

# Montgomery Junior School, Colchester

Baronswood Way, Colchester, CO2 9QG

**Inspection dates** 3–4 February 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The leadership and middle management of the school work hard as a team and respond quickly to improve standards across the school. The reconstituted governing body supports leaders effectively, and is now well placed to help the school improve further.
- The headteacher is meticulous in his monitoring of teachers' work, giving detailed and accurate feedback. As a result, teaching has improved significantly and is now good, enabling pupils to make good progress, particularly in reading and writing.
- The governors, staff, parents and pupils are all highly supportive of the headteacher and his focused determination to secure the best for the school.
- Relationships within the school community are strong. There is a very supportive ethos and everyone is made to feel welcome. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- The school's teaching of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is particularly good. Pupils are articulate in their understanding of what it means to be British. They know the difference between right and wrong, and how to treat others with respect.
- Leaders have acted swiftly to introduce changes in how they assess pupils and to the new curriculum. Their skill in using and understanding data results in careful tracking of pupils' progress. This ensures pupils who need extra support receive it quickly.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the gap is closing, disadvantaged pupils do not make the same progress as others, particularly in mathematics.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils who make more than the expected two National Curriculum levels of progress in mathematics is below average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and teachers, a representative from the local authority, pupils, the Chair of Governors and two other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including a summary of the school’s self-evaluation and development plan, policies aimed at keeping pupils safe, and information about the management of teachers’ performance.
- The inspection team analysed the views of 23 parents who responded to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors also spoke with parents during the inspection, in person and on the telephone.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by the 21 staff who returned a questionnaire.
- Inspectors also listened to pupils read in Year 3.

## Inspection team

Kelly Stock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Hughes

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- A very large proportion of pupils have a parent in the armed forces. This means they are supported by the armed forces' pupil premium (additional government funding for the children of service personnel).
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- Large numbers of pupils join and leave the school within the school year. These are mainly pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have 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 reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school works in close partnership with Lexden and Home Farm primary schools.

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

- Ensure a greater proportion of pupils make better than expected progress in mathematics by continuing to track individuals at risk of underachieving and providing extra support.
- Speed up the progress of disadvantaged pupils, especially in mathematics, so that they achieve as well as other pupils in the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is highly focused and organised. His clarity of guidance and strong leadership ensures that all staff understand the high expectations needed to drive forward improvements. Senior leaders have managed the introduction of teaching and learning reviews exceptionally well, and teachers receive detailed and precise feedback on their teaching and marking. This has led to a significant rise in the quality of teaching across the school. New teachers to the profession, and to the school, are also well supported.
- New appointments have strengthened the middle leadership of the school. These leaders are passionate and enthusiastic, and have the skills to improve the curriculum and raise standards. For example, the design of the topic model has enabled a seamless change to the new curriculum, and pupils' books demonstrate a wide range of topics which pupils enjoy.
- The school works closely with two partnership schools to check its judgement of pupil's progress and improve the quality of teaching. It also uses educational research to identify and try out examples of best practice.
- Teachers have welcomed and valued the support and training from the local authority to improve the teaching of mathematics and phonics (the sounds that letters make). As a result, teachers have successfully introduced 'working walls' in mathematics (displays of helpful and relevant information for pupils to refer to). They have also designed a new calculation policy which enables pupils to use and apply their skills in problem solving.
- The new special educational needs co-ordinator started in September 2014 and works across both the infant and junior schools. As a result, she has an excellent knowledge of the pupils, supporting the transition from one school to the other. Careful management and tracking of pupils ensure they make at least expected progress from their different starting points. One parent expressed her 'absolute admiration' for the school, in its care and 'dedicated' support for her child.
- The pupil premium is used appropriately to support disadvantaged pupils both academically and pastorally, so that they can access the full range of opportunities available to them including trips, visits and clubs. The school carefully monitors the progress of these individuals to ensure their achievement is improving in all subjects. It has identified that this is not yet the case in mathematics.
- The school is highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in preparing pupils not only for secondary school but also for life in modern Britain. This can be seen in the pupils' theme books, displays, assemblies and in their attitudes towards each other. The school also has strong links with the British Army and British Legion and is now a member of HMS Heroes.
- Pupils' understanding of equality is also impressive; one pupil said, 'It doesn't matter your religion, we're all the same'. Pupils also explained to inspectors how homophobic or racist language is offensive. The school is effective in how it promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are effective in keeping pupils safe. Pupils say they feel safe at school and their parents agree.
- The school's new approach to assessing pupils' attainment without reference to National Curriculum levels is proving successful. This is because it enables teachers and leaders to regularly and accurately track pupils' individual progress. The school has worked hard to ensure it assesses pupils accurately when they join the school.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used well. Specialist staff have improved the teaching of gymnastics, and the school also employs coaches from Colchester United Football Club. Pupils are now more confident to join in, including those with special educational needs who have previously not taken part readily in sport.

- Almost all parents who completed Parent View or who spoke with inspectors were highly positive about the school and would recommend it. They are particularly pleased with the new homework policy and how the school provides information on their childrens' progress.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective. The governing body, reconstituted since the last inspection, now has lead governors for different areas of responsibility. As a result, governors are able to use their individual skills and knowledge to best support the school. Governors say communication has improved, enabling them to act more quickly.
- The Chair of the Governing Body has arranged training for all staff so they are confident in knowing how to check on the quality of the school's work effectively. Governors' minutes reflect the ability of members to question and challenge the school. There is evidence of good discussions taking place around the new curriculum and approaches to assessment.
- The governors have a good understanding of the school's finances, including how additional funding is spent and its impact.
- Governors also have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, and link this to performance management arrangements, including those for the headteacher. Teachers do not receive pay rises unless they meet their appraisal targets.
- The headteacher provides the governing body with detailed information and data. As a result governors have a better understanding of how the school is performing.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel listened to, for example, through the school council.
- Staff keep parents informed of their childrens' attitudes to learning and behaviour, as well as their effort and academic achievement. Teachers gather this information on pupils through their mentoring approach. Pupils say the rewards system, including 'Monty Merits', makes them feel appreciated. They value the privileges that the accolade of being in 'Team Green' brings.
- Pupils are polite and considerate to each other and to staff and visitors. For example, they behave equally as well for visiting teachers who teach drama and physical education as they do for their class teachers.
- Pupils are used to their classmates joining the school outside normal times of entry. They make an effort to help new pupils 'fit in' with the 'buddy' and 'passport' systems. Pupils said, 'We look after them and treat them nicely'.
- Pupils are able to talk about the school's '3 Rights' policy and say teachers help them to know the right thing to do. As a result, pupils treat each other with respect. They listen carefully to each other, to their teachers and work well together.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They take pride in their work and are enthusiastic in lessons. When teachers have particularly high expectations, as seen in Year 6, pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- Pupils with more complex needs or challenging behaviour are managed well.
- Attendance is average. The reason it is not higher is partly due to the school's sensitivity to some of its military families, who request holidays in term time because of their work schedule.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and their children agree that pupils feel

safe in school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe on the internet and say that they feel able to go to their teacher if they have a problem.

- Pupils treat each other with respect, regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation.
- Pupils say that, if bullying does happen, it is dealt with quickly. The same is said for any behaviour in class that distracts them from learning.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teachers know their pupils well and relationships are highly positive. As a result pupils learn in an atmosphere where they feel able to make mistakes, and to say if they do not understand.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are patient and check pupils' understanding before moving on to the next activity.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is improving. Teachers are now more confident in supporting children in Year 3 to use their phonic knowledge to improve their spelling. The school is now looking at ways to work with partnership schools to support children further in using phonic knowledge to improve their reading of unfamiliar words. An after-school reading café is also improving pupils' range of reading.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those who require additional help now receive support in class rather than only having separate help outside of lessons. This is helping teachers to follow up any gaps in learning more quickly and also ensures these pupils are fully integrated into their classes.
- Marking across the school is good, and teachers give regular feedback to pupils in class and in their books. The same approach is used consistently by all teachers and pupils respond to their teachers' comments using their purple pens. The quality of feedback in books is outstanding. In a Year 6 class detailed feedback enables pupils to have a very clear understanding of what they are doing well and how to improve their work.
- The quality of teaching over time is particularly effective in Year 6. Teachers' high expectations and excellent subject knowledge enable pupils to make rapid progress from their starting points, including those pupils who join the school as late as Year 6. In these classes, teachers' questioning to extend the learning of the most able pupils is highly effective. Both teachers are committed to using best practice gleaned from educational research to improve the teaching and learning in their lessons. Pupils say work has the right level of challenge.
- Teachers' planning meets the needs of all pupils in their classes well. Activities engage the pupils and they are interested in their work. In one Year 4 class, pupils were transfixed when the teacher revealed the 'magic' of a group of multiple numbers all equating to the number 9.
- The school has invested in a number of training courses for teaching assistants. As a result, they are very skilled in supporting the pupils they work with, including managing their attention and behaviour.
- High expectations and regular monitoring of books by leaders ensure that pupils' writing is of an equally high standard across the different subjects.
- Teachers build on what pupils already know when planning learning in mathematics. Pupils benefit from the new calculation policy when applying their mathematical skills in solving problems. Pupils' books show that they are starting to use and apply their mathematical skills across different subjects. However, leaders recognise they still have more to do.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- Pupils join the school with average standards. The school assesses pupils as soon as they start school, including those pupils who join the school later. These assessments are moderated with partnership schools to ensure the accuracy of judgements.
- Standards in reading and writing have improved and are now above average. In 2014 the proportions of pupils in Year 6 making the expected two National Curriculum levels of progress was in line with national figures in all subjects. The most able pupils made better than expected progress in reading and writing. However, pupils who joined the school in Year 5 did not make more than expected progress in mathematics. Leaders are now carefully tracking individuals at risk of not achieving the higher Level 5 in mathematics to ensure last year's results are not repeated.
- Due to the mobility in the school, leaders track the progress of pupils who have attended the school for more than three terms separately to those pupils who have attended the school for less than three terms. Data and evidence in pupils' books show that the longer the pupils stay, the better they achieve. Pupils who have recently joined the school in Year 6 are demonstrating good and sometimes rapid progress.
- The gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school is closing. These pupils are now on track to achieve well in reading and writing. However, in 2014 a small number of Year 6 pupils narrowly missed the marks expected of them and, as a consequence, the gap widened. Pupils were approximately two terms behind their peers in writing and grammar, one and a half terms behind in reading, and two and a half terms behind in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils achieved broadly the same as others nationally in mathematics and slightly better in reading, writing and English grammar.
- Disadvantaged pupils at risk of not achieving expected progress are receiving additional support to help them catch up. These pupils have already made good progress in the last four weeks due to changes in the way this support is organised.
- Current Year 6 pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making good progress from their different starting points. The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is in line with similar pupils nationally, and they make good progress from their starting points, especially in writing.
- Increasing numbers of the most able pupils are on track to make better than expected progress in all subjects and across the year groups. However, the number of girls in Year 5 on track to achieve the higher levels in mathematics is not as high as the school would like. As a result leaders have put in additional support, such as booster classes and the Monty's Merchandise enterprise undertaken by these pupils themselves.

## 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>	114750
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	454802

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maxine Simon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bill Aylett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 572288
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