

Mountfield Primary School

Kirkwood Drive, North Kenton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 3AT

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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. Results in tests and assessments had been below average since the previous inspection but improved in 2014 to be closer to average by the end of Year 6. Attainment is rising and the progress of current pupils is accelerating rapidly because the quality of teaching is good.
- Leaders, managers and governors have successfully tackled weaknesses in teaching and have improved pupils' achievement particularly in the early years and at Key Stage 1. The school is well placed to build on this success and improve further.
- Teachers use interesting resources to engage pupils' interest and they manage their classes well. The progress of all groups of pupils is tracked carefully and extra help given to those who need it.
- Good leadership of the early years ensures children quickly become confident learners. In the Nursery and Reception classes they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The good behaviour of pupils makes a major contribution to the good climate for learning that exists at Mountfield School. Pupils attend regularly, feel safe at school and have good attitudes to learning. They feel they are listened to and that their opinions matter.
- The curriculum is broad and gives pupils a wealth of experiences which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils understand and respect those who have different faiths and cultures to their own. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are sometimes not moved on to challenging work quickly enough.
- Teachers do not always insist on high quality presentation of work in pupils' books.
- In mathematics, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Teachers do not fully share their own good practice and have insufficient opportunities to observe good and outstanding teaching in other schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons being taught to full classes and smaller groups of pupils of all ages and in a range of subjects including mathematics and English. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and inspectors made several shorter visits to classrooms together.
- Discussions were held with parents, pupils, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation.
- The 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire, 'Parent View', were considered as well as those from the school's own parental surveys and from school staff.

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alison Aitchison

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and so eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a similar proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils join the school partway through their primary education.
- The on-site provision for childcare, 'Mountfield Pre-school and Creche', is not managed by the governing body and receives its own inspection report which is available on the Ofsted website. A Sure Start children's centre also shares the school's site.
- The school works in partnership with schools and businesses in the 'Newcastle North West Learning Trust.'
- Children in the early years are of Nursery and Reception age. Those in the Reception class attend full time while those in the Nursery class attend in the mornings only.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There has been considerable staff change since the previous inspection with over half of teachers taking up their posts in the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that pupils reach higher standards and make even faster progress, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - moving pupils on quickly to more challenging work as soon as they are ready
 - always insisting on high standards of presentation of work in pupils' books
 - giving pupils more opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem solving-skills in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by giving teachers more opportunities to share their own good practice and observe good and outstanding teaching in other schools.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have brought about rapid school improvement in the last two years by tackling weaknesses in teaching. They have created a climate at Mountfield School where good teaching and good behaviour can flourish. New staff have brought considerable leadership and teaching expertise to the school. Consequently, a legacy of underachievement is now disappearing, gaps in pupils' knowledge are being filled and attainment is rising.
- The quality of teaching is carefully monitored. The management of staff performance is robust and staff are made very accountable for the progress of their pupils. Staff rightly say they are well supported by senior leaders. They feel that their views are valued and morale is high.
- Staff have access to some good-quality training to improve their skills through increasingly close work with their partner schools in the Newcastle North West Learning Trust. However, opportunities to share their own good practice and see that of other schools have so far been limited.
- Senior leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified what is needed to make it even better. Subject leaders are now being empowered to monitor the work of their areas of responsibility even more closely. They have clear ideas about how to make further improvements and are well placed to achieve these goals.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is closely monitored and extra funding (the pupil premium) is spent wisely on providing specialist one-to-one and small group teaching if pupils are in danger of falling behind in their work. Consequently, they make the same good progress as their peers and gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils, both in school and nationally, are closing.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Good relations between pupils from all backgrounds are fostered very successfully. Pupils have a good understanding of those who come from different faiths and cultures to their own through school visits, assemblies and by playing happily in the school yard with pupils who come from different backgrounds.
- The curriculum is very broad and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are now making good progress in developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. They are also gaining a wider understanding of the world around them and becoming more confident individuals as a result of the many trips, visits and clubs the school offers. Pupils talk enthusiastically about activities as varied as watching the eclipse through 'special glasses' to visiting a local mosque. All of these opportunities ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and for the next stage of their education.
- Safeguarding meets requirements. Staff are fully trained and well aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures.
- The local authority provides good support for the school through the School Achievement Partner who is employed by the Newcastle North West Trust and gives advice on the analysis of school data and assists with improving teaching and checking pupils' work.
- Extra funding for primary sport has been well used to employ specialist coaches and to improve staff skills in teaching physical education. Consequently, pupils have access to a wider range of sports, are able to perform at the highest level of which they are capable and are encouraged to take exercise and lead a healthy lifestyle.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses because they monitor its work carefully. They have an increasingly good understanding of the school's performance data and of the quality of teaching. They have a clear understanding of how staff performance is managed. They have tackled weaknesses in teaching and understand how good performance is rewarded. Governors ensure that finances are well managed and that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils move around the school very sensibly, play together happily in the school yard and are polite and well mannered in the dining hall. They clearly understand the importance of being tolerant and respecting others. They are kind and friendly to each other, staff and visitors.
- Records show that there are few incidents of challenging behaviour or bullying. If these do occur they are carefully recorded and leaders swiftly and effectively dealt with any incident.

- Pupils are keen to learn. They answer questions readily and work well together in teams and groups. Work in their books is usually of good quality but is sometimes untidy because teachers have not insisted on high-quality presentation.
- Pupils attend school regularly. They are punctual and arrive well equipped for learning.
- Pupils feel valued and that their views matter. They are proud of their school and are keen to tell others just how good it is. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility by, for example, acting as members of the school council, helping in the dining hall and looking after younger pupils in the playground.
- The good behaviour of pupils makes a major contribution to the good climate for learning that exists at Mountfield School.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff are well aware of safety policies and procedures. The school site is kept secure and visitors are carefully checked. Checks on staff suitability to work with children are fully in place.
- Pupils feel extremely safe in school and the vast majority of parents agree with this view.
- The parent support advisor, the special needs coordinator and all staff work closely with parents to provide very good support for children, particularly those who are vulnerable. They also work closely with specialist agencies to ensure pupils receive expert help when this is needed.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about keeping themselves safe. They have a good awareness of internet safety and of the dangers of, for example, drug and alcohol abuse. They have a sensible attitude to taking risks.

The quality of teaching is good

- Work in pupils' books shows that they make good progress in literacy and reading and slightly slower (although still good) progress in mathematics as a result of the good teaching they receive. Staff use varied resources and set interesting tasks so pupils enjoy learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage their classes very well. They ask perceptive questions and give pupils time to think carefully and respond with more detailed answers.
- Improved phonics (the sounds that letters make) teaching is ensuring that younger children quickly begin to develop good reading and writing skills. This is providing a firm foundation on which teachers are now building so that pupils' progress in literacy is accelerating across the school and most are becoming fluent readers. Older pupils developed their writing skills well and linked together their learning in other subjects as they drew on their knowledge of hieroglyphics and mummification to plan stories set in ancient Egypt.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants so they are able to complete work which is matched to their abilities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given valuable specialist help in developing their literacy skills if this is needed.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and track their progress very carefully. Good use is made of this assessment information to plan future lessons where work is closely matched to the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and they are given good advice on how to improve their work. Teachers' expectations of how pupils should present their work vary. In some books pupils work is clearly laid out and well presented but this is not always the case.
- Pupils' books contain a good quantity of work. However, in some books, particularly in mathematics, pupils complete repeated examples of the same type of work rather than moving on quickly to tasks which are more challenging and make them think harder. Pupils regularly practise their number work and develop good mathematical skills. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to solve real-life problems and use their reasoning skills in all mathematics lessons.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Work in pupils' books, that displayed in classrooms and the school's own detailed tracking data all confirm that current pupils are achieving well.
- Most children enter the early years with skills which are below those typical for their age in most areas of learning. They make good progress from their individual starting points. A legacy of underachievement is now disappearing, gaps in pupils' knowledge are being filled and attainment is rising because teaching has

improved and is now good.

- Pupils' current achievement is markedly different from that shown by previous school performance data. Results have been below average at the end of Year 2 since the previous inspection and were below average in Year 6 in 2012 and 2013. In 2014, test results improved so that the proportion of Year 6 pupils who reached the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics was average. The proportion of pupils making expected progress also compared favourably to that found nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as their classmates because they are given well-targeted extra help if they are in danger of falling behind in their work. Test results show that there was a gap of approximately two terms in reading, writing and mathematics between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally but this gap was less than one term between them and classmates. Both gaps narrowed in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils who join the school partway through their primary education all make good progress and achieve well. Their progress is carefully tracked so they receive timely and well-targeted extra help if and when this is needed.
- The most able pupils make good progress. They receive small group teaching and are given more challenging tasks which extend and deepen their learning and enable them to reach the higher levels.

The early years provision is good

- Most children have skills which are below those typical for their age in speaking, reading, writing and physical development when they enter the school. However, they quickly settle into school routines and respond well to the good teaching and vibrant learning environment the school provides.
- From their individual starting points, current children are making good progress and the majority are on track to reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. They are becoming confident learners, well equipped with the skills needed to succeed in Year 1.
- Children are given a wealth of learning opportunities both inside the classroom and out of doors. Phonics teaching is of high quality and children are continually encouraged to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. In the Reception class, children enjoyed learning as they fished eggs out of the sand and opened them up to discover the new words inside which they confidently read and neatly wrote down. In the Nursery class children developed their mathematical skills by sorting out the numbered green bottles after 'Mischief', the naughty nursery cat, had mixed them up.
- Children behave well because staff have very high expectations of them. They share toys and equipment without fuss, listen carefully and readily follow instructions. They are kept very safe by well-trained staff who understand their individual needs.
- The leadership and management of the early years provision are good and have brought about rapid improvements in children's achievement in a short time. Staff and resources are well deployed, children's progress is closely monitored and learning is meticulously planned. Links with parents are very productive and parents receive good information about, for example, new ways of teaching mathematics, which help them support their children's learning.

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	108474
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	456110

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Veronica Rodgers
Headteacher	David Atkinson
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2011
Telephone number	0191 2853793
Fax number	0191 2853025
Email address	admin@mountfield.newcastle.sch.uk

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