

Mundeford Community Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113738
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	325872
Inspection date	25 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	178
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Paines
Headteacher	Diane Murcott
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Queen's Road Mundeford Christchurch BH23 3HH

Age group	4–7
Inspection date	25 February 2009
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Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The achievement of the youngest pupils in each year group and pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities in mathematics.
- The achievement of boys.

Evidence was gathered from the observation of lessons and small group work, analysis of school tracking and assessment data, curriculum documents and monitoring and development planning, and from discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body and pupils. The views of parents were gathered from the returns of the Ofsted and the school's own questionnaires.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Mundeford is a popular infant school. A very small number of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which cover moderate learning, behaviour, and speech, communication and language needs, is around average. The school holds the Activemark and Healthy School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Mudeford Infant School is an outstanding school which provides particularly well for individual pupils' needs. In this caring and supportive environment, pupils thrive and make exceptionally good progress in both their personal and academic development. Parents recognise this and are extremely appreciative of the high quality care and education that their children receive. As one parent commented, 'An exceptional school. I feel privileged that both of my children have benefitted from such an excellent start to their education.'

The school's success is due to the outstanding leadership and management seen at all levels. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are extremely effective in supporting and enabling all staff to perform well. Self-evaluation is excellent and has achieved recognition from the local authority. Challenging improvement targets are set, being continually raised further as the school achieves its aims. Standards have risen especially well since the school's last inspection and continue to do so. This gives confidence that the school is exceptionally well placed to improve further. The governors' 'School Improvement Group' plays a very effective role in supporting development. Very good financial management benefits pupils especially well, for example through the employment of high quality teaching assistants. The school's commitment to its local and wider community and its partnership with parents and other schools and agencies is outstanding. For example, a group of young adults helps maintain the school buildings and grounds and pupils help enhance the local area through their participation in the 'Christchurch in Bloom' competition. Parents are encouraged to be full partners in their children's learning and enjoy the many opportunities to join in with school activities.

Standards on entry to Reception are below those expected for this age. Pupils' outstanding achievement is evident in the above average standards reached by the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, pupils do exceptionally well in reading and writing and by Year 2, standards are high. Standards in mathematics are above average, but the school is determined that pupils will do as well in this subject and is working successfully to raise standards even further. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is very good due to the excellent provision, which gives children a very good platform to build on in Years 1 and 2. A major reason for the school's success is the excellent system in place for supporting pupils' progress. Progress is assessed and checked very regularly, and excellent use is made of the information to provide extra help when progress has slowed or inspire the higher attaining pupils to do even better. Very effective programmes are provided for these groups, as was seen in a session to help pupils develop their reading skills. As a result, the younger pupils in each year group and pupils with learning or language needs achieve as well as their classmates.

The curriculum is especially well planned to meet pupils' needs and interests. For example, the school is very successful in providing activities which engage boys' interest and motivate them to learn. This helps to ensure that boys achieve as well as girls. Activities are especially well designed to enable all pupils to fully participate in school life, including those who have disabilities. Very good attention is given to adapting the curriculum to raise standards even further, resulting in higher standards in mathematics this year. Enrichment, through a range of school clubs and links with other schools, is outstanding. In particular, links with The Grange Sports College help pupils to achieve high standards in physical education and develop an excellent awareness of how to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

The outstanding curriculum underpins high quality teaching and learning because activities are exceptionally well matched to the level at which individual pupils are working. Tasks are challenging and interesting and help pupils to investigate and find out things for themselves. However, some teachers are more skilled than others in creating an exciting and stimulating learning environment. Staff are especially good at ensuring that pupils understand exactly what they have to do and how to check if they have achieved the lesson objective. This results in very good discussions about their work, often with other pupils. Pupils are very confident learners, willingly trying out new things, with a determination to do their very best. The extremely well qualified classroom assistants make a major contribution to pupils' learning, especially when working with different groups. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are especially well taught, with pupils being provided with a wealth of opportunities to use these in other subjects. This prepares pupils exceptionally well for their future lives.

This is a very caring school where pupils' safety and welfare are at the heart of its work. It fully complies with government guidelines for the safeguarding of pupils and pastoral support is excellent. Many parents wrote of their appreciation for the way in which staff deal with individual children's problems or concerns. Highly skilled classroom assistants help provide outstanding care for pupils who have specific needs, especially those who are disabled, one example is through the 'Nurture Group'. The advice given to help pupils improve their work, for example through very effective marking, is outstanding.

The high quality care ensures pupils feel very safe and happy in school, eagerly participating in all activities. As one parent wrote, 'My child's attitude and abilities have been transformed due to the care and dedication of the staff at this school.' Pupils' great enjoyment of school means they are very keen to attend, and the school's rigorous discouragement of termtime holidays has led to a rise in levels over the last year. Pupils' moral and social development is excellent and they are developing into mature, polite and thoughtful young people. This is evident in the way they welcome visitors to the school. Although some pupils find it difficult to behave well, staff are very effective in managing this, and behaviour is good. The school is a very happy and harmonious place to be and pupils have an excellent awareness of how to keep safe. Spiritual and cultural development, although not as strong, are developing well due to the increased opportunities for creative activities in lessons. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and the wider community. For example, environmental education activities help pupils contribute to the world around them.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Over the past few years, attainment on entry has been declining, particularly in some key literacy and numeracy skills. Children make very good progress and, by Year 1, standards are above average although they are slightly lower in numeracy skills due to children's lower starting points. They make exceptionally good progress in acquiring early literacy skills. Children's personal development is excellent. They quickly develop confidence and enjoy taking responsibility for their own tasks, willingly choosing and tidying away resources. Children very much enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their learning. Children's abilities and interests are very carefully assessed when they start school, with staff making sure that the tasks set encourage children to learn and progress well. As in the rest of the school, progress is checked very regularly and activities adapted to meet emerging needs. Staff have an excellent awareness of how to help children learn and develop so there is a very good balance between activities where children work with an adult and those they choose and organise for themselves. The

classroom is a buzzing and exciting place to be, where children enjoy learning new things and want to do their best. Excellent attention is paid to children's welfare, with especially good liaison with parents, local pre-schools and agencies, such as social services. Although the Early Years Foundation Stage leader is relatively new to the post, with the support of senior leaders, the provision is exceptionally well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in mathematics to the same high level as that seen in English by providing more opportunities for practical and exciting learning activities.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

26 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mudeford Community Infant School, Christchurch, BH23 3HH

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly, polite and helpful. I particularly want to thank the school council pupils who gave up their lunchtime to speak with us. We think your school is excellent and are delighted that you and your parents agree.

- Here are some of the things we found out were good about the school:
- You make very good progress and standards are above average. You do especially well in reading and writing where standards are high.
- Your personal development is excellent. You are mature and thoughtful young people and you do a lot to help your school and the local area.
- You love coming to school and work very hard to do your best.
- Teachers plan lots of interesting activities that help you to develop new skills especially well.
- Teaching is excellent; in particular, adults are very good at getting you to discuss your work and explain what you have learnt.
- The assistants who help in classes are highly skilled and give you excellent support.
- Staff take especially good care of you and give you excellent advice on how to do even better.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors lead the school exceptionally well and are especially good at helping it to improve.

- Here is what we have asked your school to improve:
- Although you are doing really well, we agree with staff that they can do more to help you to improve your mathematics work. You can help by trying really hard to do as well in this subject as you do in reading and writing.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

D Wilkinson Lead Inspector