

Mellers Primary School

Norton Street, Radford, Nottingham, NG7 3HJ

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved in all areas since the previous inspection because the headteacher has responded rigorously to its findings. She has created a team of staff who are enthusiastic and committed to improving the school.
- Senior leaders have focused strongly and successfully on improving teaching and accelerating the progress made by the pupils.
- Teaching is now consistently good. It motivates pupils to become enthusiastic learners who try to do their best.
- Teaching in the Early Years is good and as a result, children make a good start to their education.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Almost all pupils make at least the progress expected for their age by the time they leave Year 6.
- Behaviour is consistently good or better and is frequently exemplary in lessons. Pupils are keen to succeed and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Governors are now more actively involved in monitoring the school's work and are clear about its strengths and weaknesses and the effectiveness of actions being taken by the school leaders.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school because systems to protect them work effectively and adults care for them well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some of the most-able pupils do not make as much progress as they could, particularly in mathematics.
- The school's work to ensure regular attendance has not been successful enough with some families and this slows down progress for these pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 17 lessons. Every class was observed at least twice. In addition, pupils were observed working in small groups and also individually on a reading support programme. Five of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or another member of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and also talked with them about their reading and checked their reading records.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, and with several members of the teaching staff. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Many conversations were held with pupils, both formally in groups and informally in lessons and at break times.
- The inspectors took account of the views of the 19 parents who completed Ofsted’s on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Conversations were also held with parents at the start and end of the school day. The inspectors also analysed the 37 responses to a questionnaire for staff.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school’s own data on pupils’ recent and current standards and progress; planning and monitoring documentation; reports on the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the school’s development plan; documents relating to safeguarding; and the minutes of various meetings, including those of the governing body.

Inspection team

Nigel Grimshaw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Chris Fallon	Additional Inspector
Inderjit Sandhu	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, for whom the school receives the pupil premium, is well above average. The pupil premium is funding provided to schools to support looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The very large majority of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language and, in total; well over twenty different home languages are represented within the school. These proportions are above average.
- The proportion of pupils arriving at and leaving the school part way through their primary education is high compared with other schools.
- The school's early years provision is part time in the Nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates a breakfast club. This was looked at as part of the inspection.
- The school also operates a counselling service on site for pupils and their parents.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of the most-able pupils by making sure that teachers:
 - provide tasks with greater challenge so that pupils deepen their thinking skills, especially in mathematics
 - ensure that pupils follow up teachers' guidance on how to improve their work more consistently.
- Work more closely with families whose children still have higher-than-average absence from school to ensure pupils' regular attendance.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The very effective headteacher led an exceptionally positive response to the previous inspection. She created a clear plan of action and developed a culture designed to ensure improvements in the quality of teaching, in pupils' progress and standards, and in their behaviour. All of these have improved as a result.
- The quality of teaching has been rigorously monitored through a planned programme of lesson observations, regular checks on pupils' work and frequent analysis of the records of pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, all teaching is now consistently at least good.
- Half-termly meetings are held with individual class teachers to check on the progress of every pupil. If any pupil is slipping behind expected levels, the problem is tackled promptly and the correct support is put in place to accelerate his or her progress. This support has proved very effective and almost every pupil makes at least the progress expected for his or her age. However, some of the most-able pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed an enthusiastic team of effective subject leaders, particularly the English and mathematics leaders. Subject leaders undertake their monitoring roles and responsibilities successfully. All staff are committed to improving the school and ensuring that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The newly designed curriculum is well balanced and vibrant. It motivates pupils through the wide range of enrichment activities such as school visits, residential trips, visitors to the school and the variety of after-school clubs. The school has close links with a contrasting partner school in Jamaica that broaden the pupils' views of other people's lives. One pupil described the work in school as 'awesome'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the school's inclusive ethos where everybody is valued. Pupils show respect and tolerance for others. The school is a harmonious place in which to work because the pupils abide by the class and school rules. The governing body and senior leaders make sure that all pupils are treated equally and that any discrimination is tackled promptly and effectively.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and appreciate British values. For example, they were fully involved in their understanding of the general election which took place during the inspection. They talked of little else at break times. The pupils held their own 'general election' with four campaigning parties participating. Pupils had the opportunity to cast their votes at the 'polling stations' set up in the school.
- The pupil premium is used very effectively to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils through one-to-one and small-group support.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is also used effectively. For instance, all pupils have the opportunity to go swimming regularly and the school recently won the local swimming gala. Pupils have also gained a good knowledge of how to acquire and maintain healthy lifestyles.
- The school has received good support from the local authority, particularly through the training provided for staff and governors. This has been a contributory factor in the school's improvement, particularly in the quality of teaching.
- School leaders have clearly identified the priority areas where improvement was needed and taken decisive action to make improvements. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the school's development plan is well focused on the right areas. Consequently, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are fully in place and meet statutory requirements. All staff have been trained in child protection procedures and the support provided for vulnerable pupils is monitored comprehensively.
- The school has excellent links with most parents, who feel very much part of the school and its community. Most parents would recommend the school to others.
- Checks on attendance have been carried out with increasing rigour by the senior leaders. They have been successful over the last two years in almost halving the number of pupils who are persistent absentees. However, the work is not complete and persistent absence remains above national average.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is more actively involved in monitoring the work of the school than at the time of the previous inspection. Its committees have been reorganised to ensure that governors carry out their responsibilities effectively. Through training, the governors have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities and of the school's performance data. Relevant committees now rigorously monitor standards and progress and keep checks on the delivery of the curriculum. Governors are now directly linked to subjects and meet regularly with the relevant subject leaders. Consequently they have a much-improved appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the effectiveness of the actions being taken to improve the school. They provide good levels of challenge and support. They are kept very well informed by senior leaders through reports and presentations about all aspects of school life.
 - The governing body monitors the performance of staff, know how weaknesses are tackled, and make sure that increases in salary are linked to good performance in the classroom. It ensures that all safeguarding requirements are in place.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is also the view of the pupils. Most parents feel that behaviour is managed well.
- Pupils are well mannered and are respectful to adults and fellow pupils around the school. They work and play together harmoniously and show consideration for others. Lunchtimes are 'family affairs' with older pupils helping to serve lunches to the younger ones. This creates a very friendly and relaxed atmosphere that reflects the inclusive ethos of the school.
- Behaviour in lessons is usually exemplary and always at least good because the pupils are motivated by their work and are engaged, therefore, in doing their best at all times. They show good levels of concentration and perseverance.
- Pupils are very keen to take on additional responsibilities and are proud to be school prefects or to be on the school council. They particularly enjoy helping others, contributing ideas for school improvement and providing playground support for any pupils not engaging with others.
- Attendance rates have improved for the last two years and are currently in line with national averages. However, persistent absence, although reducing recently because of the decisive actions taken by the school, is still above national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All pupils spoken with during the inspection said that they felt safe and most all parents agreed.
- Safeguarding practices are implemented rigorously. Visitors to the school are all checked on arrival and issued with badges when they sign in. External doors have key pads to ensure access is limited to staff and pupils. Site security is checked on a regular basis. Appointments of new staff meet statutory

requirements of safer recruitment and the backgrounds of all staff are checked thoroughly.

- The school has comprehensive records of the necessary risk assessments when undertaking visits outside school. Local safety organisations, such as police and fire services, are welcomed to provide advice to pupils on how to keep themselves safe in the wider community. Pupils are also taught well about the safe use of the internet.
- Pupils have been taught well about the various forms of bullying through assemblies and class discussions. Pupils agreed that bullying is rare because 'everyone gets on well with each other and we don't fall out much at all'. They all had confidence that any member of staff would deal with any instances promptly and effectively.

The quality of teaching is good

- School leaders have ensured that recruitment procedures for new staff are rigorous. Leaders' expectations of their teachers' subject skills and knowledge are very high and ensure that the pupils receive high-quality teaching.
- The school's records of observations of teaching, data on pupils' progress and the outcomes of checks on pupils' books show that the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teaching is now consistently good.
- Much of the teaching enthuses and motivates the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 6 used their mathematics skills to plan school visits that provided best value for money. They took into account the costs of travel to the venues and the costs of admission. They planned how to negotiate better rates for each. They also took into account the popularity of the trips from the views of other pupils. This problem-solving task was directly related to real life because the trips were based on possible activities after the Year 6 tests are completed.
- The teaching of reading has improved this year and is now a strength. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is introduced when the children enter the school in the early years and this gives them confidence to tackle new words and develop their fluency and understanding. This continues throughout the school and all the pupils spoken with during the inspection had a real enjoyment of reading and read regularly for pleasure, both in school and at home.
- Teachers focus strongly on extending the pupils' range of vocabulary and this is evident in their discussions in class. However, a very small minority of the pupils are reluctant to use this challenging vocabulary in their pieces of writing.
- Pupils are given clear checklists to help them assess their own work alongside the comments made by their teachers. Teachers' marking provides good encouragement to pupils through positive feedback and good guidance on how to improve their work. However, teachers do not always check that this has been followed up by the pupils.
- Pupils find the work planned by their teachers motivating and enjoyable and, therefore, they develop positive attitudes to their learning. Consequently they are engaged in their work and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. However, the work for the more-able pupils sometimes lacks sufficient challenge to extend their thinking.

The achievement of pupils is good

- From low starting points in the early years and on entering Year 1, pupils make good progress and achieve well by the time they leave Year 6.
- Improved teaching is making a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school. Progress is now consistently good in every year group in reading, writing and mathematics, although in mathematics it is still slower than in the other subjects. From an analysis of the school's own data the

results for the end of Year 2 this year are on track to be the best ever for the school and to be in line with the national averages for 2014. Similarly, in Year 6 this year, pupils' outcomes in February were already ahead of the end-of-year results in 2014. Results in reading, writing and mathematics are on track to be considerably better than those from last year.

- The attainment of the most-able pupils is still below expected levels. Predicted results show the situation is improving but that teaching does not always provide sufficient challenge to get the best out of the most-able pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making improved progress, in line with their peers, in the current academic year because of the quality of the individual and small group support they receive from the teachers and the well-trained teaching assistants. Their progress is better in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar or faster progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the gaps in attainment have narrowed rapidly in school. From being almost a year behind their classmates in 2013, pupils leaving Year 6 in 2014 were less than one term behind others in their class in mathematics and writing, and were half a year ahead of their classmates in reading. Compared with other pupils nationally they were over a year behind in mathematics, a term behind in reading and two terms behind in writing.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make better progress than their peers and, by the time they leave the school, their attainment is within one term of their classmates. This is because they receive high-quality support at an early stage to ensure that they develop their 'new' language quickly and effectively.

The early years provision

is good

- The early years is led well. The early years' leader and the deputy headteacher have created a clear vision for the school's unit and have clear plans in place to achieve this. Along with the other school leaders, they have created a strong staff team who work extremely well together. The unit is well resourced, attractive and stimulating and is organised to make sure that the children develop skills of independent learning and the ability to use their initiative. As a result, they are on task consistently and show high levels of perseverance when working.
- Parents are very appreciative of the good induction procedures for them and their children. Children settle quickly into school life and parents are encouraged to liaise closely with the teachers to ensure that their children are succeeding well and are happy in their surroundings.
- In the early years, behaviour and safety are good. The children soon learn the high expectations of behaviour and work and play together cooperatively. They support each other well, including when clearing up at the end of each session. These attitudes are then carried with them as they move through the school. The school's inclusive ethos is established early.
- Staff work effectively to keep the children safe and secure. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and parents have real confidence that their children are safe. The children have been taught how to use all the equipment safely and sensibly.
- The teaching in Nursery and Reception classes is much improved since the last inspection and is now consistently good. The teachers are very effectively supported by the strong team of teaching assistants. All adults know the children well. Good questioning is used constantly to reinforce language development and to extend vocabulary. The good assessment and progress tracking systems enable the staff to plan appropriate learning activities for each pupil. This has improved boys' reading and writing, which in 2014 had been weak.
- Children start school with weaknesses in their basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. Good teaching makes sure that the children make good progress. There is clear evidence in the pupils' 'Learning

Journeys' and in classroom displays that progress is good, especially the improvements in their writing. This is much better than in 2014, when less than a third of the children reached a good level of development. However, it still means that, because of their low starting points, about half the children are not yet fully ready for the new National Curriculum when they move to Year 1.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122481
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	461988

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Wood
Headteacher	Amanda Dawson
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2013
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