

Inspection of Medlock Primary School

Wadeson Road, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester, Greater Manchester M13 9UJ

Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Medlock Primary School. They are kind and considerate towards each other. The positive relationships that pupils forge with each other and with the staff help them to feel safe and happy.

Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly. They understand the importance of treating everyone with respect, regardless of their differences. They are confident that staff will deal with any concerns about bullying properly and promptly.

Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), live up to leaders' high expectations of their behaviour, both in lessons and when playing outside. The atmosphere in the school is calm and supportive. However, leaders and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can and should achieve in some subjects, including in reading.

Pupils know that they can make a positive difference through their actions. They are proud to support local and national charities, and they have worked with members of the governing body to start an eco-council.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of exciting after-school activities, such as drama, basketball and 'ninja warrior' clubs.

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

Leaders have ensured that all pupils, including pupils with SEND, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders are in the process of improving the curriculum plans for some subjects to ensure that they are suitably ambitious for all pupils.

Subject leaders have received training to help them to design curriculums. In some subjects, leaders have identified and carefully ordered the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. In these subjects, leaders provide teachers with clear guidance so that they can design learning that builds on pupils' earlier knowledge.

While some curriculums are planned well, in a small number of other subjects, leaders' plans are in the earlier stages of development. This means that leaders' expectations of what pupils should know are not clear enough. This hinders teachers when planning the next steps for pupils. Added to this, some subject leaders do not provide enough support for teachers so that they can use assessment strategies consistently well. This prevents leaders from checking that pupils know and remember the content of the subject curriculums as intended.

In the early years, children from the age of two years are supported well to make a positive start to their school life. Staff help children in the Nursery class to listen carefully. This ensures that most children are ready to learn sounds and letters as soon as they start in the Reception class. However, leaders have not made clear

enough the expectations of the sounds and letters that pupils, including children in the early years, should learn and by when. This means that leaders and teachers do not act quickly enough to help those pupils who fall behind to catch up. In addition, staff have not been trained sufficiently well to ensure that the books that pupils are given to practise their reading match the sounds they know. This results in some pupils losing confidence and the motivation to read. Consequently, not enough pupils become fluent and accurate readers by the end of Year 2. This hinders the development of their comprehension skills and their achievement in other subjects.

Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers have been trained to adapt their approaches so that pupils with SEND can access a full curriculum. That said, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should because leaders do not provide the additional support that pupils need soon enough.

Pupils, including children in the early years, have positive attitudes to learning and behave respectfully. Leaders have introduced a clear behaviour system that is understood by pupils and used consistently by staff. Some pupils who have struggled to manage their own behaviour in the past have been supported well to overcome their difficulties.

Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions and staff take the time to listen to their views. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the world beyond their school. They show a keen interest in learning about different beliefs and cultures.

Governors are committed and dedicated to their role. They are proud to serve the school community and they want the best for pupils. They have supported school leaders to navigate a particularly challenging period for the school. That said, members of the governing body have not kept a close enough check on the quality of education that pupils receive.

Staff appreciate that governors and leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are trained regularly so that they remain alert to the signs that might indicate that a pupil is at risk from harm. Staff know how to report their concerns.

Leaders take swift action to access support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The safeguarding team actively seek further support from outside agencies when it is needed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Older pupils understand the features of healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have an overly positive view of the effectiveness of the curriculum for early reading. They have been too slow to deliver improvements to ensure that the curriculum for early reading is planned and delivered effectively. As a result, not enough pupils learn to read accurately and fluently by the end of Year 2. Leaders should ensure that there is a systematic approach to teaching phonics with clear expectations of the sounds and letters that pupils should know and remember, and by when. Leaders must also make sure that all staff have the expertise that they need to deliver this programme effectively, so that more pupils become accurate and fluent readers as soon as possible.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that teachers have clear enough information about what pupils should learn or sufficient guidance to help them to deliver curriculums effectively. This prevents some teachers from designing learning that helps pupils to know and remember the intended curriculum. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects, teachers have the necessary detail regarding curriculum content and that they can benefit from the support required to deliver intended curriculums well.
- In some subjects, leaders have not developed effective assessment systems to check how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. Subject leaders in these subjects do not have a clear oversight of how well pupils know and remember curriculum content. Leaders should ensure that expectations of what pupils should know and remember are clarified and are used by teachers to identify those pupils that need further help with their learning.
- Members of the governing body are not well informed about the quality of education that pupils receive. This means that they are unable to hold leaders to account as well as they should about how well pupils achieve. Governors should ensure that they have the information that they need to hold leaders to account for pupils' achievement across the 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 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	105483
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10200774
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lindsay Bann
Headteacher	Jonathan Brown
Website	www.medlockprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	7 and 8 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers have taken up post since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school offers early years provision for two-year-old children.
- The governing body manage the breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders, subject leaders and members of staff. They spoke to four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governors. An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in breakfast club and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of their school, their learning, their behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, mathematics, religious education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also reviewed some aspects of other subjects, including leaders' curriculum plans.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers shared through Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. This included the comments received via the free-text facility. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation shared by school leaders, including the school development plan, the minutes taken at governors' meetings and the leaders' self-evaluation document.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed documentation and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Janette Walker, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Williamson

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Ofsted Inspector

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