

Inspection of Mundella Primary School

Black Bull Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5QX

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005
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The acting co-headteachers of this school are Lisa Paez and Lauren Wharmby. This school is part of Veritas Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kerry Jordan-Daus, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Simon J Haseltine.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school, where there is a very calm and nurturing ethos. There is an inclusive, positive culture that supports all pupils well, including those who may face challenges in their lives. Trusting and warm relationships with caring staff mean that pupils feel safe and happy in school.

There is a determination that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language, will achieve their very best, whatever their starting points. As a result, pupils achieve well. This is reflected in the school's motto, 'Aspire and Achieve'. Parents agree. One commented, 'My child is encouraged by the school to achieve his best and be happy, and he is.'

Pupils appreciate the opportunities offered in the new playground and enjoy the 'family feel' with older and younger pupils playing together. Pupils value the friendships they make at school. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They work hard to represent the school's values of caring, creativity, respect, independence, collaboration and honesty, which are embedded in all that the school does. They are polite, friendly and respectful of adults and each other.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. The essential skills and knowledge that pupils need to learn are clearly identified and sequenced from Reception to Year 6. The school has successfully improved pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing. By the end of Reception, children are ready to continue learning in Year 1. The environment inside and outside supports the development of early reading, writing and number skills as well as inspiring pupils' curiosity, imagination and independence. Pupils' interests are expertly threaded through the curriculum.

Staff know the pupils very well and identify the needs of pupils quickly and accurately. This ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn, including pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff plan a range of adaptations to ensure pupils with SEND can achieve well alongside their peers. Staff work with external agencies effectively in order to plan appropriate support for pupils with the most complex needs. The school works relentlessly to improve attendance and punctuality, which, although remaining below the national average, has improved slightly overall and significantly for some individuals.

Reading has high priority in the school. Children in Reception enjoy learning lots of rhymes and songs as well as learning to love books and stories. They learn phonics skills well. They read books that match the sounds that they know. Pupils who are struggling have effective additional support to catch up. Pupils enjoy the books they study in class that are linked to learning in other subjects. They enjoy reading for pleasure and read often and widely.

Pupils' current work shows that most are learning and achieving well. Teachers generally explain new ideas clearly. They mostly check on pupils' learning in lessons, which helps them know which pupils need more help or guidance. Sometimes, the checks on pupils' understanding are not as effective as they could be. Occasionally, pupils are not supported as well as they could be to remember what they have learned in the past. The school has rightly identified that these aspects of learning could be more effective in order to ensure that all pupils are consistently achieving as well as they can.

The school is determined to give pupils a wide range of experiences to expand their horizons. Pupils enjoy the many trips to local places of interest that help them explore the curriculum more broadly. A breakfast club and a wide range of after-school clubs are provided to widen pupils' interests and develop their skills. Pupils are respectful and have a strong sense of acceptance of the differences between pupils from different backgrounds and with different needs. They learn to listen to and respect others' opinions even if they disagree with them.

There is a strong staff team. Staff appreciate the consideration given to their workload and well-being. A small number of staff said they would appreciate more support in managing the more challenging behaviour of a very few pupils. The school, the trust and governors work tirelessly together with the shared vision to make a difference for every pupil. This aim is appreciated by parents. One commented, 'The guidance of the staff and the help they have given my children have changed their lives. They are much happier children and more confident.' The school has the capacity and resolve to forge further improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are a few inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum. This means that, on occasion, a few pupils' misconceptions are not carefully checked and pupils are not always encouraged to remember and retrieve prior learning, knowledge and skills. The school should ensure that in all subjects, staff are supported so that these aspects are addressed and pupils consistently achieve as well as they can.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148711
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10322057
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Simon J Haseltine
CEO of the trust	Kerry Jordan-Daus
Headteacher	Lisa Paez and Lauren Wharmby (acting co-headteachers)
Website	www.mundella.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Mundella Primary School is part of the Veritas Multi-Academy Trust.
- Mundella Primary School converted to become an academy in September 2021. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be requiring improvement overall.
- Since April 2024, the school is led by two acting co-headteachers, who were previously deputy headteachers at the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the co-headteachers, the assistant headteacher, subject leaders and many staff.
- The lead inspectors met with trustees, including the CEO, the chair of trustees and the chair of the local academy committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum information for a range of other subjects. They reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness and priorities for improvement. They also looked at information relating to behaviour, attendance and SEND.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during playtimes and lunchtimes in the playground and in the lunch hall.
- The views of staff and pupils were gathered through both formal and informal discussions.
- The views of parents were gathered through the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, the school's own survey for parents, as well as the views of parents spoken with at the gate.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Lovatt-Young	Ofsted Inspector

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