

Lee Mount Primary School

Lee Mount Road, Lee Mount, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 5EB

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2019

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- There has been a significant decline in the quality of education since the last inspection. Although it is improving, the quality of teaching is not consistently good across year groups.
- Over the last three years, published outcomes for pupils at the end of each key stage have been poor. However, current pupils' progress is improving, but remains variable.
- Leaders have designed the curriculum to give pupils a wide range of first-hand experiences. However, these are not always well planned to extend pupils' learning appropriately.
- The contribution teaching assistants make to pupils' learning is variable. Too often, during whole-class teaching, their impact is minimal.
- Leaders have not identified disadvantaged pupils' barriers to learning precisely enough. Consequently, their outcomes lag somewhat behind those of other pupils nationally.
- Teachers do not always have the subject knowledge they need. This means that they do not address pupils' misconceptions consistently.
- Additionally, teachers do not use assessments consistently to match work to pupils' needs. This hampers pupils' progress.
- Senior and middle leaders do not consistently take responsibility for improving teaching in the subject areas they lead.
- In the early years, the quality of teaching is not consistently effective. Activities designed for children to initiate their own learning are not challenging enough to extend their skills well.
- Leaders have been successful in raising pupils' attendance rates. However, too many pupils are still regularly absent from school.
- Most pupils are keen to learn. However, when teaching is not effective, their concentration drifts and low-level disruption occurs.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have ensured that pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. As a result, pupils are empathetic and mature.
- Pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities to participate in sports clubs and competitions.
- Governors are effective in holding leaders to account.
- Leaders have established an ethos of care. Despite the school's current position, staff reflect leaders' positivity and a determination to improve.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good or better, and improve pupils' outcomes, by ensuring that:
 - teaching staff have strong subject knowledge in all subjects they teach
 - teachers use accurate assessments in all subjects to plan and adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs, including for child-initiated learning in the early years
 - teaching staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievements and plan work which challenges pupils, including the most able pupils
 - teaching staff address pupils' misconceptions and errors effectively
 - the books pupils use to practise their early reading skills are tightly matched to detailed assessments of pupils' phonics knowledge
 - pupils demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning so that low-level disruption is eliminated
 - all teaching assistants contribute to pupils' learning effectively.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior and middle leaders receive professional development to enable them to take responsibility for improvements in teaching and the development of assessment in the areas they lead
 - all disadvantaged pupils benefit from support which is matched tightly to their barriers to learning, and leaders check systematically on the difference they make to disadvantaged pupils' outcomes
 - the curriculum is well designed to meet pupils' needs, extend their learning and promote their spiritual and cultural development effectively
 - all staff adhere to the school's policies and adopt improvement strategies promptly
 - pupils' absences are reduced so that attendance rates are in line with national averages, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Current senior leaders have halted the significant decline in standards which had occurred since the last inspection. Over the last year, the school has faced numerous challenges, not least the high level of staffing turbulence. The interim executive headteacher and acting headteacher have been successful in raising expectations of the quality of teaching. Ongoing changes to staffing have slowed the rate of improvement. However, despite the school's position, staff morale is growing and staff are motivated to improve the quality of education for pupils.
- The interim executive headteacher and the local authority have played a pivotal role in securing crucial external support. Advisers have supported leaders in identifying the priorities for improvement. Hence, leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness are precise and accurate. Additionally, the support of partner schools has been instrumental in securing some early improvements to leadership and the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have introduced new expectations of teachers' use of assessment and how this should inform planning. Leaders have also introduced systems to hold teaching staff to account effectively for pupils' outcomes. This has given staff much-needed direction.
- A number of subject leaders are new to their role. English and mathematics leaders are beginning to check thoroughly on the quality of teaching in their subjects. They use this information well to plan for further improvements. In other subjects, leaders are passionate about leading improvements and often provide support to individual teachers. However, their evaluations of teaching and the difference they make to strengthening this are limited.
- Leaders' strategies to overcome disadvantaged pupils' emotional and social barriers to learning are well developed. However, leaders are not fully effective in meeting disadvantaged pupils' learning needs through their use of additional funding. Leaders do not have a detailed picture of the full range of factors which may be hampering disadvantaged pupils' learning. Therefore, leaders are not able to match strategies to pupils' needs precisely enough. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' outcomes lag behind those of other pupils nationally, and this gap is not closing.
- Pupils are taught the full range of national curriculum subjects. Leaders have prioritised pupils' learning through a wide variety of first-hand experiences. As such, educational visits, workshops and themed days linked to topics are frequent. However, leaders have not ensured that teaching staff capitalise on these experiences and use them to extend pupils' learning in a meaningful, congruent way.
- Leaders have ensured that a harmonious ethos of caring for each other underpins all aspects of the school's work. Pupils' moral and social development is particularly effective. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development are also evident. However, these are often through extra-curricular activities and special events, such as 'one world week', where each class studied a different country. Because of the variability in the quality of teaching in religious education (RE), history and geography, pupils' spiritual and cultural development is not as effective as it should be.

- Leaders have recently ensured that 'learning plans' are in place for all pupils with SEND. This has been effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress towards appropriate targets. The new special educational needs coordinator has a secure knowledge of individual pupils' needs and checks that teaching is matched to these. Leaders have plans in place to measure the progress of pupils over time, where learning needs to be measured in small steps. However, as this is not currently in place, leaders are not able to evaluate pupils' progress effectively.
- Leaders ensure that the primary physical education (PE) and sports funding is used effectively to increase pupils' participation in and enjoyment of sport. Pupils benefit from PE lessons delivered by specialist coaches. They also participate in a broad range of clubs and competitions. Pupils' learning in other subjects is often extended through dance lessons. For example, when learning about the Vikings, pupils enjoyed expressing their learning through dance.

Governance of the school

- Since September 2018, governance has been strengthened significantly through the appointment of a new chair of the governing body and several new governors. New members have broadened the range of expertise within the governing body.
- Leaders provide governors with detailed information about the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and improvements planned. Governors use this information to challenge leaders on key issues. Governors are increasingly effective in holding leaders to account.
- Governors are honest in their evaluations of the school's effectiveness and are realistic about the work still to be done. They are passionate about improving the school and are ambitious for pupils' achievement. They understand fully the important role the quality of education plays in shaping pupils' future life chances.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Pupils who shared their views during the inspection said that they trust staff to support them through any difficulties they may face. They are particularly appreciative of the staff who are available to support them in the 'helping hands' room, which pupils can access as needed. Pupils can also share any worries with these same staff members by writing a letter to 'Ted', a teddy bear whose bag is checked daily for such notes. These support systems contribute greatly to the feeling of safety pupils described to inspectors.
- Staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding are effective in supporting pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff make swift referrals to external agencies where necessary. Their records in respect of this are detailed and well organised.
- Pupils demonstrate a detailed knowledge of how to stay safe in a range of situations, including online. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is effective in supporting pupils' learning about safety. For example, Year 5 'Junior Wardens' work alongside the police to promote safer parking and pedestrian safety.

- Leaders have ensured that appropriate measures are in place to check that staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. Records in relation to this are well maintained and organised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving but remains variable across year groups and subjects. In some year groups, teaching is effective in moving pupils' learning on. However, too often, teachers lack the subject knowledge they need. They do not identify the gaps pupils have in their knowledge, understanding and skills consistently. This restricts pupils' progress and, therefore, too few pupils reach or exceed the standards expected for their age.
- Pupils enjoy their whole-class reading sessions, which are based on sharing a book which is linked to their topics, for example in history. However, in reading comprehension lessons, the questions pupils answer are often too easy. In several year groups, pupils are not required to think deeply about their reading, and this limits progress.
- Leaders have introduced new strategies to improve the teaching of writing. This has secured increased opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to extended pieces of writing. Pupils are often motivated by writing for a given purpose which is linked to their topic learning. For example, Year 6 pupils produced good-quality writing in their letters to a food manufacturer about their use of palm oil, having studied this environmental issue in their geography topic.
- In some classes, the teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills is not well sequenced to prepare pupils for extended writing. Additionally, when pupils make errors in relation to these aspects, teachers are not consistent in addressing them. As a result, pupils repeat these errors and their progress in writing is limited.
- In mathematics, a new approach and training for staff has strengthened the quality of teaching. Pupils now have increasing opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Although this is heartening, the quality of teaching remains variable. In some year groups, teachers do not build up pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in appropriately sized steps to enable them to be successful. Similarly, some pupils, particularly the most able, lose learning time waiting for their next activity. These factors hamper pupils' progress.
- In wider curriculum subjects, such as history, geography, science and RE, the quality of teaching is also variable. Leaders have not ensured that assessment systems are in place consistently for these subjects. Therefore, teachers are often not aware of pupils' starting points. As a result, the work they plan for pupils often represents a lack of challenge. Additionally, learning in these subjects often focuses on writing, to the detriment of subject-specific skills.
- The teaching of phonics is improving but is not fully effective. Some teaching staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge. They are skilled in supporting pupils to develop appropriate strategies to become fluent readers. However, modelling and explanations delivered by some teaching staff are not effective. In addition, some teachers' assessments of pupils' phonics knowledge are not sufficiently detailed. Consequently, too often, pupils' misconceptions are left unaddressed. The books pupils use to practise

their skills are not always matched precisely to their phonics knowledge. These factors mean that pupils, particularly lower-attaining pupils, do not develop their early reading skills as well as they should.

- The contribution teaching assistants make to pupils' learning is variable. Typically, where teaching assistants provide support to individual pupils with SEND, they are highly effective. This ensures that pupils with SEND make good progress, while learning alongside their peers. However, too often, teaching assistants supporting whole-class learning do not receive sufficient direction from the teacher. As a result, the difference they make to learning is sometimes minimal.
- Most pupils are keen to learn. However, too often, the teaching they receive does not match their needs. At these times, their attention drifts, and sometimes low-level disruption is evident. Leaders have been successful in reducing the frequency of this lost learning time but have not eliminated it entirely.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have focused considerably on nurturing pupils' social and emotional development. For example, older pupils enjoy taking on the role of tutor, supporting the younger pupils with their reading and writing skills before school or at lunchtimes. As a result, pupils show high levels of empathy, maturity and responsibility.
- Pupils have a broad range of experiences through their participation in extra-curricular clubs. For example, clubs focusing on sports, gardening, sewing and languages are all popular among the pupils. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the events they attend which are linked to the clubs. For example, members of the gymnastics club are excited about an upcoming gymnastics competition. Similarly, members of the choir are inspired by the opportunities they have to perform. Many of these experiences contribute well to pupils' spiritual development.
- Leaders have established a culture of tolerance and kindness in the school. To this end, assemblies and lessons support pupils in developing a secure understanding of British values. For example, during the inspection, pupils participated in an assembly focused on the rule of law, linked to the school rules and the concept of fairness. As a result of this focused work, instances of bullying and derogatory language are rare.
- Regular opportunities to raise money for charities are effective in promoting pupils' moral development. Similarly, working with community groups to contribute to the local area is beneficial to pupils' personal development. For example, pupils experienced valuable learning through planting bulbs in the park for others to enjoy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Most pupils are keen to learn. However, when their work is not matched to their needs and when adults have low expectations of their behaviour, pupils' concentration drifts. As a result, pupils' learning time is lost.

- Leaders have introduced new rewards and sanctions for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are keen to gain rewards and they benefit from considering any poor choices in the 'reflection room'. This new approach has been effective in reducing the frequency of poor behaviour.
- A small number of pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour. Leaders have ensured that tailored nurture support, informed by external specialists, is in place for pupils where necessary.
- Despite leaders' recent success in improving pupils' rates of attendance, this remains below the national average. Leaders have put in place incentives for high attendance and tailored support for families where needed. Consequently, pupils value their education and understand the importance of attending well. However, too many pupils are regularly absent from school. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance rates, and those for some pupils with SEND, although improving, remain too low.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, outcomes have declined significantly. Over the last three years, published outcomes for pupils at the end of each key stage have been poor, particularly in reading and writing. Although this decline has been halted and progress for current pupils is now improving, pupils' progress remains variable. In some year groups, where the quality of teaching is effective, pupils make strong progress. However, due to the inconsistency in the quality of teaching, this good progress is not maintained across year groups.
- In writing and mathematics, following the introduction of new strategies, pupils' progress is now strengthening. Because improvements are in the early stages of development, pupils' progress is not maximised in these subjects.
- In subjects which have not been the main focus of improvement initiatives, such as reading comprehension, history and geography, pupils' progress is particularly variable across year groups.
- Current pupils have gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects. These gaps are the legacy of historically weak teaching. Consequently, the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the standards expected for their age is low in most year groups. Some teaching staff are becoming increasingly skilled in identifying and filling these gaps in learning. However, there is more work to do before teaching is fully effective in supporting consistently strong progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attainment is particularly low and lags behind that of other pupils nationally. Like other pupils in the school, the quality of teaching disadvantaged pupils receive is variable. Additionally, leaders have not identified disadvantaged pupils' barriers to learning in sufficient detail. Although leaders have plans in place to tackle this, disadvantaged pupils are not catching up.
- In 2018 at the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment was significantly below average. The progress pupils had made in reading and writing was particularly low, and was in the lowest 10% of schools nationally. More heartening has been pupils' progress in mathematics over the last three years, which has been average or better.

- Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 over the last three years reflect a similar picture. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing has been low. However, pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved during this period. In 2018, it was broadly in line with the national average.
- As the teaching of phonics is not consistently good, not all pupils acquire early reading skills as well as they should. The shortcomings in teaching hinder the progress of lower-attaining pupils particularly. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is below average and has been for the last three years.
- Recent improvements to the quality of teaching for pupils with SEND have been successful in securing stronger progress for this group across a range of subjects. Pupils' books show that they are making good progress towards their targets.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years leader is very new to the role. Senior leaders have made effective use of the expertise of external partners in identifying the priorities for improvement. However, the pace of improvement has been slowed by several changes to staffing, and hence the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. Because of the shortcomings in the quality of teaching, the progress children make is not maximised. As a result, only about half of the children reach a good level of development. This means that about half of the children move to Year 1 without the knowledge and skills they need to be successful.
- When adults are leading activities, they often use questioning and demonstration well to extend children's learning. However, the activities adults provide for children to initiate their own learning are not based on precise assessments. As a result, too often, activities are not demanding enough and are not effective in extending or consolidating children's skills. This hinders children's independence as well as their progress.
- Similarly, adult-led activities often provide children with suitable opportunities to develop their reading, writing and number skills. However, when children are not working with adult support, such opportunities are limited. For example, during the inspection, children were successful in accurately forming numbers using play dough because the adult's questioning steered them well. Conversely, children choosing to practise writing numbers by themselves reinforced their existing errors. They were not able to access resources independently to support their own learning.
- The early years environment is attractive and there are a variety of activities on offer. However, adults do not typically design activities to appeal to or build on children's interests. As a result, some children find it difficult to maintain their concentration and they flit between activities.
- Despite the changes to staffing, adults have developed strong relationships with the children. This ensures that a nurturing atmosphere exists within the early years. As a result, children are confident, cooperative and they conduct themselves well.
- Leaders have ensured that systems are in place for effective communication between parents and carers and teaching staff. There are opportunities for parents to share

information about their child's achievements outside of the school. Parents also participate in learning events, such as 'stay and play'.

- The early years welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	107483
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10086828

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	343
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Woolley
Headteacher	Susan Barraclough (Acting headteacher)
Telephone number	01422 352856
Website	www.leemount.calderdale.sch.uk/
Email address	head@leemount.calderdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2007

Information about this school

- Lee Mount Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. It has a Nursery, attended in the mornings by children from the age of three.
- At the time of the inspection, the substantive deputy headteacher had been in the role of acting headteacher for just over a year. An interim executive headteacher is in place one day a week. A new headteacher has been appointed and is due to take up post in April. The schools led by the interim executive headteacher and the new headteacher are working in partnership with this school, providing professional development for staff.
- During the last year, a high number of teaching staff have left the school. A considerable number of teachers remain absent from the school. At the time of the inspection, four classes were being taught by supply teachers.
- Approximately 40% of pupils are disadvantaged. This is above the national average.

- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of subjects in classes across all year groups. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work and listened to them read. They gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, a group of governors, a local authority representative and a group of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and monitoring records of the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors also evaluated information relating to pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors gathered the opinions of parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Karine Hendley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Marsh	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Millard	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Smit	Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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