

Maytree Nursery and Infants' School

Derby Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO14 0DY

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 low starting points to reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is usually good and, at times, outstanding. Pupils do exceptionally well in learning to speak English.
- Outstanding teaching in the Nursery enables children to make an excellent start. Learning is stimulating, fun and exciting.
- Leaders and teachers check pupils' progress very thoroughly, and quickly provide extra support if necessary.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They come to like school because they receive a nurturing education which strongly supports their well-being and achievement.
- School leaders and managers do a good job. They have created a caring school where all staff are dedicated to helping all pupils to achieve their best.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Work is not always well matched to pupils' abilities in phonics (the links between letters and sounds) and mathematics.
- A small minority of pupils have too many absences, and this affects their progress.
- Some members of the governing body are not sufficiently involved in checking the school's work.
- The school improvement plan does not help school leaders to check readily whether their actions for improvement are fully effective.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, including nine which were joint observations with senior leaders, and listened to some pupils from Years 1 and 2 read.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teachers, a representative from the local authority and a school improvement consultant.
- Inspectors considered the 17 responses to the online Parent View survey and a few letters from parents and carers.
- Inspectors considered responses to the 32 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' observations of teaching.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Robert Arnold

Additional Inspector

Sue Horsnell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Maytree is an above-average-sized infant school with a nursery.
- It is situated in central Southampton. The number on roll has risen since the last inspection and the school now has two part-time Nursery classes and three classes in each year group from Reception upwards.
- The very large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups with English spoken as an additional language. The largest groups are Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi or Black African, though there are many others.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families) is above average. Currently, there are no children from service families.
- The number of pupils who join the school other than at the normal times is above average. For example, in the current Year 2, three out of every 10 children began later than the start of Reception.
- The school is led by two part-time headteachers. The substantive headteacher leads the school for two days a week while the acting headteacher manages the school for the rest of the time.
- Following the substantive headteacher's retirement at the end of this term, the acting headteacher will become the full-time permanent headteacher. The assistant headteacher will take up post as the deputy headteacher at the beginning of next term.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by
 - ensuring teachers match phonics tasks well to all pupils' needs
 - ensuring lower-attaining pupils are given opportunities to work on their phonics targets before reading their books
 - developing more-able pupils' mental calculation skills more systematically and producing a scheme of work to help teachers to do this.
 - Improve the quality of leadership by:
 - ensuring all governors have clear roles and take an active part in monitoring the school's work
 - ensuring the school development plan shows how the impact of leadership initiatives will be measured and evaluated, and who will be responsible.
- Improve attendance by working directly with those parents and carers who keep their children off school without good reason.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with their knowledge and skills much lower than expected for their age, particularly in speaking and personal development. Their progress is good overall. It is excellent in the Nursery and good in Reception. This begins to lift their attainment, although pupils still start Year 1 with skills lower than average for their age.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and pupils' attainment is average by Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The small fall in Year 2 attainment in 2012 has been mainly reversed but fewer Year 2 pupils than should be are on track to reach higher levels in mathematics.
- Nursery children make outstanding progress in the key areas of communication and language, and physical and personal development. Adults' excellent knowledge of children's needs enables them to provide a rich array of practical experiences which are finely tuned to individual needs. Children delight in hearing stories, are starting to recognise sounds and letters, and write their names. They are learning to count and recognise shapes.
- In the rest of the school, pupils also develop their speaking skills extremely well because staff provide memorable real experiences for them to talk about. Skilled support from teachers and assistants, including from the bilingual assistant, ensures their language skills develop quickly.
- Otherwise, pupils' progress is a little uneven in Reception and Key Stage 1. By Year 2, pupils enjoy books and some read with great confidence. However, in Reception and Key Stage 1, progress occasionally slows in phonics lessons because pupils' work is too hard or too easy.
- Lower-attaining pupils are not given enough opportunity to practise new sounds before tackling their reading books which restricts their confidence when reading. Extra help, through programmes such as Reading Recovery, accelerates progress in reading in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils write neatly in sentences for different purposes and usually apply phonics well when spelling because teachers consistently encourage this. In mathematics, most progress well but more-able pupils are not always quick and adept when calculating larger numbers in their heads. A few still rely too much on number lines.
- Pupils of different ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make progress similar to their peers. There are robust procedures for helping later entrants to catch up, including those with little English or gaps in their skills and knowledge. Pupils supported by pupil premium achieve well. Their attainment was slightly better than their peers in 2012 Year 2 national assessments. Currently, it is similar to their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is lively, engaging and creative. The curriculum, through visits and practical work, is well designed for helping teachers to broaden pupils' experiences and develop their language skills. It is generally well structured for enabling teachers to build pupils' basic skills securely in lessons and over time.
- Lessons capture pupils' attention and motivate them to learn. For example, following a visit to a local aquarium, the teacher enthused pupils to write some facts about dolphins. Pupils progressed very well because they were captivated by the way the teacher's explanations enabled them to apply phonics skills when writing new words.
- Leaders have worked hard with staff to promote good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils build up their skills as they progress through classes. This year, the school has revised the way it teaches phonics and teachers follow a consistent approach. Reading skills are mostly taught well but, on a few occasions in phonics lessons, pupils are not

challenged enough or tasks are too hard.

- In mathematics, teachers focus sharply on developing pupils' number skills through practical tasks. However, they occasionally provide too much practical equipment instead of encouraging more-able pupils to manipulate numbers in their heads. The school acknowledges a more-robust scheme of work for steadier development of pupils' mental calculation skills is needed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan well to meet the needs of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak limited English. In class and small groups, adults provide work that is often demanding yet always achievable.
- In Nursery, inside and outside spaces are used extremely well to promote high-quality learning, and there is an excellent balance between children's independent learning and adult-led tasks.
- In Reception, adult-led learning involves practical activities which broaden children's language and experience before they undertake abstract tasks such as writing, as when pupils' investigated herbs and designed colourful plant pictures. 'Plan, do and review' enables children to develop their independent learning skills through purposeful play.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress rigorously and provide helpful comments in their marking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' good behaviour is an important reason for their good achievement and personal success. Relationships are excellent and pupils from widely diverse backgrounds get on extremely well together. This is because the school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils develop a love of school and learning because, from the earliest days in the Nursery, they are exceptionally well cared for and there are so many interesting things to do. Pupils' behaviour is consistently well managed and staff and pupils consistently apply rules such as 'Give me five'.
- A few pupils with individual needs find it difficult to behave well for a sustained period of time. However, they are well supported by staff, and inspectors found strong evidence to show the effectiveness of the school's work with these pupils over time. Poor behaviour very rarely causes interruptions to the learning of others.
- Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They learn about forms of bullying and what to do to stay safe. They said that there is very little bullying and that any incidents that occur are dealt with quickly and effectively. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree with this, and that behaviour is good.
- The majority of pupils attend regularly. However, despite the school's stringent procedures for promoting good attendance, it is barely average. A few pupils have persistent absence because their families take them out of school, often abroad, for extended periods during term time.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders share their expertise to provide strong leadership and management. Leaders, staff and governors have high expectations of what the school and its community can achieve. Aspirational targets for each pupil are designed to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment. The school ethos is very inclusive in seeking to promote equality, and discrimination is not tolerated.
- By regularly checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, leaders form an accurate view of the school's strengths and those aspects requiring improvement.
- Staff are keen to improve their practice. Leaders have helped them to do so through clear guidance, well-selected professional training and coaching. Consequently, weaknesses are eradicated and the amount of outstanding teaching is increasing.
- Leaders have managed performance of staff effectively. Promotion and progression through the pay scales are directly tied to classroom performance and impact on achievement.

- Additional funding for pupils eligible for pupil premium is used well. This includes the provision of extra help for pupils with reading, training courses for parents and carers for supporting reading, and employing a bilingual support assistant to work with pupils and their families.
- Although leaders know the school well, the methods of measuring the impact of actions for improvement require improvement. This is because the school development plan does not map out timescales nor make clear who is expected to monitor each action and how they should do so.
- The school works very well with parents, carers and the community to enable them to take a full part in helping pupils to settle and achieve well. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work.
- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support but has been keeping a closer watch in the last year because of a slight drop in Year 2 attainment and lower phonics screening results than expected. The school has used independent consultants in the last year to help with improvement, including for phonics, and has valued and benefited from this.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body understand the school, and are aware of what has been done to improve teaching and how achievement compares to other schools. They understand pupils' assessment data and use this to challenge school leaders. They have a good overview of the school's systems to manage the performance of staff and set demanding performance targets for the part-time headteachers. However, while the Chair and some governors are active and very effective, a few do not have clear roles. They are currently auditing their skills so they can use them for supporting and monitoring the school. The lack of details on the school development plan, including named governors, limits governors in their monitoring activities. Governors know exactly how pupil premium monies are spent and are able to judge the difference the provision is making to pupils' outcomes. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	116093
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	412542

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joyce England
Headteachers	Lyn Hawkins and Jan Goatley
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2009
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