

Montgomery Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113082
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	378638
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2012
Lead inspector	Paul Sadler

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathryn Lemin
Headteacher	Martyn Boxall
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 December 2008
School address	Redvers Road Exeter Devon EX4 1BS
Telephone number	01392 285241
Fax number	01392 494350
Email address	admin@montgomery.devon.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Montgomery After School Club
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	120
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	9–10 December 2008

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	13–14 March 2012
Inspection number	378638



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Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Sadler	Additional Inspector
Helen Griffiths	Additional Inspector
Mark Anderson	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent nearly 11 hours observing 26 lessons taught by 19 teachers and held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation relating to pupils' progress and attainment, school improvement planning and the safety of pupils. The responses to questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 134 parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average primary school. While the majority of pupils are of White British ethnicity, a wide range of ethnic groups is represented in the school. The proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English is average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also average. Their needs include physical disabilities, moderate learning and behavioural difficulties and disorders on the autistic spectrum. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The headteacher took up his post in September 2010. Since that time further new staff, including senior leaders, have been appointed. In October 2011 the school moved into newly-built accommodation on its original site and the previous building was then demolished. The governing body provides childcare in the form of an after-school club for children aged 4 to 11 from 3.30 pm to 6.30 pm which was also inspected on this occasion.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is a good school. Rapid improvements, especially to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, have taken place over the last two years. These improvements have come about through outstanding leadership and management. In order to become an outstanding school, pupils' progress in lessons needs to be consistently excellent.
- All groups of pupils make good progress throughout the school. Children start school with levels of skills and knowledge below age-related expectations. In 2011 the attainment in English and mathematics of pupils leaving Year 6 was in line with the national average. Scrutiny of the work of current pupils and of the school's records of their progress shows that they are on course to continue improving their achievement.
- Rigorous management of performance and well-targeted professional development for staff has led to major improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan interesting tasks that excite and motivate them. While most lessons are conducted at a good pace, a few lack the necessary sense of urgency.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Evidence confirms pupils' views that there is little bullying and that staff deal well with any that occurs. Senior leaders have recently increased the expectation that staff are responsible for managing behaviour in their classrooms and a few staff are not yet fully committed to this approach.
- Leaders and managers at all levels place the improvement of teaching and pupils' achievement at the heart of their work. Exciting developments are taking place in the curriculum, not least due to the application of new technologies and other opportunities presented by the recently opened accommodation. The governing body challenges and supports senior leaders effectively and meets its responsibilities, for example, to keep pupils safe.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

In order to achieve outstanding outcomes:

- ensure that the pace of lessons enables all pupils to always make fast progress, especially when working on their own or with others
- ensure that staff's management of pupils' behaviour always reflects the school's agreed policies.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school with levels of social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy that are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception years, for example when learning about subtraction by moving a toy on a large number square. By the end of Year 2 attainment in reading does not reach the national average, but observation of lessons and listening to pupils' reading show that they are making good progress. For example, lower attaining pupils can read without significant visual clues and explain their good understanding of the text. Progress continues to be good in Years 3 to 6, for example pupils in Years 3 and 4 made models of bridges and learned much about concepts such as force and stability. In Years 5 and 6, where attainment in all subjects including reading is average, pupils have high aspirations and tackle tasks that are more demanding than those usually expected. A good example was seen in Year 6 of high quality work tracing changes in fashion from the mid twentieth century to modern times. Pupils have very good skills of communication and are keen to show their work, such as a pupil in Year 3 who stopped an inspector in the corridor to explain how he had successfully used a simile in his writing. Pupils are adept at using information and communication technology for research, for example into styles of fencing sold by various hardware retailers. They also have many opportunities to develop practical skills, for example by building and testing different types of bridges. Most pupils and their parents and carers rightly recognise that they are making good progress.

Leaders and managers rigorously track the progress of different groups of pupils and can demonstrate, for example, that pupils who were at an early stage of learning English on arrival at the school have made more rapid progress than their peers, and that the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also good. Observation of the work of these pupils confirmed the school's conclusions.

Quality of teaching

The effective organisation of the new accommodation and resulting amendments to the curriculum have required teachers to adapt their approaches to teaching and collaborate closely as teams of adults. Teachers have high expectations for pupils

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and these are demonstrated, for example, in Year 6 where all pupils are encouraged to aspire to attain at the higher levels, even though this is very challenging for some. Other pupils recognise this and help their peers. Teachers use a wide range of resources well to interest pupils. This includes visitors with particular skills, such as when a parent or carer demonstrated the making of biscuits while the class teacher asked probing questions, and asked pupils to imitate actions such as kneading and rolling pastry in preparation for their later practical work. When pupils work independently or in groups they generally make good progress, but on a few occasions monitoring of pupils' progress by the teacher or other adults is less effective and learning slows. Pupils receive good guidance on how to improve their work and know what they are aiming to achieve.

The teaching of sounds and letters (phonics) to younger pupils is rigorous and consistent. Teachers and teaching assistants are precise in their pronunciation and this helps pupils to learn the correspondence between the sounds and their letters quickly. Staff, including teaching assistants, also provide effective specialist support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and to those at an early stage of learning English. Teachers make good use of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and emotional development, for example by encouraging discussion about the meanings of words describing emotions in preparation for writing poetry in Years 5 and 6. Almost all pupils and their parents and carers rightly consider teaching in the school to be good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in lessons, at playtimes and around the school is good, and records show that this has been a consistent feature over time. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly establish good routines with high expectations of behaviour that lead to rapid progress in children's social and emotional development. Pupils are polite and enjoy helping others. They are proud of their new school building and are keen to keep it in good order. They enjoy telling visitors about the building's eco-friendly and sustainable features such as the use of solar panels to generate electricity. Their enjoyment is reflected in rising attendance levels which in the current school year are above average.

Pupils say they feel safe and that there is little bullying and that any that occurs is largely unkindness such as name calling. This is confirmed by the views of many parents and carers. All feel that staff are approachable and handle any incidents effectively. While older pupils are aware of the dangers of matters such as racist behaviour and cyber-bullying, they say they have almost no experience of such things. The school's records confirm this.

Senior leaders have raised the level of expectation that teachers will deal themselves with the majority of incidents of inappropriate behaviour, rather than by sending pupils to senior staff at an early stage. While this policy is proving effective in maintaining pupils' good progress, some staff acknowledge that they have found it a challenge to apply the policy consistently. A very few pupils have diagnosed

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conditions that can occasionally give rise to very challenging behaviour. The school has good plans in place to manage their behaviour, the effectiveness of which was observed by inspectors. This is likely to be a factor in the somewhat heightened concern about disruptive behaviour expressed by some pupils, parents and carers. While the school acknowledges that such incidents can occasionally slow learning, no evidence was found to support pupils' or their parents' and carers' concerns about this issue.

Leadership and management

At its last inspection in December 2008 the school was judged to be satisfactory. In December 2010 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school and reported that satisfactory progress was being made in carrying out the improvements identified as necessary in that inspection.

Currently, a notable feature of the school is the energy and enthusiasm with which leaders and managers at all levels drive improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. To quote a member of staff 'There is no ceiling to attainment at Montgomery.' Led by the dynamic headteacher, substantial and successful efforts have been made to ensure that the move to the new building is a success. Over a significant period of time there has been a concerted and successful drive to eradicate inadequate teaching and to challenge all teachers, including those already good or outstanding, to improve their practice further. This has been brought about through rigorous management of performance and effective professional development. Evidence from senior leaders' records of monitoring of the quality of teaching shows that there has been considerable recent improvement. Leaders and managers use data very effectively to identify and tackle slower progress and to ensure that all groups of pupils make similarly good progress.

The school's vision, innovation of organisation and curriculum are outstanding. The curriculum motivates and stimulates pupils to achieve their best and to apply their developing skills. Use of the environmentally friendly building, the grounds and initiatives to develop outdoor learning are examples of the curriculum's excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is having an impact on rapidly improving attainment and progress. Middle leaders, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage and with responsibility for subject areas, demonstrate very high levels of skill and commitment to the pupils. The appointment of an education support worker has improved the engagement of parents and carers, including those who might not readily engage with the school. The equally good progress made by all groups of pupils and the inclusive nature of the education provided to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and to those at an early stage of learning English, are examples of the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

Members of the governing body have worked diligently with staff to bring about improvement. They ensure the safety of pupils through rigorous vetting of adults and the safety features of the new building. They also ensure that the good after-school

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club provides safe, high quality childcare with a wide range of activities that children enjoy. All statutory safeguarding requirements are met and arrangements give no cause for concern. Since the previous inspection many aspects of the school’s work have improved from satisfactory to at least good. The areas for improvement identified by that inspection have been successfully tackled. These features, together with the rapidly improving achievement of pupils, demonstrate the school’s undoubted capacity to improve further.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The after-school club provides good quality care. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have the opportunity to mix with older children and when the weather is appropriate many activities take place outdoors, where children have access to a wide range of toys and equipment. These opportunities enable them to make good progress in their social and physical development. When indoors they have access to the excellent resources of the new school, including new technology. This enables them to make good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills.

Children are cared for by a greater number of adults than is required. They are given refreshments and have ready access to facilities for personal hygiene. All safeguarding requirements are met. Leadership and management are good as the leader knows the requirements for children of this age and the governing body oversees the provision well.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	2

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Montgomery Primary School, Exeter EX4 1BS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, and thank you to those who completed our questionnaire. We especially enjoyed talking with you, seeing your work and hearing your views, particularly when you spoke with excitement about your new school and all its environmentally-friendly features. This letter is to tell you what we have found.

- Montgomery Primary is a good school. It is improving quickly.
- You all make good progress with your work. We enjoyed seeing the bridges built by Years 3 and 4, and Years' 5 and 6 work on fashion.
- You and your parents and carers told us teaching is good and we agree. Teachers expect a lot of you and make lessons interesting, and you work hard as a result.
- You behave well and told us there is little bullying. You trust the adults in school and if you tell them about any problems you have, they try to help you sort them out.
- Leadership and management of the school are excellent. All the staff work hard to improve the teaching so you can make even better progress. The governing body and teachers make sure you are kept safe.

We have asked your headteacher and the staff to do two things to make the school even better:

- Make sure that you always work at a good pace when you work alone or in groups. You can help by not distracting each other, or by asking for help if you need it.
- Make sure that staff always deal with any misbehaviour in the way they have agreed. You, of course, can help by never misbehaving in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler
Lead inspector

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