

# Marland Hill Community Primary School

Roch Mills Crescent , Off Roch Valley Way, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL11 4QW

**Inspection dates** 15–16 May 2013

|                                |                      |                    |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Outstanding        | 1        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Outstanding</b> | <b>1</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Overall achievement is outstanding. Pupils make excellent progress across all key stages because of the continued focus of senior leaders on improving the school.
- Almost all of the children who start in the school's Nursery and Reception classes arrive with levels of skills and understanding well below those expected nationally in most areas for learning identified within the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- By the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils from all groups leave with standards broadly in line with those expected nationally in both English and mathematics. This represents outstanding achievement overall.
- Teaching is of an outstanding quality across the school. Teachers have exceptionally high expectations of what pupils can achieve and are very effective in ensuring work set closely matches pupils' needs. However, in a very small number of mathematics lessons marking and feedback do not give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent both inside and outside the classroom. Those spoken to feel school is a safe place where, as one pupil commented, 'everyone gets on with each other'. These positive attitudes are reflected in their improved levels of attendance.
- The school's outstanding leadership team is exceptionally well supported by a very dedicated team of staff. This close working partnership has brought about continuous improvement since the last inspection in many aspects of the school's work. For example, most pupils across the school now make accelerated progress in English and mathematics as a result of senior leaders' continued focus on improving the quality of teaching. This commitment to improving pupils' levels of achievement shows their ability to make the school even better in the future.
- Most parents are very positive about the work of the school, however a very small number would like more information about the progress their children make.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 20 lessons and parts of lessons taught by 12 teachers. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher. The inspection team also listened to pupils from Years 1 and 2 read and examined the quality of work in the books of pupils from across the school.
- The inspectors held meetings and had discussions with pupils, senior leaders, members of the school staff and members of the school’s governing body. A telephone conversation was undertaken with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team had informal discussions with 27 parents at the beginning of the school day. They also took into account the views of 57 parents who made their views known through the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team also received the views of 23 members of the school staff.
- The inspection team examined a range of the school’s documentation, including teachers’ curriculum planning, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff, health and safety documentation and the school’s system for checking pupils’ progress.

## Inspection team

|                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Marian Thomas, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Carol Machall                 | Additional Inspector |
| Geoffrey Lawrence             | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Marland Hill Community Primary School is a larger-than-average primary school.
- Pupils who attend come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The two largest groups of pupils come from families of Pakistani and White British heritage. These groups make up approximately 85% of the school population. A small number come from Eastern Europe.
- A larger-than-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those from forces' families).
- There is a larger-than-average number of pupils with special educational needs who are supported through school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A resource unit which supports pupils with hearing impairment is located within the school. Currently, the six pupils who attend the unit spend the majority of their time in mainstream classrooms alongside their peers.
- A larger-than-average number of pupils join the school at times other than the start of the school year.
- The school has a range of awards and accreditations including the Extended School award, Leading Literacy School status and Gold Artsmark award.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in a small number mathematics lessons by ensuring the marking of books consistently gives sufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Ensure all parents feel well informed about their children's progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The vast majority of pupils start school with skills and knowledge that are well below those typically expected for their age. Most at the end of Year 6 have reached levels of attainment that are broadly in line with those nationally in both English and mathematics. This represents outstanding achievement for the majority.
- Despite the higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs within the year group, attainment in English rose last year. Current Year 6 pupils are making exceptional progress and are on track to make a significant improvement on last year's national test results in both English and mathematics.
- A very large proportion of children who join the school's Nursery arrive with social, language and numeracy development well below those expected for their age. Because of exceptional levels of teaching, coupled with the wide range of interesting and engaging activities provided, children make excellent progress and leave Reception class with skills and knowledge close to those expected nationally. This excellent start is appreciated by the majority of parents, who commented to the inspection team that they felt staff worked exceptionally hard to give their children 'fun and enjoyable experiences'.
- As a result of excellent teaching, pupils make excellent progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 1, as evidenced by the exceptionally high quality of work in their books. However, because of their very low starting points a smaller proportion of Year 1 pupils than the national average achieved the expected performance in the phonics screening check (which tests pupils' ability to link letters to sounds). Currently, the majority of those that did not have now reached the expected standard.
- Pupils throughout the school clearly enjoy reading. Pupils often attend booster reading sessions held in breakfast-club time as well as reading regularly to staff in school. Older pupils also read a varied choice of books. All pupils spoken to said how much reading books at school had helped them to develop their reading skills. As one commented, 'I prefer reading a book to playing on my games console because books take me into another world.'
- In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012, pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals attained standards in line with those expected nationally in reading and mathematics and approximately two terms ahead in writing. Attainment for this group was slightly lower than for their peers; however, a large percentage of this group also had identified special educational needs. This represented excellent progress overall. In the current Year 6, tracking information shows attainment for this group is continuing to rise in line with others in the year group.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make very good progress. This is because school leaders have been effective in their use of pupil premium funding to provide additional support for this group. Because the school tracks the progress of different groups of pupils, the needs of this group of individual pupils are clearly identified, and a wide range of support has been put in place to improve both their academic and social outcomes. This support includes one-to-one teaching and individual learning programmes, particularly in reading, as well as the provision of a wealth of musical opportunities which have accelerated pupils' progress, particularly in reading and writing, as well as improving their self-esteem.
- Because staff are exceptionally good at identifying pupils' extra needs and providing excellent support, the majority of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those from the hearing impaired unit, make outstanding progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils who attend the school come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. The school promotes the expertise of its different groups of pupils exceptionally well, as evidenced by a prominent wall display which celebrates the language skills of individual pupils. This very clear message of equality for all pupils ensures pupils from all ethnic groups make equal progress.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Teaching across the school is outstanding. The progress in pupils' books and in lessons observed during the inspection confirmed this.
- 'I really love coming to school because teachers make learning fun and exciting and every day is different', commented one pupil. This is because teaching staff are very good at planning opportunities for pupils to learn in a variety of ways. They also offer pupils a wide range of diverse experiences, for example through regular trips to the woodland forest school where pupils not only learn about a variety of animal and plant habitats but also about self-reliance and woodland skills.
- As a result of these and other experiences, pupils are given many opportunities to write from first-hand experience and practise their imaginative writing skills. As a consequence, attainment in writing has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Children in the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes benefit from a wide range of activities both in the outdoor area and in the classroom. Teaching is also lively and interesting. For example, at the time of the inspection pupils were making vegetable soup as part of work based around the story of the 'Enormous Turnip'. Children worked with staff chopping vegetables and took great delight in talking about the different textures, flavours, colours and smells of the different vegetables. Many were also bubbling with excited anticipation at the thought of a delicious bowl of soup. Participating in these activities promoted their speaking, listening and writing skills exceptionally well.
- Teamwork is a strength of the school. Strong working partnerships between teachers and support staff are evident across the school and support the learning needs of all. This leads to excellent quality provision for all pupils and particularly those with disabilities and special educational needs. As a result, all groups make outstanding progress.
- Pupils who attend the hearing impaired unit spend a large part of their day in classrooms learning alongside their peers. Because of the excellent quality of teaching and the good levels of support they receive from unit staff, they also make very good progress.
- Teachers diligently mark pupils' work and always provide feedback to pupils on the quality of their work. However, on a small number of occasions, particularly in mathematics, marking does not give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Learning is very rarely interrupted by incidents of difficult behaviour because pupils' behaviour is excellent both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils say the school is a very safe and happy place. This could clearly be seen in the polite and caring attitudes pupils showed to staff, each other and visitors.
- Many parents echo this view and feel that school is a calm and welcoming place to which their children enjoy coming. Staff are described as caring and approachable and offer excellent levels of care and support for their children. An example of the importance the headteacher places on ensuring pupils are calm could be seen in an excellent 'Dream Journeys' session which the headteacher led for Year 6 pupils just prior to their taking a SAT's paper. This relaxation technique helped pupils to focus calmly and ensured they were very well prepared for the task ahead.
- Pupils say they love coming to school and feel valued as members of the school community. Those spoken to during the inspection felt that the school could do little to improve further and they felt their views were already valued, respected and taken into account by school leaders.
- A very caring philosophy is well established across the school and enables older pupils to develop responsible and mature attitudes which prepare them well for their transfer to secondary school.
- Pupils spoken to were very clear about how to stay safe as well as the different forms bullying can take. They feel this is due to the reminders on display in school of what constitutes bullying

behaviour as well as the celebration of good behaviour in all classrooms.

- Attendance remains close to average but has improved since the last inspection and is above average in many classes. School staff work exceptionally hard with a range of outside organisations to continuously improve pupils' attendance.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The highly effective headteacher supported by the very capable senior leadership team has a very clear vision of what makes the school successful. Supported by a highly effective teaching team and the governing body, school leaders have continued to maintain and build upon the school's performance since the previous inspection. As a result, the school's overall effectiveness has remained outstanding.
- The monitoring of teaching is undertaken frequently and school leaders are highly effective in taking action through the management of staff performance to improve any areas of weakness. As a result, the quality of teaching has remained at an outstanding standard since the last inspection.
- Performance targets set for staff by school leaders, link directly to pupils' achievement and the school's improvement plan. Checks on the performance of all staff are undertaken very rigorously and the headteacher uses this information to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- The curriculum is innovative, exciting and of an outstanding quality. It offers pupils an exceptionally wide and very rich variety of opportunities and experiences. Pupils clearly enjoy undertaking the variety of activities on offer. For example, a recent residential visit undertaken by Key Stage 2 pupils to an outdoor pursuits centre was described by one pupil as 'amazing'. 'I couldn't believe there was so much choice of things I had never tried before.' The breadth of these experiences develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding exceptionally well.
- Most parents have a very high regard for the work of the school, however a small number would appreciate more information about their children's progress. The local authority has a high regard for the abilities of the school's leadership team and has, since the last inspection, offered effective, light-touch support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors have a very broad range of relevant skills and experience which enable them to offer an excellent level of support and challenge to school leaders. Their continuous commitment to further training ensures they are very actively involved with the school. In partnership with school leaders, an effective system for checking the performance of teachers, which rewards good teaching and addresses underperformance, has been developed and implemented. Their very careful and measured approach to the management of pupil premium funding has enabled them to give valuable support to eligible pupils and increase levels of attainment and progress. Safeguarding procedures and policies within school are undertaken to a very high standard. The health and safety committee carries out regular inspections and has ensured that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.

## 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

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 105778   |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Rochdale |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 413246   |

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

|  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                            |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                          |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                               |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                              |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 445                                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                 |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mavis Binns                        |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Yvonne Weatherhead                 |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 21 October 2008                    |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01706 647147                       |
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