

Inspection of a good school: Mather Street Primary School

Mather Street, Failsworth, Manchester M35 0DT

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 November 2021

Outcome

Mather Street Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this happy, friendly school. Leaders and staff get to know pupils and their families well. Pupils feel safe. New pupils are made to feel welcome, and they settle into school life quickly.

In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils show respect towards each other and the adults who work with them. The youngest children are keen to help their classmates. Older pupils who are monitors carry out their leadership duties diligently.

Pupils get on well together. They told the inspector that name calling and bullying are rare. However, when they do fall out, adults help pupils to resolve problems quickly, including any bullying.

Trips and visits help pupils learn more about subjects, such as history, science and geography. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Older pupils were proud to pay their respects on Remembrance Day at the local Cenotaph.

Staff expect pupils to work hard. Teachers make sure that pupils remember what they have been taught across the curriculum. Pupils progress well across subjects, including reading and mathematics. They enjoy their lessons. Pupils said that they especially enjoy mathematics, English and history.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils need to learn in different subjects, including in the early years. They have developed new subject curriculum plans that set out clearly what pupils should be taught and when. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has hampered the implementation of these plans. As a result of the impact of the pandemic,

some teachers are not as confident as they should be in the delivery of some aspects of leaders' new curriculum plans.

Nevertheless, curriculum leaders are taking effective steps to check how well teachers are delivering the new curriculum. Curriculum leaders are using information from these checks to organise further training and support for teaching staff. Despite all these changes, leaders continue to ensure that pupils, and children in the early years, achieve well at Mather Street Primary School.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. Most pupils learn to read well. However, leaders are determined to ensure that every pupil gets off to a strong start in reading. To this end, leaders have introduced a new phonics curriculum to help all pupils learn to read confidently and fluently.

Children start to learn phonics as soon as they join the Reception class. In the Reception class and across key stage 1, staff follow a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics in daily lessons. This improves pupils' confidence. Teachers make sure that pupils who are falling behind in reading are given the help and support that they need to catch up quickly.

Younger children love listening to, and joining in with stories, rhymes and songs. Older pupils enjoy listening to their teachers reading stories to them, as well as choosing books to read by themselves. They talk confidently about their favourite authors and the different types of books that they like to read. Teachers successfully explain the meaning of any new or unfamiliar words to help build pupils' vocabulary.

When new pupils join the school, teachers quickly find out where they are in their learning. This helps teachers to plan any additional support that these pupils need, so that they can catch up with their peers.

Teachers successfully adapt how they deliver the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This enables pupils with SEND to make strong progress across the curriculum from their different starting points. Teachers ensure that these pupils can take part in all aspects of school life, alongside their peers. Leaders are adept at identifying the additional needs of pupils with SEND.

Pupils are delighted that they can go out on trips and visits once again. They enjoy the different clubs on offer, such as Zumba. Older pupils take pleasure in reading with younger children. Older pupils are keen to lead the school council and they benefit from taking part in sports tournaments.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel that leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload.

Governors support the school well. They have a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience, which helps them carry out their responsibilities. They keep a close eye on many aspects of the school's work. They act as a critical friend to leaders, both supporting and challenging as needed. However, some of their previous ways of working have been

hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that governors are rethinking how they evaluate the effectiveness of leaders' new curriculum on pupils' learning and achievement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff undertake frequent safeguarding training, so that they understand their roles and responsibilities. All staff are trained to identify and support pupils who may experience peer-on-peer abuse. Staff make sure that they record and report any safeguarding concerns in a timely way. Leaders work well with external agencies to make sure that pupils and families who are struggling get the help that they need.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy through the school's personal development programme. This includes how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teaching staff do not deliver aspects of the school's new curriculum as well as they should. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. Leaders need to ensure that teachers receive ongoing training and support to deliver all aspects of the curriculum effectively, so that pupils excel.
- Due to the impact of the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, governors do not have a clear enough understanding of how to measure the impact of their new curriculum plans. This means that they cannot be sure whether the current curriculum is being delivered effectively to help pupils to achieve as highly as they could. Governors should ensure that they develop their systems to check how well the school's curriculum is being implemented, and whether it is having the desired effect on pupils' achievement.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 7 and 8 July 2016.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	105649
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10199933
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	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samantha Gibson
Headteacher	Martine Buckley
Website	www.matherstreet.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 and 8 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and class teachers. The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority. The inspector met with four members of the governing body.
- The inspector considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text responses. She also spoke to several parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted's pupil survey.

- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. The inspector spoke with staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. She spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- As part of this inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning, and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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