

Wakefield The Mount Junior and Infant School

The Mount, off Thornes Road, Wakefield , West Yorkshire, WF2 8QW

Inspection dates 4–5 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 from their starting points in the Reception class and by the time they leave Year 6 they reach average standards of attainment.
- The school's leadership checks the work of the school very carefully and then takes effective action. As a result, achievement and teaching are continually improving.
- The overall quality of teaching is good. Pupils enjoy the lively and exciting lessons provided by the majority of teachers.
- The school has responded well to the challenges raised by pupils leaving and joining the school at different times.
- Those pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and those with disabilities and special educational needs make good progress. The growing numbers of pupils with English as an additional language often make rapid progress.
- Pupils usually behave well in lessons and try to do their best. Pupils say they feel safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' standards in writing are not as high as those in reading and mathematics, and the quality of pupils' presentation of their work is too variable.
- In a few lessons, introductions are too long restricting pupils' opportunities to practise their skills, especially in writing.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked but pupils do not always respond to the comments that teachers write in their books.
- Teachers do not always share effective ways of working. For example, although some teachers make sure that the work set is at the correct level for pupils, this is not always the case.
- The sanctions used to improve behaviour include writing activities that can give pupils a negative view of writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in every class, visiting 12 lessons. They listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read. They held discussions with pupils and staff, met two governors and the school improvement adviser employed by the local authority. In addition, the inspection team evaluated the quality of pupils' work in their books and folders.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and forming judgements.
- The inspection team looked at a range of school documentation. This included those related to safeguarding, the plans for the school's improvement, records related to pupils' behaviour, attendance, attainment and progress and the school's self-evaluation of the quality of its work.

Inspection team

Peter Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Twaits	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average size primary school. It includes an Early Years Foundation Stage unit comprising one Reception class.
- A large proportion of pupils are of White British heritage. Around a tenth of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is lower than the national average.
- A very high percentage of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, which supports those pupils known to be eligible for entitled to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported at school action is average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The number of pupils joining and leaving the school throughout the school year is higher than average. Of these pupils, many join from other countries and some have limited previous experience of education.
- There is an after-school club that is not managed by the school's governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further, particularly in writing, by:
 - improving pupils' spelling, particularly for those pupils in Years 1 and 2
 - giving pupils ample opportunities to produce longer pieces of writing
 - expecting pupils to increase the amount of work they do in lessons and making certain that they take more care about the way that work is presented
 - making sure that sanctions to deal with unacceptable behaviour do not give pupils a negative view of writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
 - making sure that good practice is shared by all staff especially the checking that work is always set at exactly the right level for each pupil
 - making sure that introductions to lessons are not too long and allow pupils more time to practise their skills
 - making certain that pupils' work is always marked in a way that they can understand and providing opportunities for pupils to respond to written comments.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved in recent years and is now good. Most pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to do well. They enjoy the many stimulating and exciting lessons the school offers.
- Children's skills are often below expectations when they join the Reception class. They are particularly low for many in language, personal and social and emotional development and some important aspects of number. All children make a brisk start thanks to the effective teaching they receive. They make good progress overall, particularly in speaking and listening and personal development. Progress is good in language and number given the children's starting points, but for many their skills remain below expectations when they begin Year 1.
- Overall results in the letters and sounds test taken by pupils in Year 1 in 2012 were lower than the national average. The school launched a new school-wide programme in September this year that has already made a dramatic difference to pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters make.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. At the end of Year 2, attainment is rising and many pupils now reach average standards in reading and mathematics. Results of national tests compared well with those reached by similar pupils across the country. Some of those pupils with lower language and number skills do not reach expected levels but their progress is good from their starting points.
- Good progress is maintained in Key Stage 2 and by the time pupils leave Year 6 their attainment is securely in line with national expectations. Results of national tests in 2012 show an overall improvement in attainment and progress. This is partly the result of new systems to check on the progress of pupils. Pupils now have targets that are realistic but high enough to increase their progress. Inspectors looked at the work and progress of pupils currently in school and this showed that they are on target to improve on last year's achievement.
- Although achievement in writing is good, attainment is not as high as in other subjects. The school has recently introduced new teaching approaches to tackle this area but it is too early to judge if they are making a difference. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are insecure in their spelling and across the school pupils do not always complete enough writing that shows sufficient care over presentation and handwriting.
- Many pupils join and leave the school at different times in the year and need additional support in their learning. A growing number arrive with little or no English or experience of formal education. Whilst the standards these pupils reach may not be as high as those attained by their classmates, they often make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress over a short time. This is because of the intensive teaching and support they receive.
- There is little difference in the progress made by pupils eligible for extra support through the pupil premium and others in the school and they reach similar standards to other pupils. The small number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and other pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable also do well thanks to the effective, personal teaching and support they are given.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well paced and teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn. There is a good range of activities to keep pupils interested, and resources such as electronic whiteboards and computers add sparkle to learning. Teaching is not outstanding because lesson introductions are sometime too long, there are aspects of the teaching of writing that require some improvement and a lack of sharing the most effective methods of teaching between all staff.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a stimulating, spacious and welcoming

classroom area. Children gain confidence quickly and learn to listen, take turns and work cooperatively and individually. There is a good balance between activities supported by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Speaking and listening skills and children's personal development improve rapidly thanks to the many well thought out opportunities and activities that children enjoy.

- Well-focused and expertly applied questioning techniques make pupils think hard. In a small number of lessons, teachers talk for too long to the whole class rather than allowing pupils to get on with their work. As a result, pupils do not always have enough time to practise their writing skills.
- The work pupils are asked to do is generally set at the right level because staff use information about pupils' progress to plan interesting and challenging tasks. In these lessons, pupils usually progress swiftly as a result. In a small number of lessons, pupils are given work that is either too easy or too difficult when this happens their progress slows.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked. They are praised for their efforts and given advice about how to improve their work. This helps their progress. Sometimes, the words used in marking are too difficult for some pupils. Also, although the advice given is good, pupils are not always expected, or given time, to act upon it by correcting or editing their work. This is especially the case in lessons about writing.
- The sessions where the links between letters and sounds are taught are lively. They combine enjoyment and challenge and have benefitted all pupils, but especially those with little or no English. However, they have not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' spelling, especially in Years 1 and 2.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is much improved and is usually good. The majority of pupils are cooperative and eager to learn and are proud of their school. Occasionally, pupils get over excited when they are on the playground.
- The appointment of learning and behaviour mentors has provided much needed extra support to pupils with behavioural difficulties. The better communication and relationships between home and school that have been established have helped to improve the behaviour and attendance of some pupils. Some parts of the current behaviour policies are effective and are valued by most pupils but some sanctions are no longer necessary. Some of these involve writing or other activities that are a part of lessons and this is sending the wrong message to pupils about the value and importance of their learning.
- Pupils say bullying has decreased greatly but also say it does happen sometimes and usually involves name calling. They say it is dealt with promptly and effectively and that they feel safe in school.
- Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils occasionally become restless and start to chat to their classmates when they are required to listen to the teacher for too long.
- Attendance hovers around the national average but is beginning to rise. The school has a small core of persistent absentees, but has put a range of programmes in place that are making a difference. These include rewarding good attendance and the learning mentor vigorously following up absences.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, the focused and hardworking headteacher, supported by her willing colleagues and governors, has successfully identified the issues central to improving pupils' achievement, behaviour and the quality of teaching.
- Key staff have been delegated and embraced the responsibility to contribute to making the school more successful. Success is evident in the improvement in important areas, such as pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds, behaviour, attendance and in the Early Years

Foundation Stage.

- The school has a clear view of priorities and practical and well-crafted plans have been put into place. The school has improved since the last inspection and shows good capacity to continue to improve in the future.
- The school's leaders check how well school is doing much more carefully and systematically than at the time of the last inspection. They hold staff responsible for the progress of the pupils in their care. This has been an important factor in raising achievement and improving teaching.
- The school's new systems for tracking pupils' progress are helping teachers to set realistic and challenging targets for pupils and to identify those who need extra help. The funds received for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium are being used very effectively to give them individual teaching and to address any attendance or behavioural issues. As a result, most of these pupils are achieving in line with their classmates. This demonstrates the school's determination to ensuring equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- The school closely checks teaching and provides support and training where it is needed. Although the sharing of good practice is not fully established, there is little variation in teaching between classes. Leaders have put systems in place to meet the requirements of the new regulations for checking on the performance of staff and ensuring that they have the training they need to bring about improvements. Teachers who meet challenging targets linked to progress are considered for additional pay.
- The local authority provides effective support for the teaching of English and mathematics and has contributed to the improvements made since the last inspection.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for all pupils to improve most of their basic skills through a topic based approach that pupils find very enjoyable and engaging. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to produce long pieces of writing. A varied programme of visits and visitors for all pupils makes learning enjoyable. There is a good range of sporting, cultural and artistic clubs and activities for pupils at lunchtimes and after school.
- There are good local links and partnerships within the community and overseas and with other schools that help ensure pupils gain knowledge and experience of other faiths and cultures, an issue at the last inspection.
- Parents say that communication is good and appreciate the monthly newsletter they receive from the school. They have good opportunities to take part in school life. Many were attending a very successful and lively Christmas Fair held in school during the inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The recently reconstituted governing body is led well. Members use their considerable expertise unselfishly to support the school. Governors have ensured that there are effective safeguarding systems in place. They are well aware of their responsibilities to check that teachers are performing well enough to justify increases in pay. They receive regular information about how the pupil premium is spent and check that this has an impact on their achievement of these pupils. The governors are well informed about the school's performance and ask difficult questions when necessary.

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	108215
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	405156

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Stone
Headteacher	Sarah Talbot
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2010
Telephone number	01924 303750
Fax number	01924 303751
Email address	headteacher@mount.wakefield.sch.uk

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