

The Five Islands School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133554
Local Authority	Isles Of Scilly
Inspection number	354517
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen McShane HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Vaughan
Headteacher	Bryce Wilby
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 May 2007
School address	Secondary base Carn Thomas St Mary's TR21 0LB
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Boarding provision	Mundesley Boarding House
Social care Unique Reference Number	SC0 42065
Social care inspector	Michelle Oxley

Age group	3–16
Inspection date(s)	8–9 July 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, one social care inspector and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 17 lessons and 16 teachers and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work in all the bases, including the boarding provision, and looked at policies, records, assessment information and school documentation related to recent management activities. In addition, 112 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were analysed, as well as those completed by staff and pupils. During the inspection, pupils from Years 5 and 6, and some from Year 9, were out of school on a residential trip.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the consistency of provision to ensure good learning and progress for different groups of pupils in all key stages
- the degree to which the school's leaders and managers have a clear grasp of the current priorities for the school, and have appropriate plans to improve provision and outcomes further.

Information about the school

Five Islands School is made up of three bases on St Mary's Island: Carn Thomas Secondary, Mundesley hostel for secondary-aged boarders and Carn Gwaval Primary, as well as primary bases on the 'off-islands' of Tresco, St Agnes and St Martin's. Early Years provision includes a Nursery class on St Mary's and provision for Reception children in mixed-aged classes in the primary bases. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average, although the proportion varies from year to year.

The headteacher joined the school in January 2009. A new school is currently being built on St Mary's and it is anticipated that this will be completed in 2011.

Five Islands is a specialist school for creativity.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Five Islands is a good school. Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. Pupils leave the school with high attainment. Their behaviour is exemplary and their contribution to their school and the local community is excellent. Overall, pupils' progress is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a flying start. Progress in the primary years is satisfactory, and it accelerates again in the secondary years. Attendance is average.

The curriculum in Five Islands is outstanding for all ages. Pupils have a broad range of options of vocational and academic courses in their secondary years. This is enhanced by a wide range of additional opportunities. In the primary years the very effective and interesting topics give excellent opportunities for pupils of different ages to explore subjects in depth, and to apply and consolidate their basic skills.

Teaching is good overall. All teaching is underpinned by excellent relationships between staff and pupils. A large majority is closely targeted at the needs of the individual pupils, building on rigorous assessment. Teaching is interesting, challenging and fun. Sometimes it is no better than satisfactory, particularly in the primary year groups, because learning objectives and activities in lessons are not specific enough to ensure that all pupils are making consistently good progress.

Outstanding partnerships mean that the school enriches its curriculum effectively, including in its specialised subject areas. Individual pupils receive appropriate help and the school benefits from input from outside consultants. Links with the local community are very well developed to promote community cohesion, but work to ensure pupils are well informed about the national and international dimensions is underdeveloped. So far, no evaluation of the impact of this work has taken place.

Boarding provision is good. Boarders are cared for well. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are a particular strength. The school meets most minimum standards.

The commitment of leaders and managers to the unique nature of Five Islands and to each individual pupil, ensuring that they are all given the best opportunities to attain highly, is a key factor in the success of the school. Middle and senior leaders are very knowledgeable about their particular areas of responsibility and particular pupils. When issues are identified they take action very quickly and have been successful in improving aspects of provision and outcomes since the last inspection.

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Regular monitoring and performance management are in place and broadly effective. Governors are committed, have a working knowledge of the school, and are successfully steering the new building programme. Overall, capacity to improve is good. Whole-school monitoring and evaluation, however, is not brought together in a way that ensures governors are fully able to evaluate systematically and challenge the school to bring about further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in all year groups, by ensuring that lesson objectives are always clear and activities set in lessons challenge all ability groups to do well.
- Ensure that whole-school monitoring is synthesised effectively so that governors are fully involved in evaluating school performance and are influential in tackling any weaknesses and bringing about further improvements.
- Develop the range of individual and whole-school strategies to improve attendance.
- Evaluate the school's work across all dimensions of community cohesion and ensure that it is focuses appropriately on the local, national and international contexts.
- The school must ensure that it meets the National Minimum Standards for boarding which have not been met.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills broadly in line with those expected for their age. By the time they reach Year 1 they have made good progress. Progress in the primary years varies between different year groups and different provisions, for example different island bases. During the inspection, in a few lessons, the older pupils and the most able in the class in particular, did not make good progress as they were not challenged sufficiently. In the secondary base pupils again make good and sometimes outstanding progress so that they leave school with very good results in their examinations. In lessons observed all pupils practised and applied their new skills well, reached challenging targets and embraced individual opportunities to excel. In the very large majority of lessons pupils are engaged, enthusiastic and diligent. They enjoy learning and are keen. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and the way they work together and are supportive of each other are major factors in their success. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

Pupils say they feel very safe and most parents and carers agree. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident in adults. Pupils talk readily of the importance of a healthy

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lifestyle, engage very well in a range of physical activities and are well informed about emotional health, sex and relationships and the dangers of drug misuse. Attendance is significantly affected by trips to the mainland for appointments, which mean that students have to miss schooling, and families taking holidays in term time. The school has taken steps to discourage these holidays, including changing the school's term dates and the issuing of fines. However, in an area where tourism is a key industry, these initiatives have had limited impact. Pupils are very well prepared for the workplace. Their diligence is very apparent. They have strong basic skills, including excellent information and communication technology skills. They are well prepared for the sixth form and transfer successfully. Pupils have a strong 'voice' through a school council that meets regularly with governors, and the green team has achieved national recognition for its work. Pupils are involved regularly in fundraising, and volunteer to take part in Duke of Edinburgh award schemes. Pupils have high moral values and know right from wrong. They are open to new ideas and quick to take on new experiences. They show a strong sense of common values and an obvious sense of pride in their school and island community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is challenging. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons have a good pace with activities carefully targeted to individual pupils. High staff: pupil ratios and strong support from adults mean that pupils are very well supported. In one literacy lesson, for example, individual clearly targeted learning objectives, sensitive and humorous adult support and effective use of resources meant that a

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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pupil made outstanding progress in understanding the importance of persuasive language in advertisements and was able to apply her knowledge quickly. In another, a very good match of teaching and learning styles, flexibility of grouping and a sense of enthusiasm and fun meant outstanding progress in art was made in exploring impressionism and pointillism. Sometimes, particularly in the primary year groups, teaching is satisfactory because activities are not sufficiently targeted at the pupils’ different levels, and some groups, particular the most able, are not sufficiently challenged.

The curriculum is consistently interesting and well matched to pupils’ needs. In the primary years it contains many opportunities to explore the environment, including different studies of lighthouses and the history of the island schools in the study of the Victorians. The school offers a wide range of accreditation including GCSEs and Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) that are carefully personalised to individual needs, with further improvements planned. Pupils are provided with opportunities to produce excellent work across many different subjects and key stages including first-rate art work, exceptional written work and outstanding practical work in design and technology. Enrichment opportunities are varied and include pupils working to complete a challenge to visit the Pyrenees. The impact of the recently awarded specialism in creativity is already to be seen in the projects with Cornish schools to produce a joint musical production, giving students the chance to perform with larger groups of children to bigger audiences.

Staff know individual pupils and their families very well. Strong data analysis, particularly in the secondary department, means that progress is carefully monitored and any interventions quickly put in place. Pupils are very aware of their targets and innovative work to develop e-portfolios means that older pupils themselves rigorously monitor their own progress. This has recently led to pupils leading their own ‘three-way conversation’ with their teachers and parents and carers. Although it is early days, these meetings were very successful and demonstrate the grasp students have on their own progress. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well by confident adults and through a good range of interventions. Good multi-agency work means that pupils receive any additional support required.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are passionate about their school, their pupils and their community. They

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have high expectations of each other and set challenging targets for pupils. They have many strengths, including strong data analysis, an accurate grasp on the quality of lessons and detailed knowledge of most aspects of the school. They are quick to act to tackle particular weaknesses and to innovate. There have been particular improvements to provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and ongoing innovative developments to the curriculum. Very effective informal monitoring and collaboration between teachers and leaders leads to ongoing improvements. Governors know the school and community well and keep in close touch, but monitoring information is not presented to them in a sufficiently accessible way, and this blunts their effectiveness in evaluating the school, including the boarding provision, and driving improvement.

Overall, partnerships with parents and carers are good. They get regular updates on progress, have ongoing contact with teachers, the three-way conversation has been welcomed, and good partnerships exist when intervention is needed. The school accepts that recently there have been instances when communication about dates has been muddled and this has caused some disquiet and inconvenience. Governors are also aware that a few parents and carers feel that the views of parents on the off-islands are not adequately represented. They are taking good steps to rectify this by exploring different ways in which the off-islands can be represented on the governing body and by ensuring these parents and carers have access to the governors. The school takes good steps to ensure all pupils succeed. Good data analysis leads to effective action to tackle any underachievement by individuals or groups.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Three designated individuals are responsible for child protection matters across the school and boarding provision. There are good links with the local authority children’s services team, who in turn work in close conjunction with the safeguarding teams. All staff receive good-quality training in safeguarding children, and senior designated staff receive a higher level of training which is consistent with their role. Pupils learn about keeping safe through the curriculum. Criminal Records Bureau checks are systematically carried out for all staff before they commence work. There are a few inconsistencies in the way that full employment histories and checks on identity are kept on some files.

Community cohesion is satisfactory, with strengths apparent in work related to the local community. A lack of a clear plan and evaluation of this area means that while there are different activities to address national and international issues, these tend to be ad hoc and their impact is unclear.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the	3

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school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Very high levels of enjoyment are evident in the Nursery and Reception classes and in the off-islands provision. Children make excellent progress as they are inquisitive and active in their own learning, persevere and show enthusiasm for tasks. Behaviour is outstanding. The children cooperate very well and show high levels of respect for each other. Very knowledgeable adults plan interesting activities that are very well matched to the children’s ability and interest levels. Assessment is very strong. Sensitive support and outstanding relationships with adults mean that children are gently guided to make the best possible progress, even when they have particular difficulties. Outdoor provision on the St Mary’s site is currently underdeveloped, and this notable weakness is limiting the curriculum opportunities on offer to those Nursery and Reception children. Links with parents and carers are excellent and most spoken to have very positive views of the provision. There is excellent implementation of procedures to ensure equality so that all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are fully involved. Clear plans for development are in place with a strong commitment to ongoing improvement. There are excellent links, where appropriate, with other providers and Key Stage 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Boarding provision

The overall quality of the boarding provision is good. The three recommendations made following the previous inspection are met.

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Boarders benefit from a good level of individual support regarding health care. Senior house parents have received relevant training enabling them to deal effectively with health care. They ensure that they seek out relevant information about individual health needs and hold these on file. Young people report that they receive excellent care and attention when they are unwell. Medication is stored safely and a log of medicines administered is held. There is no record of medication coming in and out of the boarding house. The lack of an audit trail means that potential errors or administration queries cannot be retrospectively checked.

The food provided is plentiful and nutritious and there is a focus on healthy eating. The main meal of the day is taken at lunch time in school; boarders enjoy these meals and report that portions are large. The evening meal is taken at 5.00pm in the boarding house. Staff and boarders have identified that changes are required to the evening meal which are to be implemented next term. Special dietary needs are catered for and a vegetarian option is provided daily. Mealtimes are sociable occasions with staff and boarders sitting together to chat about their day.

Established systems are in place to respond to child welfare concerns. Boarding staff link with designated individuals to raise concerns about child welfare. Boarders report that they feel safe and secure at the boarding house.

The standard of young people's behaviour in the boarding house is very good. Young people generally identify that punishments used in boarding are fair. Bullying is rare with young people unanimously reporting that they do not feel that bullying is a problem.

Overall, there is a proactive approach to health and safety. Fire procedures are well established including evacuation drills. All alarm tests are recorded. Currently, the building is potentially vulnerable as the glass in one of the bedroom fire doors is broken. Appropriate risk assessment, service contracts for gas and electrical testing are in place.

Boarders enjoy excellent opportunities to develop and maintain social relations with their peers. The boarding house is well stocked with a range of equipment to facilitate leisure pursuits and most young people also participate in community activities. Friends and family are welcome to visit and join in social activities subject to manageable numbers. One young person said that, 'the best thing about boarding is that you always have your friends around, it's like a big family.' School work is well supported with an hour being dedicated to homework each evening. Relationships between house parents and boarders are outstanding. Boarders receive a good deal of individual care and support.

As a result of the systems in place to listen to boarders views, young people feel that they are able to contribute to the day to day running of the house. Weekly meetings take place and views are heard at school council meetings. Boarders mostly feel that they can approach house parents directly with comments or concerns and a

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suggestions box is in place. All boarders have the phone number of an independent person who they can contact should they wish to. There are no recorded complaints in the boarding house log.

Accommodation for boarders is of an acceptable standard. Each dormitory has individual storage space, although for the younger children storage space is limited. Year 11 boarders benefit from a privately screened bedroom area with their own desk and storage. Bathing and washing facilities are sufficient in relation to the number of boarders. The use of shared towels for hand drying is currently insufficient to ensure a good level of hygiene.

The organisation and management of boarding is effective on a day to day basis. The boarding house operates with a small dedicated team of four staff including two senior house parents. Good training opportunities are in place for house parents, allowing them to broaden their knowledge and develop skills in specific areas. There are good weekly pastoral links with the assistant headteacher from the secondary school and these support the boarding provision well. There are no identifiable links between boarding and the governing body to monitor welfare and there are no systems in place for the monitoring of boarding by the headteacher or designated person in relation to effectively scrutinizing records. The policy manual in the boarding house contains some out of date policy information and does not reflect the good work on policy development now occurring in the school.

National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care

- Ensure that the governing body implements a system to monitor welfare which is linked to boarding (NMS 8)
- Keep a record of all medication coming in and out of the boarding house (NMS 15)
- Implement a system to monitor boarding house records and take action where any patterns emerge (NMS 23)
- Repair the broken glass in the fire door (NMS 26)
- Review and update the boarding house policy manual (NMS 35)
- Ensure that staff recruitment checks are kept consistently in line with safer recruitment recommendations and national minimum standards (NMS 38)
- Increase storage space in dormitorys for Year 7 boarders (NMS 42)
- Provide facilities for hygienic hand drying (NMS 44)

This is the grade for the boarding provision

The effectiveness of the boarding provision	2
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Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire feel their child is happy at school and are happy with their child’s experience. Inspectors agreed with the positive individual comments such as, ‘Children are helped to reach their full

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potential', and that the school 'offers many different opportunities'. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about communication. The school recognised recent problems, and this is covered above in the main report. Individual positive and negative comments were submitted on a range of different issues, including safety, teaching, leadership and management. These were followed up with the school and where there was additional evidence they informed inspectors' judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Five Islands School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 112 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	48	54	48	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	46	47	42	3	3	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	36	57	51	13	12	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	41	58	52	7	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	43	38	63	56	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	38	53	47	13	12	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	54	47	42	4	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	59	53	36	32	11	10	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	38	60	54	8	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	36	62	55	5	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	28	59	53	17	15	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	36	32	65	58	6	5	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	47	52	46	7	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



13 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Five Islands School, Isles of Scilly, TR21 0LB

Thank you so much for making us feel welcome when we inspected your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking with you and seeing you in lessons. You told us how much you enjoyed school and all the memorable things that you do.

Our inspection found that the Five Islands is a good school. Some outcomes are outstanding. The examination results for your school are much higher than in many schools nationally. Your outstanding behaviour is a strong factor in your successful learning. Your contribution to your school, to your learning and to the local community is also outstanding. During your time at Five Islands you make good progress. It is at its best and most consistent in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the secondary base.

The curriculum you are provided with is outstanding. It is interesting and challenging and you have very good opportunities to take a variety of examinations. Teaching is good, although not consistently so for different age groups. It is very often inspiring and fun and carefully tailored to your needs. It is successful because adults know you well and have very positive relationships with you.

The leaders of your school have been working hard to improve things and they have been successful. To improve the school even further we have asked them to:

- make teaching good for all age groups so you make consistently good progress
- very carefully monitor all the work they are doing at a whole-school level, so that the governors can check it more thoroughly and make sure that any weaknesses are tackled systematically
- keep working with you to improve attendance at school
- improve your understanding of national and international issues
- meet all the national standards of care for Mundesley House.

You can help to improve your school further by improving your attendance and by continuing to work hard and support the staff.

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane
Her Majesty's Inspector

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