

Marston Montgomery Primary School

Marston Montgomery, Ashbourne, DE6 2FF

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils are making good progress in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure good progress for all pupils.
- Occasionally the pace of lessons is slow or discussions and explanations do not include everybody. This means some pupils lose concentration and do not listen fully.
- Pupils are not always given the opportunity to follow the guidance given by teachers in their marking and so make the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils' progress is not checked in small enough steps to quickly identify any who may be falling behind.
- Governors visit the school regularly but these visits do not always focus closely on how the school can improve progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Most pupils make good progress with their reading.
- Progress in writing and mathematics is improving. Currently, pupils in Year 4 are making good progress in mathematics.
- There is some good teaching in the school.
- The care and support for pupils when they start at the school and throughout their time there is exceptionally good.
- Behaviour is good in and around school. Pupils are polite and well mannered to adults and each other.
- The leaders and managers have eradicated all weak teaching. This means that progress is improving.
- Pupils' strong personal development is a strength of the school and underpins all it does.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, two groups of pupils, the vice-chair and two other members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers.
- The inspector took account of 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), school questionnaires, individual communications from parents and six completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at: information from the school's checks on its performance; school improvement plans; its analysis and tracking of pupils' progress; leaders' records of classroom observations; safeguarding arrangements; and records of governing body meetings.
- She also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read during lessons and checked information on pupils' attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care or those with a parent in the armed services, is below average. Currently, there are no pupils in the school in local authority care or with a parent in the armed services.
- There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school in Key Stages 1 and 2 and part-way through the academic year is above average.
- Apart from school visits, all pupils are taught on-site. The school does not use alternative off-site provision to educate any of its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, especially of writing and mathematics, so that more is good and outstanding by ensuring that:
 - the pace of lessons maintains the interest of all pupils at all times
 - different methods are used to involve all pupils in answering questions and in sharing their ideas
 - pupils are routinely given the opportunity to follow the guidance given by teachers in their marking and so make the next steps in their learning.
- Strengthen leadership and management through:
 - checking pupils' progress in smaller steps so that any pupils who may be falling behind are identified quickly
 - linking governor visits being more closely to areas of school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is not consistently good. While pupils in some year groups, particularly in mathematics in Year 4 and reading in Years 2, 3 and 5 are currently making good progress, progress is not equally good in all year groups and across all subjects.
- Pupils start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with many skills typical for their age. However, literacy and numeracy skills for some children are slightly weaker. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most start in Key Stage 1 with skills expected for their age.
- Pupils reach average standards by the end of Key Stage 1. They make at least expected progress in writing and mathematics, and good progress in reading, especially in Year 2. The results of the national screening check on how well pupils know the sounds that letters make (phonics) in Year 1 last year were above average.
- Standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are also largely average in both English and mathematics, but progress in Key Stage 2 is variable. While some pupils make good progress, especially in reading, others make only expected progress. However, this is improving and more pupils are now making better progress than they did last year.
- Pupils who join the school other than in the Early Years Foundation Stage make at least expected progress and some make good progress. New arrivals to the school are quickly assessed for any specific needs and support is speedily provided to help them settle in.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. This is because the funding is spent on one to one tuition and small group support which is very carefully matched to the needs of particular pupils. The school is narrowing the gap between all pupils and those eligible for free school meals across the school although there are no national data to demonstrate this as no pupils were eligible for free school meals in Year 6 in 2012.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar, varied progress to that of other pupils in the school. Pastoral care for any pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is very strong. This means that they build up their confidence and have a positive attitude to learning. However, this is not always reflected in the progress they make in their writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good. Occasionally the pace of lessons or group work is too slow as explanations take too long or specific questions are not relevant to everyone. When this happens some pupils lose their concentration and are not drawn back into the lesson quickly enough. This means that they do not always make the good progress that they could.
- While discussions about the books pupils are studying are encouraged in literacy lessons, not all pupils participate and so do not practice the skills they need to develop in their own writing. In mathematics lessons good use is made of group work. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to work together to create a poster of large numbers sorted into odd and even groups.

- Most marking, especially English books, gives pupils guidance as to how they can improve. Because pupils are not always given time to respond to the guidance opportunities for them to progress in their learning are missed.
- All staff use good questioning techniques. They ask searching questions which make pupils think carefully about their learning. For example pupils in Year 4 were asked to 'get under the skin' of the character in a book they were reading to explain her actions. However, teachers do not always ensure that all pupils are involved in answering questions and sharing their thoughts which means that some pupils rely on others to respond.
- Good teaching was observed where work was set at the right levels for pupils' abilities. In these lessons pupils made good progress. For example a more able pupil in Year 6 was plotting line graphs against equations while other pupils used simpler graphs to show the growth rate of plants.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, giving them opportunities to develop a range of skills both inside and outdoors. During the inspection children were fully engrossed in making a zoo out of tree bark and used straw as bedding for their animals.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs work well with other pupils. They are supported by additional adults who are well-briefed and sensitively address pupils' specific needs. This means that most are able to make as much progress as other pupils in the class.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils say it is always linked to what they are doing in the classroom. They are particularly enthusiastic about the topic-based homework and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are rightly proud of their learning logs where they record this work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well around school. They are polite to adults and each other. During the inspection pupils were overheard thanking the school cook for a lovely lunch and each other for sharing equipment. There has been a marked improvement in behaviour over time and pupils and parents agree that it is good.
- Pupils are very clear about what bullying is and can talk about different types of bullying such as physical, emotional and cyber bullying. They say that, although people sometimes 'fall out' there is no bullying in the school and any incidents that do occur are speedily dealt with by teachers. All the parents who responded to Parent View also agreed that any bullying is well dealt with by the school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. All pupils are aware of basic road safety. They also spoke about visitors to the school who teach them about fire safety and staying safe when using the internet.
- Pupils throughout the school are given plenty of opportunity to take on roles of responsibility. Pupils from Years 2, 4 and 5 have been trained as peer mentors to help resolve any minor friendship incidents.
- The school has worked closely with parents to improve attendance. This is now above average and, although there are a few pupils whose attendance is not as good as it should be, most pupils attend regularly and are punctual to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The leaders and managers of the school have a passion for school improvement. Despite having a small number of staff, leadership roles are clearly defined. All teachers have responsibility for key areas of learning and show a good knowledge of how well the school is doing in that area.
- Pupil progress is checked regularly and meetings are held to discuss every individual pupil. Because the measures of progress are too broad any underachievement may not be identified quickly enough for support to be put in place.
- Teachers' performance is judged against how much progress their pupils make and how well they fulfil their different roles in the school. Targets for teachers are used to measure whether promotion up the pay scale is justified by the results achieved. Weak teaching has been eradicated.
- The school has a highly developed support system for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable or who may find good behaviour a challenge. The 'positive play' programme and nurture group help pupils who find socialising difficult.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They particularly appreciate its caring attitudes and the fact that the headteacher always has time for them. Parents whose children are new to the school told the inspector how well their children have settled and how happy they are in school.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity, and tackles discrimination through ensuring that all pupils are listened to and all have the opportunity to succeed. No group of pupils makes less progress than others and pupils say they feel their views are taken seriously. Through debates and discussions in lessons they are taught to respect the views of others.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength of the school. Through the 'Philosophy for Children' programme, pupils are given opportunities to reflect on moral issues. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils discussed whether it is right to dam a river if it affects villages further down stream.
- All pupils in Key Stage 2 have the chance to learn the flute or clarinet and most take up that opportunity. The school is also part of the 'Take One Picture' project and is due to have pupils' art work exhibited at The National Gallery this summer.
- The local authority does not view the school as vulnerable and so provide a limited amount of support. The school receives termly visits from a local authority adviser who challenges the headteacher effectively on school improvement issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good view of the strengths and areas for development for the school. They hold the senior leaders to account for improving progress and standards. Minutes of governing body meetings show that they ask challenging questions of the headteacher in order to gain a good understanding about progress in the school and the quality of teaching. They have agreed a new policy to ensure that the performance of teachers is checked regularly and only good teaching is rewarded with an increase in pay. Governors visit the school regularly, and support the wide range of cultural and educational activities that the school offers. However, visits to focus specifically on school improvement issues are not so frequent and not enough governors have discussions with staff about progress and attainment of pupils in different

subjects. Governors manage the school's finances well and have a good understanding of how well the pupil premium supports good progress for specific pupils.

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	112589
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	405404

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	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Bull
Headteacher	Carol Fenton
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2010
Telephone number	01889 590373
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Email address	info@marstonmontgomery.derbyshire.sch.uk

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