' abilities. A specialist teaching assistant offers additional one-to-one support for those who need it. Phonics lessons observed during the inspection saw children

enthusiastically sounding out words.

- Pupils' work is marked frequently. Teachers clearly identify what has been achieved and add constructive comments on how pupils can improve their work. For example, short, unstructured and unimaginative sentences used at the start of the year in pupils' writing books had improved to include punctuation and adjectives by the time of the inspection. Teachers' assessments are well moderated within the school and in partnership with the junior school.
- Teaching is good and in some cases outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is helping pupils to develop their skills and confidence. Teachers are skilled at planning suitable activities and taking opportunities to reinforce mathematics and literacy skills. For example, in one lesson the teacher took the opportunity to practice individual and group counting during registration time.
- Teaching in the SSC is outstanding. Teachers and support staff consistently apply clear behaviour policies and give constant feedback on individual pupils' behaviour. Pupils were praised for 'good listening' and 'good choices'. The learning support assistant records small steps in progress that pupils make, and staff are skilled at recognising how to maximise learning as opportunities arise. There is a strong emphasis on developing social skills, so that the pupils can join in with some classes for some lessons.
- Parents spoken with at the start of each day of the inspection agree that teaching in the school is good.
- The work of teaching assistants is good and often outstanding. In one lesson, skilful questioning from a teaching assistant fully engaged a reluctant learner in his work and enabled him to achieve well. They routinely take notes during lessons and discuss with teachers the progress that individual pupils have made.
- Teachers use assessment well during lessons and adapt lessons to meet pupils' needs. Weekly planning is adapted to take account of how well children are doing. Although most lessons are well planned for the majority of pupils, teachers do not always set challenging enough tasks to stretch the most-able pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school has a positive atmosphere. Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. During the inspection several classes worked outside and on each occasion movement through the school was calm and sensible.
- Children are keen to learn. Most like to contribute to lessons and engage enthusiastically. During an art lesson there was an atmosphere of quiet purposefulness as pupils created a jungle scene. These pupils were proud of their work and eager to explain what they had done.
- Pupils are polite and caring of each other. One child observed looking unhappy during playtime was quickly approached and consoled by other children. Pupils in need of adult help often start their sentences with 'excuse me'. All pupils wear the school uniform smartly and the school building, including some bright and lively displays, is well respected by the children.
- Attendance has improved over the last three years and is now near the national average. Punctuality to school has improved, partly through the use of the breakfast club.

- The school has an effective behaviour management strategy which is clearly understood by the pupils and consistently applied by the staff. The system for monitoring behaviour continually allows poor behaviour to be dealt with rapidly. Children who frequently misbehave are quickly identified and behaviour programmes are put in place. As a result there have been no exclusions in the last year.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils spoken with told inspectors that they feel safe in school and their parents and carers agree. Staff who responded to questionnaire unanimously reported that behaviour of the pupils is good. Pupils are able to identify risk and potential dangers, and they use the variety of play equipment provided safely.
- Pupils are aware of what constitutes bullying, and recorded incidents are rare. The school has recorded no prejudice-related incidents. Children play well together, and especially enjoy staff joining in with their games.
- Teaching assistants play an important role in the management of behaviour in classrooms. They routinely position themselves where they can be close to pupils whose attention may wander, and nearly always manage to re-engage these children well.
- Behaviour is not outstanding as pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of the types of behaviour needed for learning. In a small number of lessons some pupils lose interest in their tasks and stop working. However, teachers are quick to spot this and pupils respond well to their interventions.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The senior leaders have effectively tackled the issues identified during the last inspection. As a result the quality of teaching and achievement of the pupils have improved. The school's view of its own strengths and performance is accurate. The local authority has a similarly secure view of the school.
- Members of the leadership team have a clear picture of teaching and learning. In lessons jointly observed with inspectors, staff made accurate judgements about the quality of teaching. The system in place to monitor the impact of teaching is rigorous and effective, and pupils' achievement has improved. However, the school does not yet share outstanding teaching practice so that other teachers can develop their skills.
- Each class teacher is held to account for the progress of the pupils in their class through regular progress meetings. The school does not allow teachers to move through the salary structure unless pupils' progress targets are met.
- The local authority has provided effective support for the school since the last inspection. It was initially involved with school leaders in planning actions to improve the school. It has been able to reduce the level of support as the school has improved. Local authority support is still proving effective in developing the leadership skills of the mathematics and English co-ordinators.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Rigorous assessment and tracking of pupils' skills enables teachers to plan activities that ensure children make good progress, regardless of their starting points. As a result they are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects, and engages the interest of pupils. It is adapted when necessary to meet their needs. Opportunities are taken within and outside of the

curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is good. The school has adopted a particular strategy to improve pupils' writing, by increasing the time spent talking about and planning their written work. This change took place after a careful look at progress data showed a weakness in pupils' writing.

- English and mathematics co-ordinators work effectively to improve pupils' achievement in their subjects, by sharing their subject expertise through joint planning activities. They analyse data effectively, identifying children in need of extra support. All staff who completed the inspection questionnaire agree that the school is well led and managed.
- The school works closely with Causton Junior School, and several staff work in both schools. Many routines and practices, such as the behaviour policy, are shared between the two schools, which helps pupils to be well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Parents and carers are often invited into school to take part in reward assemblies, 'stay and play' sessions and coffee mornings. However, the school believes that it must continue to try and build stronger links with parents and others in the local community.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted well and there is no evidence of any discrimination. All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. Governors and staff training in safeguarding are up to date.
- Pupil premium funding has been well used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. The funding has paid for a variety of additional support and intervention activities. As a result pupils supported by the pupil premium make progress at least as good as those who do not receive such support.
- Primary school sport funding has been well used to encourage greater participation by pupils, and more specialist training for staff. As a result sports clubs are popular and well attended.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a clear view of the quality of teaching within the school. The governing body ensures that staff receive pay increases only if their performance is good. Governors are familiar with data on pupils' attainment and progress, and are able to explain how these are used to hold the school's leaders to account. Several governors have recently attended training sessions and the way in which they challenge school leaders has become more rigorous. They are rightly proud of the positive ethos and climate for learning in the school, and of the improvements made since the last inspection. They know how primary school sport and pupil premium funding is being used, and evaluate the impact of this funding effectively. The school's finances are well monitored. The governing body ensures that all requirements for safeguarding children are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124581
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	430802

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	174
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Debra Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lizzie Girling
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01394 283375
<b>Fax number</b>	01394 276956
<b>Email address</b>	admin@maidstone.suffolk.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

