

Inspection of Mablins Lane Community Primary School

Mablins Lane, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 3YR

Inspection dates: 12–13 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

At Mablins Lane Community Primary School, leaders, teachers and governors put pupils at the heart of everything that they do. There is a caring family atmosphere where everybody is valued.

Overall, leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils. Although most pupils do well academically, children in the early years do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or who are disadvantaged, are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils live out the school's motto, 'Learning Together, Learning for Life'. They enjoy learning because teachers make lessons fun. Pupils particularly like the outdoor classroom and forest area. They work together to explore nature while developing their social and emotional skills. A range of educational visits, including residentials and out-of-school clubs enrich pupils' learning. These experiences enrich the curriculum for pupils. They learn important values, such as cooperation, fairness, respect and honesty.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their attitudes to learning are very positive. The pupils that we spoke with told us that they feel happy and safe in school. Pupils said that bullying is rare, but teachers are good at dealing with it should it happen.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, teachers and governors have worked effectively to improve the quality of education for pupils at Mablins Lane Community Primary School. By the end of Year 6, pupils now achieve well in reading and mathematics. In these subjects, pupils attain similar standards to pupils nationally. Most pupils also achieve the expected standard in writing by the end of Year 6. However, leaders recognised that the aims of the curriculum in writing were not challenging enough to ensure that more pupils achieved at a greater depth. Weaknesses in pupils' use of vocabulary, to enrich their writing, has limited their achievement.

Leaders and teachers have taken effective steps to review the writing curriculum. They now draw pupils' attention to the ways that authors use language to engage readers emotionally, or to infer meaning. Teachers plan appropriate activities for pupils to experience writing in different styles. Current pupils' work is of a high quality. Changes to the curriculum in writing are bearing fruit. For example, older pupils write moving poems about the plight of refugees, with skill. Younger pupils use vocabulary well to describe emotions. Their descriptions were highly effective. Examples include: 'Depression is like a never-ending mist', and 'Happiness tastes like strawberry lollipops.'

The teaching of reading at key stage 2 is effective and well established. In the early years and in key stage 1, a new approach to teaching phonics was implemented last year. As a result, many more Year 1 pupils met the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Phonics is taught well. Staff keep a close eye on any pupils who are falling behind. These pupils get extra help and catch up quickly. When pupils begin Year 3, most can read fluently.

Pupils achieve well in mathematics because the curriculum is well planned and implemented effectively. Teachers help pupils grasp new mathematical ideas by linking them to what they already know.

Beyond English and mathematics, most subjects are equally well planned. Teachers ensure that pupils learn essential knowledge in a logical way. For example, the curriculum plans for art and design and physical education (PE) are well thought out. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about these subjects. Pupils' work in a wide range of subjects is of a good quality.

Leaders undertake various activities to check how well the curriculum for their subjects is being taught. They are acutely aware that there are one or two subjects for which planning still needs to be further strengthened. This is so that pupils achieve consistently highly across all subjects.

The quality of education in the early years is a mixed picture. In some areas of learning, the curriculum is not as effectively planned as it should be. For example, curriculum planning leads to inconsistency in how well children develop across the different areas of learning, particularly literacy. Where leaders have been more successful is in the teaching of phonics. Following a visit from a therapy dog, children used their phonics skills well to write simple words. However, some children are not ready for the demands of Year 1.

Across the school and in different subjects, teachers ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND learn the same things as others. Teachers adapt the curriculum well to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils enjoy learning and behave well. Teachers make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and emotional well-being. Many pupils take part in sports competitions. They also learn about the wide range of diversity in modern Britain. They have many opportunities to take on a wide range of responsibilities.

Leaders and governors support staff effectively with their work. There is a high level of parent and carer satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make safeguarding a priority. The level of staff training in this area is high. Staff know the signs that might indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. They refer any

concerns to the safeguarding leader. These are dealt with promptly. The leader works closely with professional agencies and is not afraid to challenge decisions in order to keep pupils safe. Several parents expressed gratitude for the support that they have received. Pupils are taught how to keep safe, including when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of education in the early years is not consistently good. As a result, children's attainment by the end of Reception is regularly below average. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in the early years is effectively planned. This is so that children build on what they already know and are ready for the demands of Year 1.
- Over time, pupils have not achieved as well in writing as they have in reading and mathematics. Weaknesses in vocabulary have held pupils back. Leaders should ensure that the improvements to the curriculum in writing are sustained and embedded.
- Almost all subjects are well planned. However, a minority of subjects require some additional development to improve pupils' achievement further. Leaders should focus their efforts on ensuring that subject leaders take the final steps in strengthening their curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	111216
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10121972
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	564
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mary Hennessy-Jones
Headteacher	Justine Joule
Website	www.mablinslaneschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The staffing situation is more settled than when the school was last inspected. There have been unavoidable staff changes in the early years.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has provided effective support for the school's improvement.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the two assistant headteachers, the school's safeguarding leader and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo).
- We met five governors, including the chair of the governing body. We held a telephone discussion with a representative of Cheshire East local authority.
- We carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, art and design, history and PE. In these subjects we spoke with the subject leaders, visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work. We spoke with teachers, heard pupils read and

had discussions with pupils about their learning in these subjects. We also looked at other subjects.

- We scrutinised the school’s safeguarding documentation, including the register of checks carried out on employees, governors and volunteers. We spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding. We reviewed logs about behaviour and bullying. We checked how leaders investigate and resolve bullying incidents.
- We met with groups of pupils to discuss their views about behaviour and how the school promotes their personal development.
- We reviewed a range of school documents, including the school’s evaluations of its effectiveness and plans for improvement.
- We spoke with parents at the start of the school day. We took account of 89 responses to Ofsted’s Parent View survey, including 55 free-text comments and a letter from a parent. We considered 42 responses to the staff survey and nine responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Margot D’Arcy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Smith	Ofsted Inspector
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