

Mount Street Primary School

Mount Street, Greenbank, Plymouth, Devon PL4 8NZ

Inspection dates

20–21 February 2018

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
|--|----------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors and leaders have overseen a decline in the standards pupils reach since the last inspection. There is now an improvement but standards are still too low.
- Pupils' progress in writing is too slow. Despite recent improvements, too many pupils do not reach the level expected of them by the time they leave for secondary school.
- The most able pupils do not reach the high standards they should in key stages 1 or 2 or in the early years. This is because they are not challenged sufficiently by their teachers.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of their pupils. As a result, they sometimes plan work which does not meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders have not tackled weak teaching with sufficient robustness. This has resulted in some pupils underachieving over a lengthy period.
- Senior and middle leaders are not monitoring the effectiveness of the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour to ensure that teaching is consistently good.

The school has the following strengths

- The governors and the new acting headteacher have begun to reverse the decline in standards. Staff are highly motivated to improve standards.
- The acting headteacher and staff welcome every child and family into the school. This inclusive approach is highly valued by parents, carers and the community.
- Leaders have ensured that support for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) is very good. They are welcomed by teachers and pupils and integrated into classes quickly.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful. They treat each other with warmth and good humour. They are keen to do well in school and so work hard.
- Children make good progress in the early years and Nursery provision. Teachers monitor their progress closely and ensure that they develop well from their starting points.
- Leaders ensure that there is good support for vulnerable pupils. Well-trained and committed staff support them and relationships with external agencies are strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, and hence raise standards, by:
 - ensuring that all pupils, particularly the most able, are suitably challenged so that they make good progress
 - continuing to address weaknesses in the teaching of writing.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that a culture of monitoring and evaluation is deeply embedded throughout the school
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they can continue to raise the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders did not act quickly enough to address poor standards in the school. The acting headteacher has now introduced a number of initiatives aimed at improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These are necessary and appropriate. It is too soon to judge their full impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Senior leaders do not monitor the school with sufficient rigour. As a result, weak teaching and ineffective practice have been allowed to continue unchecked. Recently, the quality of monitoring has improved but it is still not systematic enough to tackle weaknesses in teaching or in other aspects of school life.
- The leadership of teaching is improving but it is not yet good. The new senior leadership team has an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching but lack the detail to accurately target their efforts. Not all middle leaders have the skills to monitor and improve the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. Some are inexperienced. As a result of this combination, the considerable effort and commitment leaders and teachers show to improving standards are not having all the impact they should.
- Teachers do not currently have the skills to teach writing with the precision necessary to ensure that pupils make good progress. Leaders are aware of this and are now beginning to address the issue. They have changed the school's approach to teaching writing and this is having a significant impact. They have also raised their expectations of what pupils can do. Leaders are also making sure that teachers are given training opportunities so that they can improve their teaching.
- The new acting headteacher is ambitious for the school. She has galvanised staff into responding to the school's poor standards. She is raising expectations of teachers. She has encouraged staff to work together to overcome the challenges the school faces and to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result of her efforts, staff and parents are enthused and very supportive of recent improvements.
- Leaders make sure that the curriculum gives pupils the chance to experience a broad range of learning opportunities. Pupils enjoy learning about science and history. They are given opportunities to start to understand computing and coding. There are also opportunities to discuss moral issues and to develop a greater cultural awareness. Teachers use these subjects effectively to give pupils additional opportunities to improve their writing.
- Leaders show great commitment to ensuring that every pupil is welcomed and included in school. A substantial proportion of pupils face significant challenges in their lives. Some are disadvantaged and some displaced. Many face multiple barriers. Just less than half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Staff ensure that these pupils are integrated into school and are supported to make progress in their lessons.
- Leaders and teachers actively celebrate the school's diverse ethnic mix and use it to highlight the fundamental British values of tolerance and respect. As a result of their work, pupils are well prepared for growing up in modern Britain.
- Leaders make good use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Funding

is divided appropriately between ensuring that these pupils are supported to overcome the additional barriers they face and providing additional learning opportunities. This is proving an effective combination and pupils are beginning to catch up with their peers.

- Leaders do not ensure that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because leaders do not monitor progress in sufficient detail and so cannot ensure that pupils are supported appropriately.
- Leaders make good use of the additional funding they receive to promote physical education. Teachers are trained to lead sports activities effectively. Pupils enjoy and value these opportunities.
- Leaders are working with other local schools and multi-academy trusts effectively. They are using them to provide targeted training and coaching opportunities for teachers. This is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and hence on the standards pupils achieve.

Governance of the school

- Initially, governors were slow to react to falling standards. However, they acted to secure an acting headteacher when the previous headteacher left and to seek support from other schools in neighbouring multi-academy trusts. This has proved effective in first halting the decline and then beginning to reverse it.
- Governors now hold school leaders to account well. They understand the information they receive from school leaders and ask pertinent questions about it. They visit the school regularly and talk with staff to increase their knowledge and understanding. Consequently, they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and work alongside the acting headteacher to plan improvements.
- Governors have not yet secured the long-term leadership of the school. This has created uncertainty among parents and staff. It is a barrier to further improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders place a very high priority on keeping pupils safe. The culture of safeguarding is embedded in the heart of school. Staff are well trained and know what to do should they believe a pupil is in danger. There are good relationships with external agencies, such as the local authority social care team, and with parents. This helps to make sure vulnerable pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They know who to go to should they have a concern. They are also clear about how to stay safe online.
- All the correct employment checks on staff and volunteers are made and appropriate records kept.
- Leaders make sure that pupils are kept safe from the dangers of extremism. They are vigilant and take the appropriate action to protect pupils where necessary. They also follow appropriate procedures to protect pupils who may be vulnerable to female genital mutilation or to forced marriage.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not always make the progress they should because the quality of teaching is too inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. They underestimate what pupils can understand and do. As a result, they provide activities that do not challenge or stimulate pupils sufficiently. Pupils regularly spend too long repeating and practising things they have already mastered.
- The most able are not given enough opportunities to stretch and challenge themselves. They spend too long completing work that does not encourage them to think deeply and address complex problems. Consequently, they do not develop the skills necessary to reach the high standards they are capable of.
- Until recently, teachers did not assess pupils' work accurately. This has been resolved and teachers now have a good overview of pupils' abilities. However, teachers are still not precise enough in diagnosing gaps in pupils' understanding. This is preventing them from setting work that moves pupils on quickly.
- Teachers have recently changed their approach to teaching writing and this is having a positive impact. However, teachers are not yet sufficiently expert in the incremental steps pupils must take to develop their writing. As a result, pupils' progress, while improving, is still not as strong as it should be.
- Teaching is generally more effective in key stage 1 and in the final years of key stage 2. Where it is stronger, teachers are responding to pupils' needs well. They have a better understanding of each pupil's stage of development and so target the next steps more precisely.
- Teachers typically teach mathematics effectively. Pupils make good progress because teachers set work that develops pupils' fluency of calculation and develops their reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, the most able mathematicians are not given enough opportunities to tackle more complicated problems and this prevents them from maximising their potential.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not taught consistently well. This is because leaders and teachers do not have a sufficiently detailed knowledge of each pupil's needs. Teaching assistants provide a good quality of care and support for pupils but they do not have the skills to support learning effectively.
- Teachers in key stage 1 teach phonics well. As a result, pupils develop their letter sounds quickly and achieve good standards. This is beginning to improve standards higher up the school.
- Teachers provide a good range of learning opportunities across a broad range of subjects. In science and history, for example, pupils are challenged to predict and measure. In history, they are asked to develop their understanding of major events in Britain's past. Teachers use these subjects well to develop pupils' resilience in writing extended passages.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their school and they are enthusiastic and keen to take part in lessons. Most enjoy answering their teacher's questions and contributing to discussions with their classmates. However, where the quality of teaching is weaker, a minority of pupils switch off and become disengaged.
- Pupils are respectful and tolerant of each other. They listen to each other's opinions politely and they work together in teams productively.
- School leaders and staff have created a very effective network of care and support for all pupils, particularly vulnerable pupils. A significant proportion of pupils have additional emotional or mental health needs. School leaders and staff support these vulnerable pupils well. As a result of their work, pupils who would otherwise be unable to experience some success are able to take part in school life and to thrive.
- A significant proportion of pupils are on the school roll for only a short period, perhaps two years or less. The school works well with these pupils to ensure that they develop and make progress while they are in the school.
- Some pupils lack self-confidence. This is often a result of the challenges they face in their lives outside school. School leaders and teachers are aware of this and work hard to provide opportunities for pupils to become more confident.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff expect good behaviour from pupils and pupils generally respond very well. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly environment. Pupils behave well as they move around the school and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They are polite and respectful to adults.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. The atmosphere in almost all lessons is positive and productive. There is very little disruption to learning through poor behaviour.
- Parents, staff and pupils report that bullying is rare and that any incidents are dealt with well by staff. Pupils say that the multi-ethnic nature of the school population is a cause of celebration for them and that racist bullying is virtually non-existent.
- School leaders have been very proactive in improving attendance. As a result of their efforts to engage with parents, attendance is in line with national averages. Most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, attend very well. School staff have a strong relationship with parents and with the local authority's educational welfare service. This helps to encourage those families whose children attend less regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Standards of writing are too low. In each of the last three years, pupils have made less progress from their starting points than in nine out of ten schools. Pupils currently in the school are now beginning to achieve more, but standards remain too low. Too few pupils can consistently write extended passages without errors or use language appropriately to communicate effectively to a range of audiences.
- Too many pupils are not reaching a good standard in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Their use of punctuation is not sophisticated enough to allow them to express their ideas properly. Spelling errors are commonplace.
- Pupils are now making similar rates of progress in reading to those in other schools. This is an improvement. In 2015, key stage 2 outcomes were poor. They have improved each year since then as a result of the work leaders and teachers have put into improving the quality of teaching. Pupils enjoy reading and discuss their chosen books enthusiastically.
- Overall, pupils make good progress with their mathematics and most achieve standards similar to those in other schools. Their basic arithmetic is sound and they can use their mathematics to reason and to solve problems.
- The most able pupils do not achieve as much as they should in reading, writing or mathematics. This is because they are not given sufficient opportunity to work at the highest standards. Teachers are not exposing them regularly enough to the quality of work they should aspire to if they are to reach their potential.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not made good progress in previous years. This is now improving, particularly in reading and mathematics. This is because the additional monitoring and extra lessons they receive from leaders and teachers is giving them the boost they need.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make good progress from their starting points. This is because the support they receive is not sharply focused enough to help them overcome the barriers they face and the progress they make is not monitored effectively.
- Pupils in key stage 1 are making better progress with their reading and mathematics than in previous years but writing is still weaker. Additionally, the most able pupils are not achieving all they could because they are not given enough opportunities to excel.
- Pupils are achieving standards in the Year 1 phonics check that exceed the national average. This is because teachers are skilled and focus appropriately on key sounds and concepts. As a result, pupils' understanding builds rapidly.

Early years provision

Good

- Many children join the school or Nursery with comparatively low levels of development. Some have had very little access to the English language. By the end of their time in the early years provision, most have made strong progress from their starting points and many have caught up with the national benchmark. However, the most able children are not given enough opportunities to extend themselves. As a result, few

children reach the highest levels of development.

- Children reach a good level of development because the quality of teaching in the early years foundation stage and Nursery is good. Teachers know the children well. They accurately assess their progress and then organise tasks that help them move on to the next stage in their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in asking questions that stimulate children's thought processes.
- The learning environment is rich. Teachers encourage children to explore and to try new things. This helps to build their confidence and their ability to be independent.
- Staff are able to build positive relationships with children. This encourages enthusiastic and confident responses from the children. Behaviour is good because teachers set out clear expectations and children respond to them well.
- Most children make at least the progress expected in learning to read. Phonics is taught well and there are plentiful reading opportunities across all areas of the provision.
- Children's progress is enhanced by the careful thought that leaders and teachers put into introducing children to the Nursery, then on into the foundation stage and finally into key stage 1. This has a significant impact on helping children settle and learn.
- Leaders and teachers have built good, positive, relationships with parents. Daily contact and regular parent workshops help to ensure that parental support for children's learning is strong.
- Leadership of the Nursery and foundation stage unit is good. The unit is well organised. Teachers are well trained and know what is expected of them. This clarity enables the unit to run smoothly and to enable children to make good progress. Safeguarding is effective. All the appropriate checks and risk assessments are in place.

School details

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 113281 |
| Local authority | Plymouth |
| Inspection number | 10042679 |

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

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 241 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alex Fearon |
| Headteacher | Bridget Shillaber |
| Telephone number | 01752 205091 |
| Website | www.mountstreet.plymouth.sch.uk/ |
| Email address | mount.st.primary.school@plymouth.gov.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | March 2014 |

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The current headteacher and assistant headteacher are in temporary posts. The school is receiving support from two multi-academy trusts. It is in negotiations to join one of them.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the end of a key stage is very high.
- The school deprivation indicator is well above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the range of subjects and age groups, and scrutinised a wide range of pupils' written work. Some of the observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including minutes of governors' meetings, development plans, analysis of pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour data, safeguarding documents and the school's review of its own performance.
- Meetings were held with governors, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and groups of pupils.
- An inspector spoke to a local authority officer.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took into account the 25 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Andrew Lovett, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Olford

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018