

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Sandra Bunnell
Mount CofE Primary and Nursery School
Kings Road
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG24 1EW

Dear Sandra Bunnell

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Mount CofE Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 8 March 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors considered evidence that included:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussions with pupils
- documentary evidence
- discussions with school leaders and staff.

Having evaluated the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's last inspection.

Context

Mount CofE Primary School is an average-sized primary school. Two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is twice the national average. Around a third of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or a disability is below average. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal times of entry is above average.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Since the last full inspection of the school, it has been noted that attendance levels have declined. Pupils' absence and persistent absence rates are well above national averages. During the inspection, I looked closely at the school's records and analysis of attendance and considered the actions taken by the school to reduce levels of absence.

The school works tirelessly to promote the importance of good attendance and provides support for pupils and families. Leaders carry out weekly monitoring of attendance and class percentages are shared during whole-school assembly. Pupils know that the attendance target is 96%. Individual attendance is also tracked and the school contacts parents if pupils' attendance falls below 90%.

Some groups of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds have particularly high absence rates. The school has robust systems in place to follow up these absences and make sure pupils' whereabouts are known and monitored. The school tries to maintain contact with parents and provides work and reading books for pupils who may be absent for an extended time. Attendance is discussed during structured conversations with parents and the school works closely with families to improve attendance if it is low. Leaders acknowledge that more work needs to be done to promote the importance of attendance with some groups of parents who are harder to reach.

School leaders have introduced a range of strategies and rewards to improve attendance and to reduce the number of persistent absentees. Text messages are used to remind parents about school term dates. The school does not authorise holidays taken in term time. Pupils with high attendance or improved attendance are rewarded.

School leaders have created a culture of high expectations in the school that is shared, supported and promoted by all staff. The school's ethos and values are seen in the positive relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves. The school has a friendly, caring atmosphere where each individual is valued.

You welcome pupils and parents as they arrive at the beginning of the school day. Classrooms open onto the playground and there are opportunities for parents to talk to teachers before the school day starts. Teachers ensure that there is a warm welcome for pupils and parents alike. When the bell rings, pupils line up quickly and without fuss. These well-established routines ensure that the day starts promptly and calmly. Late arrivals are noted and reasons for lateness followed up.

I spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the day. They all praised the school and were particularly positive about the behaviour and the care and support provided 'for every individual child'.

Behaviour and attitudes in lessons are good. Teachers are well organised and this ensures that pupils settle quickly to learning. Pupils share their teachers' enthusiasm and most are keen to participate in lessons and contribute to discussions. Pupils work sensibly in pairs or small groups, listening to each other and showing respect for other's views. Additional adults provide effective support for pupils who need help with their learning. Children in the early years are given excellent opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. For example, a child confidently explained to me that the role-play area was a doctor's surgery and that if you are poorly you have to 'take turns and make an appointment'.

Pupils move around the building sensibly. They are well mannered, for example holding doors open for others and saying 'thank you' and 'you're welcome'. During the inspection, the school photographer was taking class photographs. Pupils' behaviour was excellent while they waited and when the photograph was being taken.

Most pupils understand how the school's values link with fundamental British values of tolerance and fairness. There are a few pupils who occasionally exhibit behaviour that is not acceptable and who do not fully embrace or demonstrate these values. Any outbursts are dealt with extremely well and the learning of others is not disrupted. Rather than criticise the behaviour, teachers focus on what is expected of pupils and order is quickly restored. 'Time out' in a quiet place is provided when necessary and provides an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their behaviour with support from an adult.

The school has an appropriate policy that outlines expected behaviour and attitudes to learning. There is a code of conduct that all pupils are expected to follow. Leaders explained to me that the school has clear expectations and

principles that all staff follow, but that there is not a set 'ladder' system for sanctions. The school knows pupils well as individuals and this approach allows teachers some flexibility in their responses to any poor behaviour, taking individual circumstances into account.

The school does not operate set break times. Teachers use their judgement as to when the class needs a break from lessons. Sometimes this is an opportunity to go outside so that pupils can be physically active; at other times it might be an opportunity for pupils to enjoy a chat while having a snack. This means that teachers can be responsive to the needs of the pupils and can deal with any tensions that arise.

Lunchtimes are well organised and run smoothly. Pupils line up sensibly to collect their meal, walking carefully to tables where they can sit with their friends. Adults encourage and praise good table manners; pupils take responsibility for clearing away their own plates and cutlery. Older pupils, acting as monitors, are on hand to help younger children and this is also a great help to the lunchtime staff. Pupils enjoy the social time in the dining hall, chatting and sometimes sharing a joke. For example, some of the older boys enjoyed telling me about their football game amid some good-humoured banter!

Outside, good use is made of the extensive space available. Pupils have access to a wide range of equipment and resources to add interest and focus to their play. Older pupils were seen playing football, hockey and skipping. In the playground used by younger pupils, there were ride-on toys and skipping ropes; older pupils also helped to organise games. At all times during the lunch hour, there was a high staff presence. Teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors work as a team to look after pupils of all ages. Teachers told me they enjoy lunchtimes as they can get to know pupils better, including those who are not in their class.

I spoke to different groups of pupils during the inspection. They all agreed that behaviour is generally good but that on occasion a few pupils could be 'a bit moody' and said that teachers manage these pupils well. They explained the school's expectations and the range of sanctions that may be applied for poor behaviour. There are rewards for good behaviour; pupils particularly like the texts to their parents to tell them about good work or behaviour. Pupils say there is no bullying in school and that any disputes are quickly resolved with the help of teachers. Pupils are confident that their teachers will help them sort out any worries or concerns they may have. Pupils are aware of the risks of internet use and social media and know how to report concerns. Some pupils explained to me how the school helps them with their own personal challenges for behaviour and learning. They value and appreciate the support of teachers and other adults.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to promote the importance of good attendance by engaging with parents, particularly those who find it more difficult to engage with the school, by means of technology and other innovative approaches.
- Extend the opportunities for all groups of pupils to:
 - explore, discuss and deepen their understanding of how the school's values link with fundamental British values
 - apply this knowledge to embrace fully the school's expectations for attendance and behaviour so they can express their own views and appreciate the viewpoints of others.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Southwell, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Salt

Ofsted Inspector