

Marston Montgomery Primary School

Thurvaston Road, Marston Montgomery, Ashbourne, DE6 2FF

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is an improving school. Since the last inspection the pupils' attainment and progress has improved, particularly in writing. Achievement is now good.
- The headteacher has introduced much more rigour into monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work.
- Governors have a good focus on ensuring that weaknesses in performance are tackled quickly and successfully.
- The quality of teaching has improved over time and is now good.
- Teachers' marking provides pupils with clear guidance that helps them to improve their work.
- Leaders have improved attendance to well above the national average.
- Teachers plan lessons that pupils find interesting and motivating.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is excellent. The vast majority behave well in lessons and focus on their work.
- Pupils are kept safe at school. Pupils are taught well about keeping safe outside school, particularly when using the internet.
- Pupils enjoy school. Children settle quickly into school life when they start in the Reception class, where they make good progress.
- Teachers quickly establish routines and expectations in the Reception class and these remain with the pupils as they progress through the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' planning and organisation of classrooms are not always tight enough; pupils lose learning time between activities or at the start of lessons.
- Teachers do not always give the most able pupils work that is challenging enough, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always check that pupils are working hard enough. Sometimes pupils lose concentration and do not focus on their tasks.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons. The inspector also observed pupils working in smaller groups. One of the lessons was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and checked their reading records.
- Meetings were held with all members of the teaching staff.
- A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors.
- A meeting was held with the local authority's adviser linked to the school.
- Many discussions took place with pupils, both formally and informally in lessons and at lunchtimes.
- The inspector took account of the views of 16 parents from Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), and conversations were held with parents at the start and end of the school day. The inspector also analysed the eight responses to the questionnaire for staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own data on pupils' recent and current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; reports on the quality of teaching over time; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the school's improvement plan; documents relating to safeguarding; and the minutes of various meetings, including those of the governing body.

Inspection team

Nigel Grimshaw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided to schools for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils arriving at and leaving the school part way through their education is high compared to other schools.
- The early years provision in the Reception class at the school is full time.
- With numbers on roll decreasing this year, the school has reduced the number of classes from three to two.
- The headteacher was appointed following the previous inspection in 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding by making sure that:
 - teachers' planning and preparation are sufficiently detailed so that no learning time is lost when pupils start their work in lessons or move from one activity to another
 - the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged, particularly in mathematics, and thereby achieve as well as they can
 - teachers check more frequently that all pupils are concentrating on their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's friendly but totally focused approach has created a caring ethos within the school that is centred on improving standards of teaching and learning and promoting pupils' good behaviour.
- A more rigorous approach to monitoring teaching and the outcomes for pupils has created improvements and teaching is now good. The headteacher teaches for at least three days a week and sets a good example to others, which has raised expectations across the school.
- The management of teachers' performance is rigorous and has been an important factor in raising the quality of teaching. All staff are clear about the high expectations and strive to achieve their targets.
- A strong sense of co-operative working within the staff has been created. All staff show a commitment to moving the school forward and do so through their subject leadership roles and by working together as a small but effective team.
- The tracking of pupils' attainment and progress has been enhanced and regular half-termly checks on all the pupils in school have ensured that staff are very clear about how well each pupil is progressing. Teachers provide extra support promptly if there are signs that any pupils may be falling behind.
- The school has worked closely and successfully with the local authority and with other local schools to check that assessments of pupils' attainment are accurate.
- The school provides a balanced and broad range of subjects. The provision for the creative arts of music and dance is exceptionally good; every Key Stage 2 pupil took part in a Dance Festival hosted by the secondary school the day before the inspection. The dancing, observed on the video, was high quality and incorporated some of the Tai Chi movements that the pupils learn in school.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The subjects they study promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of a good range of religions and cultures. Pupils gain an appreciation of the need for respect and tolerance for people from other faiths. Staff foster good relations within the school and tackle any discrimination promptly and effectively. All pupils are treated equally. Through elections to the school council and discussions in circle times, the pupils develop a good understanding of the democratic processes in this country.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to provide one-to-one and small group support for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the gaps in attainment between those pupils and their classmates, although still present in some year groups, are narrowing, and in some cases disadvantaged pupils are ahead of others.
- The primary sport premium is used well. The school faces challenges in providing suitable facilities for physical education and sport because of the small playground, small grassed area and the lack of a hall; and more recently by the lack of availability of the village hall adjacent to the school. Despite these difficulties the pupils have had many opportunities to participate in tournaments and festivals and almost all pupils have taken part already this academic year in some sporting or dance activity. They also have an increased awareness of how to live healthy lives.
- Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are fully in place, are effective, and meet statutory requirements.
- Although the headteacher's actions have improved the quality of teaching, some inconsistencies in planning and expectations remain.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance has improved since the last inspection, particularly the rigour of monitoring practices and consequently in governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Progress on tackling weaknesses is checked by more frequent and more focused visits into school by the members of the governing body. Through these visits and from their discussions of the school's records, governors are clear about the quality of teaching.
- Governors have undertaken a balanced range of training activities. As a result they have a good understanding of the data on pupils' attainment and progress and are in a stronger position to challenge the work of the school leaders as well as support them. The high level of questioning during meetings of the governing body shows that the governors are keen to tackle any areas of underperformance. They are clear about how teachers' performance is managed and are rigorous in checking that good teaching is rewarded as well as tackling any weaker teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils and the parents who commented during the inspection agreed that behaviour is good in school.
- Pupils' behaviour outside of lessons is exemplary. They are polite and courteous. Pupils look out for one another and are quick to help any who may be struggling with a large load, for example. They work together co-operatively and the large majority have very good attitudes to learning. The school has recently introduced a new behaviour policy and this is working well.
- The Year 6 pupils in particular show very mature attitudes to their learning and work together exceptionally well, providing support to others as well as being conscientious about their own work. However, sometimes pupils in other year groups lose concentration and this leads to slippage in learning time and sometimes their standard of behaviour also dips. On these occasions teachers and teaching assistants do not check on pupils' progress in the lesson frequently enough. This is why behaviour is not yet outstanding.
- School leaders and governors have worked diligently to improve attendance and, as a result, it has improved year on year and is now consistently well above the national average. Punctuality at the start of the day is also good but occasionally there is some time is lost at the start of the lessons before pupils are focused on their work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils and the overwhelming majority of their parents agree that the pupils feel safe at school. In discussions with pupils they say that if they had any concerns then they would be confident that adults would deal with these quickly.
- Instances of bullying are very rare and adults in school deal with those that occur promptly and effectively.
- Safeguarding practices are rigorous. Visitors to the school are checked on arrival and are required to sign in and wear badges. All external doors are secure and have key-pad entry. Appointments to the school staff comply with 'safer recruitment' procedures and all staff are checked thoroughly.
- Risk assessments are completed whenever the pupils undertake visits and activities away from the school site. Pupils are also given good advice, often from external agencies, about keeping themselves safe outside school, including the safe use of the internet.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to require improvement. It is now good and results in pupils achieving well.

- Teachers plan work that the pupils find interesting and motivating. Work in different subjects provides good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and mathematics skills in a wider range of curriculum areas. This is particularly true of their writing skills, with some exceptional work in Year 2 on 'The Great Fire of London' and in Key Stage 2 on poetry. One pupil in Year 6 wrote, 'Drifting further from a place he once lived, now no more than a memory engulfed in the past. The glistening water is below, whistling past like a dream. The sun was glimmering in the water, mirroring its beauty.'
- The development of reading skills has a high profile from when children start school in the early years. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is consistently good and pupils use the knowledge they have gained throughout their time at the school to work out words that they find difficult. Pupils read fluently and most enjoy reading for pleasure at home.
- Teachers' marking is another aspect of teaching that has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers explain clearly their positive comments regarding good work and also provide guidance for the pupils on their next steps for improvement. Pupils say that they value the help that the marking provides.
- Teachers' checks on pupils' attainment and progress are now undertaken more frequently and assessments are agreed to ensure accuracy, often through joint working with other local schools and the advisers from the local authority.
- Pupils have targets to achieve in their books and these are linked with the National Curriculum expectations. Pupils enjoy the challenges that these provide and are keen to succeed and move on to their next targets.
- Sometimes teachers are not clear enough in the explanations of what pupils are to do from the start of the lesson and occasionally resources are not ready. This leads to some time being lost when pupils are confused or have to wait for equipment. At other times, teachers do not always check quickly or frequently enough that pupils have settled to their work and are fully focused on their tasks.
- Teachers know their pupils very well and consequently provide work that is usually well matched to their abilities. This is especially true for the disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who need additional support. However, particularly in mathematics, the work for the most able pupils is sometimes too easy, which prevents them from achieving as well as they might in those lessons.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age, although their writing skills are weaker. Routines are quickly established and expectations are high, largely because they are sharing the classroom with pupils in Years 1 and 2 and take their lead from the older pupils.
- Children make good progress in the early years, especially in their writing. This good progress is maintained across Key Stage 1, and standards at the end of Year 2 have improved since the previous inspection. The good progress is now continued throughout Key Stage 2, with pupils in each year group achieving well.
- As at Key Stage 1, attainment by the end of Year 6 has improved since the last inspection and was broadly average in 2014. The school's own tracking information and the scrutiny of pupils' books show that the current Year 6 cohort are already achieving above the school's 2014 figures at the half way stage of the year and are on track to reach well above average standards in 2015.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, in line with that of their peers, because they are now identified early and receive good support from skilled teaching assistants working closely with the class teacher. Teachers understand their pupils' needs very well and consequently plan work and levels of support that will improve their learning and progress.

- The numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group are small, ranging from none to three, and so any statistical comparisons of performance would be unreliable. Where pupils eligible for pupil premium funding are present there are three year groups where they are making better progress than their classmates and only one where they are not. The school is aware that there remain some gaps in performance between the disadvantaged pupils and their peers, but the gaps are narrowing because the eligible pupils are receiving focused support.
- Results for the most able pupils at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 have been broadly in line with national averages. Pupils are now making good progress in reading and writing, but their progress is slower in mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- The experienced leader of the early years has ensured that the induction arrangements when the children start school are well-established and effective. Children soon settle into school life and make good progress from their starting points that are broadly typical for their age. All children are therefore well-prepared for Year 1. This view is echoed by those parents spoken to during the inspection. They all said that their children loved coming to school and they were all pleased with the progress they were making.
- The levels of understanding, skills and knowledge of each individual child are checked soon after they arrive at school. The teacher then plans activities that match their abilities and interests. Children who have specific learning needs are identified early and are then provided with additional support.
- The progress children make relates directly to the good teaching they receive. The attractive and well-resourced classroom and outdoor areas make for an engaging and interesting place to learn. There are more opportunities for the children to practise and develop their literacy skills than their mathematics skills, which is appropriate given children's relatively weaker writing skills when they start school.
- Children soon settle into routines and high expectations of good behaviour are established because they are modelled for them by the older pupils in the same class. The children relate well to one another and learn to work and play together co-operatively because spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are built into the learning activities they receive.

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	453710

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	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Doreen Hall
Headteacher	Teresa Bosley
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2013
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