

Mather Street Primary School

Mather Street, Failsworth, Manchester M35 0DT

Inspection dates	7–8 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders provide strong direction for teachers and pupils. They have demonstrated drive and passion that has resulted in the sustained improvement in teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils' outcomes are good across the school, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' achieve well in phonics (the sounds letters make) due to effective, systematic teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently on roll are achieving at least as well as other pupils in school.
- Pupils behave well around the school and in most lessons. They are polite, friendly and wear their uniforms smartly.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is good overall and some is outstanding. This leads to the majority of pupils making good progress in a range of subjects.
- The personal development of pupils is a strength of the school and is promoted through a broad curriculum. British values are at the core of the school's work. Pupils have a clear understanding of multicultural British society.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teaching is not well matched to pupils' needs and does not challenge pupils, especially the most able, to make the best possible progress.
- The school's policy for marking is not consistently implemented across the school. Pupils are not always given useful advice or time to reflect on how they can improve their work as outlined in the policy.
- Although the provision for the early years has improved, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development remains below the national average.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average and some pupils arrive late for school in the morning.
- Pupils' spelling and handwriting are not as well developed as their other skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - work is well matched to meet pupils' needs so that they achieve the best they can
 - all teachers adhere to the school's marking policy of giving pupils time to review and correct their own mistakes.

- Improve pupils' spelling and the presentation of their written work.

- Work with pupils' families to improve attendance and punctuality so that learning time is not lost.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The executive headteacher and her senior team provide strong leadership and clear direction for the staff and pupils of the school. Their drive and commitment to improve teaching and pupils' achievement are shared by middle leaders and all other staff. As a consequence, leaders have secured and sustained significant improvement in outcomes and teaching.
- Senior leaders are vigilant in monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching. They have been successful in improving the quality of teaching through detailed collaborative planning, coaching and providing targeted support for staff. However, teachers do not consistently adhere to the marking policy.
- The management of staff performance is robust. Links between performance and salary progression are strong. Teachers do not automatically qualify for pay progression. Leaders set challenging targets closely linked to pupils' progress and ensure that staff receive the training they need to achieve them.
- Teachers value the training they have received and feel that they have been well supported to improve their teaching practice. Staff questionnaires demonstrate clear support for leaders' ambitions and the actions they are taking to achieve them.
- There are very robust systems for checking pupils' progress. The school provides a wide range of support for pupils who are slower in grasping new concepts so that they do not fall behind.
- The impact of good leadership is seen in the drive to improve the teaching of phonics, resulting in a significant rise in outcomes this year. Pupils' improved phonics knowledge is having a good impact on their reading and writing skills as pupils confidently split words up into sounds and combine sounds to make words. The drive to improve writing across the curriculum is evidenced in the well-developed written work in pupils' books in different subjects.
- Leaders are determined that disadvantaged pupils should achieve as well as their peers, and have used pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that gaps have narrowed significantly between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others across the school. Of the pupils currently on roll, the disadvantaged are making better progress than other pupils in school.
- The sport premium has been used effectively to employ a sports coach who has developed teachers' expertise in a wide range of sports. Pupils are involved in team games and extra-curricular sport activities after school on a number of days each week, and some have been appointed as sports leaders. Through their additional sporting activity, they are leading healthier lifestyles.
- The curriculum is broad and inclusive. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. Their artwork is displayed prominently around the school and is sometimes linked to music and to pupils' experiences.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength of the school. It is delivered through personal, social and health education and across the wider curriculum. Pupils' understanding is supported by a range of visits and events. British values are at the core of the school's work. The school's values and 'golden rules' are based on high expectations and mutual respect.
- Parents receive regular information about the progress their child is making in the school. In reports teachers identify in detail the next steps that pupils should make to improve. This information is particularly helpful at key stage 2. The views of parents who spoke to inspectors and who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are mostly positive about the way in which the school is led and managed, and the progress made by their child.
- Despite their best efforts, including the regular use of rewards and fixed penalty fines for parents, school leaders have not secured improvement in pupils' attendance.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses, and bring a range of skills and experience to support its work. They are fully involved in the development and monitoring of the school's self-evaluation report and development plan, for example meeting school leaders to consider their action plans for the new school year. They participate effectively in the performance management of senior leaders and other staff. Governors challenge the headteacher on a range of issues concerning pupils' performance and financial management, including the spending of the pupil premium and sport premium.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have developed strong procedures to ensure that no safeguarding issues are overlooked. Staff engage with parents, carers and a range of school partners to ensure that all pupils are supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is predominantly good, and some is outstanding, leading to improved outcomes for pupils. Pupils across the school benefit from teachers' strong subject knowledge, effective behaviour management and well-established classroom routines which support good attitudes to learning. Very positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute to pupils' good learning.
- Teachers in the federation plan learning collaboratively and exchange ideas productively. Teaching is guided by a firm set of principles and non-negotiable expectations.
- Generally, the work teachers provide is well matched to pupils' needs through well-judged tasks and support which provide an appropriate level of challenge. The use of other adults is planned well and effective. This is particularly the case in the early years. On occasions, the work pupils are given does not meet their needs, especially for the most able pupils, and this prevents them from making consistently rapid progress.
- Teachers use questioning well to improve pupils' understanding and to encourage them to explain their ideas in more detail.
- The teaching of literacy is well focused on the development of vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 3 used a wide range of verbs, adjectives, alliteration and rhyme in their creative writing.
- When teaching phonics, staff generally pronounce sounds accurately and have high expectations of the pupils. As a result, pupils can confidently break down words into their constituent sounds and blend sounds together. These skills help them to develop their reading skills.
- The teaching of reading is good. In key stage 1, pupils read regularly, sometimes supported well by Year 4 pupils. Pupils in key stage 2 read with fluency and with good understanding.
- Where teachers follow the school's marking policy well, they ensure that their feedback is highly focused and provides the next steps for pupils to follow. When the policy is not followed, pupils are not given the time to reflect on and learn from their errors or misconceptions.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Additional help and alternative activities are selected appropriately and there are good systems and processes in place to help pupils make progress.
- Teachers set homework to encourage reading at home, to extend learning undertaken in school and to promote pupils' research skills so that they can find out information for themselves.
- New arrivals to the school, who do not speak English, are provided with some effective focused language teaching. They make good progress in rapidly acquiring the language skills they need.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. A broad programme of personal, social and health education helps pupils to develop their skills for life, emotional well-being, health education and an understanding of equality and diversity. Year 6 pupils, for example, discussed the skills they would need for future success in any job. In religious education, pupils learn about different faiths, supported by visits to places of worship including a synagogue, a mosque and a Buddhist temple.
- British values are at the heart of the school's work, promoting respect, tolerance and good behaviour. Adults use praise effectively to motivate pupils. Pupils themselves work well together and are sociable. They have a strong understanding of a multicultural British society and are welcoming to new pupils to the school from this or other countries. They have written to and met the mayor of Oldham, raised money for charity and taken part in feeding homeless people.
- Pupils are encouraged to make positive contributions to the school. Some Year 4 pupils volunteer to be reading buddies to younger pupils and Year 6 pupils partner with early years children. Pupils sit on the school council, are monitors or sports leaders and some act as play leaders.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, drama and homework clubs.
- Pupils are well cared for in the school and staff work well with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met so that they can flourish. Pupils spoken to say they feel safe in the school. Bullying is rare and swiftly addressed. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe on the internet and more generally. Although all staff strongly challenge discriminatory behaviour and language, pupils say that the use of the word 'gay' in a derogatory way still occasionally occurs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite, friendly and wear their uniforms smartly. They behave very well around the school and in the majority of lessons they have good attitudes to learning. Any disruption to learning because of poor behaviour is rare. Pupils generally enjoy their learning and take a pride in their work, although they do not always present their written work well.
- Attendance is below the national average. Leaders have in place a range of strategies to improve attendance that includes letters to and meetings with parents, home visits, the use of the local authority attendance service, rewards for good behaviour, and the use of fixed penalty fines and prosecutions.
- Some pupils travel a long distance to get to school and this affects their punctuality and attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Most pupils are making good progress from their starting points and their attainment is rising. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics rose significantly in 2016 and is now above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard after retaking the test also rose.
- Although only a third of the current Year 2 pupils attained a good level of development at the end of the early years, more than two thirds of them achieved the expected standards for their age in mathematics, reading and writing at the end of key stage 1 in 2016. This represents good progress.
- Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2 were above the national average in all subjects in 2015. The proportion of pupils making expected or greater progress was at least in line with the national average in all areas except writing. Disadvantaged pupils made the same progress as other pupils nationally in all subjects except writing where their achievement was less strong.
- The provisional results for Years 2 and 6 in 2016 indicate that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics. This good progress is evident for pupils in other year groups in the school.
The assessment information collected by the school for pupils currently on roll identifies that the proportion of pupils achieving the standards expected of their age in reading and mathematics is above or close to the 2016 national average for all pupils. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard for their age in writing is below the current national average. Leaders are aware of the gap that exists between boys and girls in Years 1 to 4 in writing and have made plans to narrow it. Disadvantaged pupils are achieving favourably in comparison with other pupils in school.
- Leaders are determined to improve pupils' writing and presentation across the curriculum. They have had some success. Pupils produce sustained pieces of writing for different purposes and audiences, with equally high standards in subjects other than English. Standards of writing are improving, particularly with regard to composition.
- Many pupils present their work well but some do not take enough care with their handwriting. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular use a good range of punctuation. The most able pupils use a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils' spelling is sometimes inaccurate.
- Pupils' work in mathematics is of a high standard in response to the good opportunities they have to solve problems and use reasoning.
- Pupils' progress is supported by a rich and broad curriculum. Work in pupils' books identifies that most are making good progress across subjects. Impressive work in geography, history, science and religious education includes some effective extended writing. Pupils are proud of their artwork, which is often of good quality.
- Pupils generally make good progress but on occasions this slows where the work is not well matched to their needs, or when the most able are not challenged to achieve the highest standards.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

Early years provision

is good

- Leaders of the early years provision have an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development, and have implemented improvements to reading, writing and number development to good effect.
- Outcomes are improving. Just over half of children enter Nursery with skills that are much lower than expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year in 2016, nearly two thirds had achieved a good

level of development. Achievement in reading, writing and number improved from 2015.

- Leaders have worked determinedly and successfully to reduce the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers. However, the gap between boys and girls remains wide and boys' attainment remains a focus for improvement.
- Teaching is good with a consistent approach by staff and well-planned activities. Children are engaged and learning opportunities are continuously encouraged. The environment is calming, relaxed and safe, and children clearly enjoy their learning.
- Activities are well matched to the needs of the children. The teaching of phonics is strong and is helping to improve reading and writing.
- There is now an increased focus on reading and writing in the early years. In the Nursery, some children are able to retell a story and demonstrate early writing.
- The outdoor learning area has been considerably improved since the last inspection and effectively promotes creative play. The entire early learning area resounds with the laughter of children having fun through their learning.
- The provision of opportunities for learning mathematics and for outdoor writing that effectively engage the children remains an area for development.
- Leaders understand the importance of improving the engagement of parents in their children's learning and are currently exploring ways in which this might be better achieved.

School details

Unique reference number	105649
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10012161

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samantha Gibson
Headteacher	Martine Buckley
Telephone number	0161 219 1051
Website	www.matherstreet.oldham.sch.uk
Email address	info@matherstreet.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 April–1 May 2014

Information about this school

- Mather Street Primary School is a smaller than average-sized school.
- Since 2012, the school has been federated with Yew Tree Community Primary School in Chadderton. The schools share a governing body, an executive headteacher and two heads of school. Other senior and middle leaders work across both schools. These appointments were made at the time of the school's federation.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and therefore supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for looked after children.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average, although the school has received a number of in-year entrants this year who are new international arrivals.
- The proportion of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school's website meets requirements for the publication of information.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across the school and in a range of subjects, of which a number were joint observations with senior leaders.
- They also examined books in lessons and in a sample of pupils' work that included all subjects.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and talked to others informally before school and at breaks and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with staff, including middle and senior leaders. A meeting was held with three members of the governing body.
- There were too few responses to Parent View to be analysed. Inspectors took into account the two text responses from parents and 16 responses from staff.

Inspection team

Gena Merrett, lead inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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