

# Mallard Primary School

Cedar Road, Balby, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 9HU

## Inspection dates

19–20 June 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The changes in staffing since the time of the previous inspection, particularly in the leadership of the school, have led to some inconsistent rates of progress across classes, groups and the school's curriculum.
- Pupils' progress was above average in writing in 2017. However, progress was well below average in reading and mathematics. Pupils' current progress, including for children in early years, is not consistently good.
- Over the last two years, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has been below that of other pupils nationally. Leaders' recent actions to improve this are effective, although it is too early to demonstrate a positive impact on the outcomes for this group of pupils overall.
- Teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' work and the accuracy of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling are not consistently high enough.
- Teachers do not use assessment information effectively to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' abilities. The most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- The expectations for pupils' behaviour are not consistently applied by all staff. When work is not explained clearly or is lacking in purpose, the quality of pupils' work suffers and they become distracted and inattentive.
- Pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should and some pupils have poor punctuality. Despite leaders' actions, attendance remains below average, and some pupils continue to have high levels of unauthorised absence.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate. As a result, they know where strengths and weaknesses are to be able to improve the school.
- Leaders' and governors' recent actions are now starting to have a discernible impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This is having a positive impact on the drive for rapid improvement.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in key stage 1. The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is improving.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It offers a wide range of learning opportunities, both academic and vocational.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by ensuring that:
  - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is monitored rigorously across all subjects, to improve pupils' learning and ensure that pupils' progress is consistently good
  - staff learn from the models of effective practice which are available in the school
  - differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally diminish more rapidly
  - staff have the specialist skills needed to support all pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities to enable them to make good progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that work is planned carefully to challenge pupils at different levels, but particularly the most able, so that all pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements and their accuracy in spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar across a range of subjects
  - adjusting teaching more swiftly when pupils are ready for more challenging work in writing and mathematics
  - using probing questioning to deepen pupils' thinking and check their understanding, so that they make more rapid progress in lessons.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils, by:
  - fostering pride among pupils about the neatness and presentation of their work across the curriculum
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to show initiative and influence the work of the school
  - ensuring that staff are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour in the classroom so as to minimise disruption to learning
  - continuing to work with parents and carers so that punctuality improves, attendance levels rise and fewer pupils are persistently absent.
- Improve the provision in the early years so that a greater proportion of children reach or exceed a good level of development by:
  - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is consistently good
  - improving the outdoor environment to engage children more in their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Changes to the senior leadership team and the teaching staff since the time of the last inspection have proved a significant barrier to the school's efforts in securing good progress for pupils. Unavoidable circumstances resulted in the headteacher being the sole senior leader for much of this academic year. This has slowed the implementation of a number of strategic initiatives, including a review of the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching have not been fully effective so, throughout the school, inconsistencies remain and pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics have not risen quickly enough from their starting points.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is variable because of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Leaders' recent analysis demonstrates that a high proportion of these groups of pupils have complex educational, behavioural and emotional needs which are not always met effectively. This is because staff do not have the necessary specialist skills. As a result, these pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. The gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is not closing as quickly as it should.
- Parents share mixed views about the school. They agree that their children are kept safe, but some parents believe that bullying and inappropriate behaviour occur in the school. A small proportion of pupils echo this view. However, they told inspectors that staff deal with any incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour swiftly. The school is proud to have achieved the Leading Parent Partnership Award.
- The appointment of the assistant headteacher in January 2018 has strengthened the senior leadership team and has led to several rapid improvements. The school's assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, for example, is now more timely, accurate and robust. Leaders ensure that the school benefits from effective support from the local authority to strengthen this further.
- Middle leaders are increasingly effective in their roles in driving improvements, particularly in reading and mathematics. Initiatives to promote a range of fiction and non-fiction books and to improve pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics, for example, are beginning to have a positive impact. However, it is too soon to demonstrate improvement in pupils' outcomes.
- Staff, including those new to the profession, speak highly of the leadership team, whom they say responds positively to any concerns. Staff morale is high and they praise the training and support that leaders provide.
- The curriculum is used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which ensures that discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils benefit greatly from the strong emphasis on the creative arts. They enjoy opportunities to play a range of instruments and participate in the annual dance festival. Teachers plan many educational visits that are linked to pupils' learning themes and invite visitors to the school to further enhance pupils' learning.

- Leaders have well-thought-out plans to use the primary school physical education and sport funding. Sports coaches are improving the expertise and skills of teachers. The number of pupils participating in physical activity is increasing and this is developing their self-esteem and understanding about how to be fit and healthy.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are passionate about the school and ambitious for their pupils. They bring a broad range of skills to support them in executing their statutory duties with care and vigilance. They are committed to honing their knowledge and understanding of governance and are keen to make a difference for all pupils.
- Governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are frustrated at the school's rate of progress and the negative impact of the turbulence in staffing on outcomes for pupils. Governors are, rightly, concerned about the decline in pupils' progress in reading and mathematics and work closely with leaders to identify strategies to rapidly improve this. For example, the recent re-organisation of Year 5 into four smaller classes is proving to be effective in accelerating the progress of pupils, particularly in reading.
- Governors acknowledge that plans and funding for disadvantaged pupils have not always had a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress across the school. They recently commissioned an external review of the use of pupil premium funding. Although governors and leaders use this review to plan a range of initiatives, over time, leaders' actions have not led to consistently good outcomes for these pupils.
- Governors work closely with the local authority to secure specialist support for the school in an attempt to rapidly improve the quality of teaching and to strengthen the senior leadership team. As a result, governors offer an appropriate balance of challenge and support to leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding legislation and the school's procedures. Documentation related to safeguarding is well organised. Training is used well to ensure that staff are aware of potential risks to pupils and to help them to identify and support pupils who may be at risk. Each week, for example, staff explore current safeguarding issues in the school in order to address any concerns about pupils' welfare.
- Staff work effectively with pupils who have particular emotional conditions affecting learning and behaviour. On those few occasions when a pupil's behaviour escalates and becomes anti-social, school leaders have effective systems to share information with those who need it and follow-up calls with parents are made. This is helping to improve the behaviour of pupils, especially those who have complex or additional needs.
- The curriculum is well planned to include different safeguarding topics. For example, representatives from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have provided training in different aspects of online safety for pupils, staff, parents and

governors. Leaders use assemblies and lessons, such as personal, social, health and economic education, to help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Although there is effective teaching over time in some year groups and classes, too much variability across the school, including in early years, means that pupils make uneven progress by the end of key stage 2, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Changes in staffing have led to inconsistency in the quality of teaching and assessment. As a result, a high proportion of pupils have gaps in their learning which prevent them from developing skills and knowledge incrementally or building appropriately on prior learning. Although improving, teachers' use of assessment information is not consistently effective in planning work that is well matched to pupils' stages of development.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. This is seen, for example, in the presentation of pupils' work and in pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and spelling, which are sometimes not of a high enough standard.
- In some classes, teachers do not make the most of opportunities to extend and deepen pupils' learning through the questions they ask. For example, staff sometimes accept simple answers and do not probe further or encourage pupils to explain or justify their ideas. Sometimes, teachers do not provide timely challenge for the most able pupils, which slows their rate of progress.
- This was not the case in a Year 4 class, however. Pupils worked eagerly in groups to identify and explain the deliberate mistakes relating to place value in addition and subtraction problems. The teacher's skilled and carefully crafted questioning meant that pupils were well challenged and had to dig deeply into their understanding and reasoning to provide accurate solutions. Similar skilled practice was also evident during a Year 6 science lesson, when pupils were carefully challenged to explain their investigation into the effect of distance on the formation of shadows.
- The teaching of phonics is improving at a faster rate in key stage 1 than in early years. Girls in particular make good progress to reach beyond the expected standards. As a result of improvement in phonics, more pupils are able to access and enjoy reading. The lending library of high-quality picture books for parents is encouraging pupils to read to adults at home.
- As a result of staff training and recent initiatives, there are clear improvements in the teaching of reading. Many pupils are now making better progress. For example, current school information and work in pupils' books, show that more pupils in both key stages 1 and 2 are at the expected level in reading compared with last year, and a greater proportion of pupils are reaching the higher standard.
- Pupils enjoy writing and they make strong progress. Pupils' work in key stage 2 demonstrates their clear understanding and use of a range of factual, persuasive and descriptive writing. The regular focus on developing pupils' vocabulary in their 'word' books, is having a positive impact on the standard of their extended pieces of writing

across a range of subjects and for a range of purposes.

- Leaders have focused on improving reasoning skills in mathematics this year so that pupils are better able to explain their thinking when completing mathematical problems. This is leading to improvement in teachers' expertise and confidence. However, inspection evidence indicates that teachers sometimes take too long to stretch pupils in their thinking, which slows the development of their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Some teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough. As a result, pupils do not learn as effectively as they should, including the most able pupils. In some classes, teachers are slow to re-engage pupils who lose concentration during lessons.
- The headteacher knows what needs to improve. The assessment system and the monitoring of the quality of teaching have been overhauled and these are helping teachers to develop their practice well. Teachers and teaching assistants are becoming better able to support pupils who have additional needs, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, more pupils are developing their self-confidence and they are making positive progress from their various starting points.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' limitations in reading and mathematics mean that they are not consistently well prepared for the next stage in their learning and development, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils do not always demonstrate pride in their work. On occasion, books are untidy and work is not consistently presented to a high standard across the curriculum.
- Members of the school council and house captains are proud to be elected by their classmates. However, they have too few opportunities to show initiative or develop their leadership skills and they say that they would like more chances to influence the work of the school.
- Pupils speak highly of the care, guidance and support they receive from all staff members. Pupils discuss their learning about other cultures and faiths with enthusiasm and they show a mature attitude towards equality issues.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to participate in the numerous clubs provided by the school and external organisations, including street dance, cheer-leading, book club, gardening and sport. A number of pupils proudly represent the school at recital evenings and prestigious musical events, including the singing of wartime songs alongside members of the chorus of Opera North.
- Staff, particularly the special educational needs coordinator and the specialist leader of the 'thrive' support, are well trained to support pupils through a variety of confidential personal and emotional issues. Vulnerable pupils and their families receive timely and

effective support and intervention to address their needs. There is robust monitoring of the progress and behaviour of the small number of pupils who attend the specialist, local authority provision in other settings.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Staff work hard to encourage pupils to adopt positive attitudes towards their work and they enjoy receiving rewards for their achievements. In the main, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. However, in some classes, pupils drift off task and engage in low-level disruption. This is often because activities are not engaging or well matched to pupils' needs. Leaders work hard to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality to school through strategies such as first-day calling, home visits and issuing penalty fines. However, they have not been successful in reducing high levels of persistent absence and too many pupils arrive late to school.
- Recent innovative strategies are encouraging better attendance, for example the 'Mallard marathon', which rewards pupils with 'half a mile' for every day that they attend school. The unauthorised absence of a few pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, however, continues to prevent attendance rates from rising quickly.
- Pupils understand bullying in its different forms. They know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations and they understand how to manage risks associated with the internet and social media. Pupils are generally polite and courteous around school and across the school day. Sometimes, pupils say that play can become a little 'rough', but that staff deal with this well.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 was below average. Pupils' progress in these subjects has been too slow. In 2017 in writing however, pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2 improved considerably and were above average. The progress that pupils are currently making across the school in reading and mathematics is too variable, however, and therefore, outcomes require improvement.
- In 2016 and 2017, the overall proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has been similar to the national average. In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in these subjects improved; however, it remained below average in reading and mathematics. Pupils currently in key stage 1 are not making consistently good progress from their starting points.
- Current pupils' work shows that, while some pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, this is too variable in different classes, subjects and groups of pupils. Where teachers give pupils work appropriate to their needs, pupils make strong progress. Pupils' work across the school shows that teachers are not consistent and rigorous in ensuring that pupils develop their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately.



- The school is working tirelessly with some good impact to diminish the difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils. However, disadvantaged pupils are still making slower progress than their peers in most classes.
- The most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, do not reach their full potential in reading and mathematics. Some of the tasks they receive do not challenge them sufficiently well to master higher level skills.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the national Year 1 phonics screening check is improving and is broadly average. Girls have reached above the national averages for the last two years. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in reading and is contributing to the strong culture of reading being nurtured in the school.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving at a faster rate than in the past in reading, writing and mathematics. Provision for this group of pupils, particularly those with an education, health and care plan, is now more carefully planned to meet their individual needs in class, in small groups, or on a one-to-one basis.
- Subject leaders effectively monitor the wider curriculum. Pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of interesting subjects, for example in music, art and physical education, because they are effectively taught by specialist staff.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- The early years requires improvement because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. As a result, children do not make good progress in their learning and development. In 2017, the achievement of boys and disadvantaged children lagged behind that of other children nationally. As a result, by the end of Reception Year, some children were not well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children start school with a range of skills and understanding for their age. A large proportion join the Reception classes having made good progress from their typically below-average skills and knowledge on entry to Nursery.
- Although the proportion of children who reached a good level of development in 2017 was in line with the national average, children rarely reach their potential to exceed the early learning goals. Staff do not always challenge the most able children to solve mathematical problems for themselves or intervene swiftly enough to ensure that these children are writing to a greater depth.
- Some children do not develop secure enough reading skills in readiness for Year 1. During the inspection, some children were able to read accurately because they had been taught effectively to carefully segment and sound out their words. Others, however, were able to sound out individual letters but were not able to blend them together accurately.
- Indoors, the environment is vibrant and well organised. Activities are carefully designed to engage, enthuse and develop children's thinking and language skills. Outdoors however, there are fewer opportunities for children to learn through imaginative play. Adults do not always use well-crafted questions to extend children's vocabulary or to



encourage them to use talk to explore the world around them.

- Relationships across early years are positive. Routines are well established, but some children struggle to concentrate at times and need constant reminders from staff to maintain their attention, particularly outdoors.
- The early years leader has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and is taking action to improve the quality of teaching across the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Positive relationships with parents and carers are established prior to children starting school. There are many opportunities for parents to engage with their child's experiences. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and staff provide them with high-quality assessment information. Parents speak highly of staff.
- Leaders ensure that statutory welfare requirements are met. All staff are appropriately mindful of the need to protect children and keep them safe. Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Parents are highly appreciative of the quality of care that the children receive.

## School details

Unique reference number	134235
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10042229

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	435
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Moseley
Headteacher	Theresa Siverns
Telephone number	01302 859116
Website	<a href="http://www.mallardprimary.com">www.mallardprimary.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@mallard.doncaster.sch.uk">head@mallard.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	15–16 January 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team and in staffing since the time of the last inspection.
- There are two classes in all year groups.
- A very small number of pupils are educated off site.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British or Any Other White background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below that seen nationally. A very small number of these pupils have an education, health and care plan.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides full-time places for children in the Reception classes and part-time places for children in Nursery.
- The school provides out-of-school care in the form of a breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook a series of short, focused visits to classrooms and longer lesson observations in each class. A number of these were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Formal and informal discussions took place with senior leaders, including governors, subject leaders, pupils, parents, the local authority and a representative of the specialist provision attended by a small number of pupils from the school.
- Documentation relating to the school's website and safeguarding, including the record of recruitment checks, was scrutinised.
- The school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and analysis of current pupils' attainment and progress were evaluated.
- Inspectors, together with senior and middle leaders, scrutinised pupils' work in different subjects.
- Inspectors listened to several pupils read individually.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed by inspectors in lessons and during break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered the 13 parents' responses to Ofsted's free-text service and the 23 parental responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors spoke with parents and considered the school's own surveys of parents' views. Inspectors also took account of the responses to questionnaires from 25 members of staff. No pupils responded to the online survey.

## Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Larissa Thorpe	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Kenworthy	Ofsted Inspector

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