

Methley Primary School

Savile Road, Methley, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS26 9HT

Inspection dates

12–13 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils make excellent progress in their studies and reach high standards in English and mathematics by the end of each key stage. The proportion of pupils at all levels of ability making expected progress in both subjects is much higher than usually seen. Similarly, the proportion exceeding the levels of expected progress is above average.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals is also excellent in all key stages.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. A very high proportion of children leave Reception with good levels of development from starting points below average for many. All adults demonstrate very high expectations of the children, and the exceptionally well-planned activities on offer excite children's curiosity and desire to learn.
- Teachers know their subjects very well indeed. They have an accurate understanding of how well their pupils are doing and where they need extra support. Lesson planning is based securely on this knowledge and leads to activities which meet the learning needs of all pupils closely. However, the quality of marking is not always of the highest standard.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They behave very well in lessons and around school. They start each day keen and eager to learn and enthusiastically participate in the work their teachers have planned for them. They are very caring towards one another, especially to those younger than themselves.
- The very well-informed headteacher and committed senior and middle leaders have high ambitions for the school. They reject complacency and show great determination to drive forward improvements. As a result, achievement continues to improve rapidly.
- Governors have an impressive understanding of performance in all areas of the school's life. They support the school to the full and challenge the leadership with rigour.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 21 lessons taught by 19 teachers.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at lunch and break times. They met formally with groups of pupils from Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and managers. A meeting also took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and a community governor. A meeting took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including arrangements for safeguarding, performance management, attendance figures, information about pupils' attainment and progress, and pupils' books.
- Inspectors were able to analyse the online questionnaire gauging the views of parents (Parent View). There were 124 responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents and received letters and emails from parents throughout the inspection. In addition, inspectors analysed the surveys completed by parents over the past 12 months.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector
Mujahid Ali	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Methley Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported through school action, is below average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus and who have a statement for their special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for children in local authority care, those from service families and children known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop a greater consistency in marking and feedback in all subjects which reflects the best practice seen in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the school in Nursery with skills lower than those typical for their age in all areas. Consistently over recent years, a higher than average proportion of children have achieved good levels of development by the time they leave Reception. This excellent progress continues through Key Stage 1 where pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 is much higher than average and has been consistently so for the past three years. Regardless of ability, a higher proportion of all pupils make better than expected progress from Year 2 to Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents outstanding progress overall.
- The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and they have made excellent progress through the key stage. This is in view of the fact that the school's provision has rapidly improved over time and the pupils at the top end of the school did not have the benefit of the excellent provision now seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- In Key Stage 1, the attainment of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. In Key Stage 2, this group of pupils' attainment was below average in 2013. However, the progress of these pupils at all stages of their time in school, including throughout Key Stage 2, is better than expected nationally. Furthermore, their progress is at least in line with and, at times, better than that of the other pupils in school. Currently, they are one term behind their peers but the gap is closing rapidly.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make outstanding progress during their time in the school. Taking note of their starting points, these pupils make sustained and rapid progress across the key subjects. Their progress is in line with and, at times, better than that of the other pupils in school. They are well supported in lessons by teachers and are given the chance to develop their skills based on their particular individual needs.
- Progress in reading and writing has improved rapidly because younger pupils' knowledge of letters and the different sounds they make has gone from strength to strength. A larger than average proportion of pupils passed the national check for this skill, with all the different groups of pupils performing better than average. This is because of the excellent opportunities the pupils have for developing their letters and sounds skills in class and using them in a variety of ways across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils use their knowledge and skills effectively to solve problems.
- Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work in lessons and a close consideration of the school's progress and attainment data, shows that pupils in all year groups are on course to reach high standards again. This includes the most-able pupils so that a higher than average proportion of pupils are on course to reach Level 6 in mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The large majority of parents who responded to Parent View are very happy with the progress their children are making.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Strong subject knowledge of teachers, warm relationships between pupils and teachers, and activities which are challenging and engaging keep pupils enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves and they are given many opportunities to learn from one another through paired and group discussion. Pupils are supported to have a 'growth mindset', where they are urged to look at all the possibilities in their learning. This attitude is encouraged by ensuring pupils are not frightened to get things wrong. When pupils do make a 'juicy mistake' which leads to further questions and better understanding, this is celebrated and pupils are rewarded for taking risks in their learning.
- The teaching of mathematics and English is very effective indeed. As a result, pupils make

outstanding progress and reach high standards. This is, in part, due to the engaging opportunities pupils are given to use new skills in a practical way, such as their use of mathematics in a lesson about the Egyptians. Inspectors saw pupils use hieroglyphics, instead of numbers, to do mental mathematics. There is a strong focus on pupils' literacy development in all areas of the school. Staff are always concerned, for example, to ensure that pupils understand the vocabulary which is specific to individual subjects and that they use it accurately and in context.

- Teachers encourage pupils to aim for the highest standards and, in turn, plan lessons which closely match the pupils' individual needs. Equally, teachers are ready to adjust their plans if pupils need extra support or would benefit from being pushed further in order to reach and exceed their potential. In addition, teachers ask challenging questions to elicit answers with explanations and rationale, and to encourage pupils to think more deeply about the topics they are studying.
- The use of a new teaching model where there are three teachers and two classes for each year group has already had an impact on the pupils' achievement. This is seen in the information on pupils' assessments from the first half of the autumn term, the work in pupils' books so far this year, and the progress seen in lessons by inspectors, which was often outstanding and matched the judgements made by the school about teaching.
- The school recognises that an even greater emphasis on marking and feedback in pupils' books will take more teaching to outstanding, thus meeting the school's high aspirations for the pupils even more closely.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes to learning. Any disruption in lessons is minor and uncommon. In many lessons, inspectors saw attitudes to learning which were exemplary, where pupils demonstrated great enthusiasm for their work, were quick to participate and keen to do their best for the teachers. From the very youngest, pupils have a very clear understanding of the routines in school, which enhances the learning as very little time is wasted on the organisation of groups or the changeover in activities, for example.
- Parents have a very positive view of behaviour and safety. They believe behaviour is managed well and that their children are happy in school. Pupils also say they feel safe in and around school and that behaviour is very good. They are clear about what is expected of them and what happens if they do not do as they are told. They also talk enthusiastically about the rewards and positive experiences they have in school.
- The attendance of pupils is excellent, as is punctuality to school and to lessons, which all demonstrate that pupils like being in school and in lessons and that they feel safe in that environment.
- Around the school, it is clear that pupils treat one another with respect and the school has set well-thought-out schemes to ensure that there is a friendly environment in the school; one initiative involves older pupils taking responsibility for younger ones. Years 4 to 6 are given a year group from Years 1 to 3 to sit with and serve at lunchtime. They also share free and structured playtime with these pupils and, as such, younger pupils do not feel any intimidation or fear of the older pupils.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare but that when it occurs, it is dealt with quickly and effectively and that they trust the adults in the school to ensure they are kept safe. Parents are pleased with how bullying is dealt with on the rare occasions when it occurs.
- The school's behaviour records show that those pupils who have been involved in more serious behavioural incidents are supported effectively, with the result that there have been far fewer of these incidents in recent times compared to previous years.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and senior team lead by example and their clear view of how the school can continue to improve is shared by staff who make very positive comments about how effectively senior leaders are striving to further improve teaching and learning. Staff say, 'We are so well supported and leaders are always focused on supporting us to just get better and better in our teaching, for the pupils.'
- The leaders' drive to keep improving the practices in the classroom is at the centre of all they do and new initiatives, such as the three-teacher model, are a response to the needs of teachers to help them provide focused support for all pupils. Staff, particularly the least experienced, are given a lot of opportunities to observe one another and the headteacher regularly uses the expertise in school for staff training. Staff coach one another and planning is always a joint venture between teachers.
- The school knows itself well and is very scrupulous in its assessment of the success of the pupils, and fastidious about where more could be done to support an individual pupil. This ambitious attitude is a driving force in the school where all staff share a passion to do the best for the pupils.
- The school's curriculum is such that it engages pupils' interest, while reinforcing key skills and promoting their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, inspectors saw excellent teaching in a music lesson, where pupils demonstrated enthusiasm for learning how to play new instruments. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were learning about the Serengeti as part of a geography project. In the lesson, inspectors saw young pupils using their literacy skills to find appropriate adjectives to describe the differences between the landscape and the wildlife where they live and that found in the desert. The pupils also have the chance to attend Art Club after school, the impact of which was seen all around, where pupils' work was displayed and celebrated.
- In addition, the school is using the primary school sport funding to provide free transport for any pupil who wants to stay behind after school to participate in sporting activities and competitions, which was not previously possible. Furthermore, the school has purchased new athletics equipment so that the pupils' experience of sport is enhanced.
- The performance management systems are rigorous; they are used to drive improvement in teachers' classroom practices and the impact of these on the achievement of pupils. Staff confirm the quality and rigour of the appraisal process, believing it to be fair yet challenging and securely based on ensuring they get the best from the pupils.
- The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is of the highest quality and it rejects all forms of discrimination. This is seen in the achievement of all pupils, regardless of ability or background.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies and practice fully meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an outstanding awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They support the school fully but are unafraid to challenge proposals and to ask questions of leaders about pupils' progress and their ideas to improve the provision. The governing body ensures that performance appraisal arrangements are secure and that teachers only receive financial reward if they meet their classroom targets in relation to pupils' progress. Governors are often visible around the school and take part in enrichment activities, such as visits and residential trips. Governors are fully aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact of this spending on the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

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	134319
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	429650

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	500
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lea Taylor
Headteacher	Tracy Dell
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
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