

# Mundella Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118384
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	312916
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Madeleine Gerard

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	179
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	23
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Allan Britton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynn Trowbridge Seal
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 October 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Black Bull Road Folkestone CT19 5QX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01303 252265
<b>Fax number</b>	01303 252281

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 October 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Mundella Primary is a smaller than average school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in Reception. The large majority of pupils are White British and a small minority are from other White backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below that found nationally and few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average and many of these find basic literacy and numeracy difficult, or need help to settle in class. The percentage of pupils who join or leave the school part-way through their education is very high. There have been a number of senior staff changes over recent years. The headteacher was appointed in March 2008. The school has been awarded Healthy School status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Active Mark for physical education (PE).

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Mundella Primary is a satisfactory school. The school's strengths lie in its success in supporting the personal development of the pupils and in establishing close partnerships with outside agencies to support pupils' welfare. In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well. All pupils are valued and enjoy themselves in the school's safe and caring environment. The school works hard to involve parents and carers in their children's learning. For example, the school provides information at the start of term about the work pupils will be doing in different subjects. Reflecting a typical view, one parent commented, 'The headteacher has introduced many innovations and additions to the school which have both helped and improved the performance of my children.'

Children join the school with a range of skills and capabilities, but generally attainment on entry is below the expected levels for their age and is particularly low in literacy and numeracy skills. Children settle quickly into the EYFS and make satisfactory progress. Their personal and social skills are prioritised. Detailed records of continuous observation are kept. However, information from assessments is not always used well to ensure children are set appropriately challenging tasks to meet their needs and improve their progress further.

Progress through the rest of the school is satisfactory, with pupils reaching below average standards by the end of Year 6. There are some examples of good progress. For example, the school's own data show pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Nevertheless, pupils are not making consistently good progress across the school because teaching and learning are too variable across classes. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and pupils enjoy opportunities to talk about their learning in pairs. However, teachers are not using assessment information well enough in every class to ensure that pupils are always suitably challenged. Consequently, expectations about what the pupils are capable of are not always high enough, particularly for the more able pupils. Tasks are not consistently well matched to what pupils are supposed to learn and pupils do not always have opportunities to take an active part. Although marking gives feedback on strengths, it does not always make clear to pupils what they need to do to move up to the next level in their work. Some challenging target setting is helping pupils to make the progress that they do, but this is not consistent.

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' good personal development. For example, all pupils take part in physical exercise in the playground at the start of every day, which encourages their very positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Links are developing between subjects although this is not fully effective in ensuring good progress throughout the school. This is because opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills, particularly in literacy, are sometimes missed.

The new headteacher has successfully united staff and set a clear direction for the school based on raising standards and achievement. The school accurately analyses its provision. However, priorities for development which stem from the process of self-evaluation do not always result in all leaders and managers taking brisk action where necessary to produce rapid improvements.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Over recent years, children joining the Reception class have had levels of skills and capabilities below those typically expected for four-year-olds and their literacy and numeracy skills have

been particularly weak. Induction arrangements are good and include opportunities for children and their parents and carers to visit the school as well as individual home visits conducted by staff before the start of term. Well-established routines help children to settle quickly when they join the school. For example, the Reception class joins the whole school in the playground for exercises at the start of the day. Adults correctly prioritise the development of personal and social skills. For example, children quickly learn to share equipment so that relationships with adults and other children are positive. There is an appropriate focus on children's language and mathematical skills as these are often their weakest areas. There are good opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves and the recently added cover to the outdoor area ensures that children can develop their learning in all weathers. However, this is sometimes at the expense of an even balance with adult-led activities focusing on the specific needs of the children. The introductions to some sessions are too lengthy so that the pace drops and learning slows. There is also room for greater challenge for those who find learning easy. The very recently appointed EYFS coordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and that all pupils throughout the school, including in the EYFS, are set suitably challenging tasks.
- Make sure pupils know consistently what the next steps are in their learning in order to move up to the next level in their work.
- Sharpen the skills of all leaders and managers in identifying the most appropriate action to bring about swift improvements to provision.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory. Rates of progress through the school are uneven because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and because expectations about what the pupils can achieve have not always been high enough. The school's own assessment data and results in tests at the end of Year 2 show that rates of pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 have improved recently and standards which have been low in the past were broadly average at the end of Year 2 in 2008, although they were weaker in writing. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated and have been generally below average. Provisional results for 2008 show standards were below average in science and particularly low in English and mathematics. This represents satisfactory progress from pupils' low starting points. All groups of pupils at the school make similarly satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well and relationships throughout the school are good. Older pupils are caring towards younger ones. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, for example as school councillors and as mediators helping to sort out any minor playground problems. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are involved in celebrating the life of Walter Tull, a significant figure in black history and a former pupil of the school. They raise funds to support local charities, which helps them to think about those less fortunate than themselves and

encourages generosity of spirit. One of the features that stands out at Mundella is pupils' excellent awareness of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They are keen to participate in games and enjoy using skipping ropes at breaktimes. Attendance has improved sharply since the last inspection and is now broadly average. This is in no small part due to pupils' enthusiasm for school. In the main, pupils listen well in lessons, although their attention sometimes wanes when they are expected to sit for too long listening to instructions. Although pupils take a growing pride in their school, they do not always take as much pride in their work. For some pupils, the quality of their work is marred by untidy presentation. Pupils' progress in basic skills prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and friendly. This helps motivate pupils to try hard and do their best. Teaching encourages pupils to share ideas by discussing their learning in pairs. The positive impact of this shows through in the increased number of hands that go up to answer questions. Teaching does not always make clear what pupils will be learning in lessons. This limits opportunities for pupils to gauge for themselves how well they are making progress in lessons. In most classes there is quite a wide range of ability but too often, pupils are expected to do very similar work. This means that tasks are sometimes too easy for some and too difficult for others. Pupils who struggle with basic literacy and numeracy as well as those who need help to settle in class benefit from good support from teaching assistants which helps them to keep up, even where the work is too hard. It is the more able pupils who make less progress than they should because the work is not always challenging enough for them.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and rightly prioritises literacy and numeracy. There are some links between subjects. For example, pupils were using bar graphs to record the results of science experiments. However, opportunities to develop pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects are not used systematically to raise standards. There is a good range of well-liked extra clubs including chess, art and country dancing. The daily lunchtime computer club is particularly popular. Other highlights include brass instrument lessons for older pupils, swimming and French in Years 3 to 6. Visitors to the school, including the police and fire services, help pupils to develop a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils enjoy 'golden time' when classes are mixed across the age groups and they can select from a range of activities including sewing, which is a popular choice. This supports pupils' good social skills. Through good links with local schools the more able pupils have some opportunities to develop their mathematics skills. However, activities designed to stimulate these pupils are more limited in the school.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well looked after and this contributes well to their good personal development and helps to ensure that they feel happy and safe in school. Good systems for chasing up absences and any persistent lateness have helped to improve attendance rates. There is good support

for those who join the school part-way through their primary education, based on a careful assessment of their specific needs. This helps these pupils to settle quickly. The progress of all pupils is carefully tracked but teachers do not routinely make enough use of this information to match work to the widely different needs of the pupils in their classes. Most work is marked regularly but pupils are not always given a clear indication of what they need to do next in order to improve their work. For example, spelling and punctuation errors in pupils' writing sometimes go uncorrected when this is in subjects other than English. This limits pupils' progress in developing their literacy and writing skills.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and leadership team have had particular success in creating an environment where pupils enjoy school and want to learn. The introduction of rewards, including the 'catch me' cards awarded by staff to pupils who are spotted being particularly helpful or kind, has been a key factor in this. The school has been successful in building an effective partnership with parents and plays a growing part in the local community. Less well developed is the school's involvement in broadening pupils' experience of global communities. The headteacher, leadership team and governors have a clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths and priorities for development. Regular monitoring has correctly identified, for example, where teaching and learning could be enhanced to accelerate pupils' progress. However, the school has not always been rigorous enough in following these up and putting in place the required improvements. Some recently appointed curriculum leaders and managers have not been in post long enough in order to bring about further development. This means that a number of the points for improvement identified by the school remain ongoing. The governing body is working closely with the school and is taking an active part in helping the school to improve further.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mundella Primary School, Folkestone, CT19 5QX

Thank you for your friendly welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. Mundella Primary is a satisfactory school.

We enjoyed our visit very much and were particularly pleased to hear about the work you are doing to celebrate the achievements of Walter Tull, an important person in black history as well as being a former pupil of your school. We also enjoyed seeing you all doing your daily exercises in the playground at the start of the school day. We want to tell you what we found.

These are the best things about your school.

- You enjoy school and with the support and encouragement of the staff, you are attending more regularly than in the past.
- You know why it is important to keep yourselves fit and healthy, and you enjoy the physical activities the school organises for you. This is one of the best things about your school.
- You get on well with each other and with adults.
- In addition to your lessons, you have a good choice of clubs which many of you attend.
- Those of you who join the school during the year are helped to settle quickly.
- The adults make sure that you are cared for, helped and safe.

We have asked the school to make sure that teachers plan work that is just the right level of difficulty for you. We have also suggested that they give you more ideas to improve your work when they mark your books and make sure you know your targets. When trying to improve Mundella Primary School, we have also asked the leaders and managers to make sure the most important things get done quickly. You can help by continuing to attend school regularly, arriving on time and telling your teachers if you find the work too easy or too difficult.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for your help and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard Lead inspector