

# Mallard Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134235
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	381643
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Jane Hughes

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	374
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Lockhart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Theresa Siverns
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Cedar Road Balby Doncaster DN4 9HU
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Jane Hughes  
David Matthews  
Karen Foster

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed the teaching of 14 teachers in 20 lessons or part lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a few support lessons where specialist help is provided by trained assistants. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents, carers, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's improvement plan, safeguarding policies, attainment data and assessment information. They listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 84 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and others completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This school is of larger-than-average size when compared to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost twice the average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school meets the current floor standard which sets the minimum standards expected by the government for attainment and progress. The school has Eco-School Silver status. There have been considerable changes within the staff team since the previous inspection. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school throughout the year.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because the quality of teaching is too variable and does not support better than satisfactory progress by pupils. The school's strengths lie in its inclusive ethos. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is satisfactory. Children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. Their progress through school from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6 is satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching varies between classes. Although it is satisfactory overall, an extended period of staff turbulence, coupled with variability in teachers' expectations and in the challenges they present to pupils in lessons, results in pupils' learning reflecting these inconsistencies.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and have positive attitudes to school. They usually get on well together. Behaviour is satisfactory although pupils recognise that the responses of a minority are not always as positive as they should be. Pupils confirm that they feel safe in school. Pupils' attendance is broadly average and continues to improve.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school and set a clear agenda for improvement. Nonetheless, the current impact of leadership at all levels, including governance, is underdeveloped. The leadership and management of teaching and learning and the management of performance do not currently result in consistently accelerated outcomes for pupils across the school.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching in order to raise pupils' attainment to at least average and accelerate the progress they make in English and mathematics throughout the school by:

- raising the expectations of all teachers to reflect the most challenging in school
  - planning a better match of work to ability to ensure there is appropriate challenge in every activity for all groups of pupils
  - ensuring that teachers have a clear overview of pupils' learning throughout a lesson and adapt activities as required to ensure teaching moves learning on rapidly
  - ensuring all teachers use questioning effectively to extend pupils' thinking skills
  - ensuring teachers' marking consistently provides points for development to help pupils to improve their work.
- Ensure effective leadership and management at all levels by:
- ensuring a more equitable distribution of responsibilities among senior and middle leaders so that there is less burden on the headteacher and all leaders improve their impact on outcomes
  - improving the impact of professional development and performance management in order to secure consistently good and better learning for pupils
  - strengthening the challenge offered by the governing body to the school's leadership and its subsequent impact on all aspects of the school's performance.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Most concentrate on tasks set in lessons and say that they enjoy the activities. They produce effective 'model maps' to help them plan and refine their approaches to the work. Pupils are quick to provide answers to problems, such as how to divide in different ways in a Year 5 mathematics lesson. They listen well when lessons thoroughly engage them and they respond well to higher expectations from adults. They offer a less dynamic response when tackling work which is not matched well enough to their ability. Children in Nursery develop strong levels of independence and converse happily with adults and each other as they boost their speech and language skills in particular.

From starting points below those expected for their age, pupils make progress similar to all pupils nationally in English and mathematics. Their achievement is accelerating but inconsistently so. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception is increasing, although it is still below the national average.

Pupils' work, assessment information compiled by the school and lessons seen, show that, across the school, pupils are making satisfactory progress. Attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading rose for the third year in 2011 and was broadly average. By the time pupils leave school their reading skills are broadly average. Pupils recognise familiar words and confidently blend sounds together to articulate new vocabulary. Pupils' attainment overall in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average by the time they leave school. Those pupils who remained at the school throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 achieved an expected rate of progress in English and mathematics in line with the national average. Girls and boys, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly satisfactory rates of progress. Pupils' current work and school data show that pupils are on track to attain skills much closer to those

expected for their ages in 2012. Gaps in performance are narrowing in relation to pupils nationally, particularly for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

Most parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire say that their children make good progress. Inspection findings show that pupils' learning is inconsistent and leads to satisfactory achievement over time.

## Quality of teaching

Teachers encourage pupils to work collaboratively, to follow the rules and to embrace teamwork. In the best lessons pupils show strongly positive attitudes to learning because activities are well planned to meet pupils' needs, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants promote pupils' confidence and encourage strong and respectful relationships. Individual support, pre-teaching and review activities enable all groups of pupils to engage in classroom learning. Practical activities, such as scientific investigations to discover the properties of electric circuits, help pupils to learn more effectively because pupils sustain interest in their learning more readily when they are actively involved in tasks. In Year 6 the teacher planned a very clear structure to a mathematics lesson where pupils were challenged to problem solve at higher levels. The teacher used pupils well to provide accurate models to others, complete with timed activities that really kept pupils on their toes. Reading skills are taught increasingly well from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, although teachers model the sounds letters make with differing degrees of accuracy.

When teaching is less successful, too many variables creep in. Expectations are not high enough in some lessons and planned activities do not consistently match work closely enough to pupils' capabilities. During some lessons teachers are unaware that pupils are not responding or learning well enough and so do not refocus the learning appropriately as the lesson proceeds. Similarly, teachers do not always use questioning well enough to draw out pupils' knowledge and understanding and to extend their thinking skills.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide positive reinforcement of stronger elements of the work. However, marking does not always provide clear ways for pupils to improve their work. The evolving curriculum concentrates on developing pupils' skills in focused areas at different times within the school year. Pupils enjoy this 'blocked' approach to project work across the curriculum. The school plans carefully to engage boys through, for example, the successful 'reading festival'. There are regular opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills in real-life contexts and also through joint family learning activities attended by parents and carers alongside their children.

Teachers understand and use current assessment information to help with the planning of pupils' future work. Adults have an informed view of pupils' achievement and identify those pupils who require additional support, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers ensure that these pupils receive a range of support and careful mentoring. However, across the school, adults' expectations of all pupils are not always high enough. The activities they plan do not push pupils on to attain higher levels in their work with sufficient rapidity.

Most parents and carers say that their children are taught well in terms of their communication, reading, writing and mathematics skills. Most pupils agree that teaching is good. Inspection findings show that these views are overly positive, given the variability within the quality of teaching.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Staff follow closely the school's behaviour management policy. Most pupils say that they feel safe in school with a large majority confirming that pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are generally kind to each other. However, pupils still rely too heavily on the school's behaviour management systems rather than taking more responsibility for their own behaviour. The school is a happy place, full of purposeful activity. There are few instances of homophobic bullying, name-calling or racism. However, a small minority of parents, carers and pupils express concerns about a few serious behaviour problems that have been prevalent. Although the leadership has explained the school's inclusive ethos and welcomes feedback from parents and carers, a very small minority remain unconvinced by the school's actions in response to the concerns they raise.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand the importance of careful use of the internet and other new technologies. Parents and carers recently attended an e-safety evening to help them keep their children safe.

Attendance is average and is improving well due to the school's keen focus. The school works concertedly within the educational welfare service to encourage all parents and carers to bring their children to school regularly and on time. The number of exclusions in school has fallen significantly over the past two years due to increasing impact of the new inclusion coordinators. Almost all parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire confirm that their children feel safe here in school. A very large majority agree that behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher knows what needs to be done to move the school forward. However, for too long she has had to shoulder an excessive workload because the senior leadership team has been below strength due to staff changes and governing body involvement has been limited. Senior leaders have identified the correct priorities to move the school's effectiveness forward. Even so, professional development opportunities are not ensuring that the quality of teaching is improving rapidly enough. Although there is increased accountability through the management of teachers' performance, targets have not been robust enough to secure and sustain the required pace of improvement. New approaches to curriculum delivery, as subjects are covered during extended topic work, engage pupils more fully in their learning. Satisfactory and improving leadership, coupled with rising achievement and overall improvement since the previous inspection, ensures that the school provides satisfactory value for money. It has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

The governing body is supportive, willing, and is developing its expertise. However,

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it does not offer sufficient challenge in terms of the school's performance. Currently, the governing body does not play a strong enough part in evaluating the school's performance or in setting its strategic direction. Nor does it offer sufficient practical support to the senior leaders. The school meets requirements with regard to safeguarding. Procedures are followed and pupils are helped to stay safe both in and out of school.

Senior leaders analyse closely a wide range of assessment information that class teachers gather about each pupil. They monitor pupils' progress regularly and identify when progress rates dip. Senior leaders set challenging expectations of pupils' progress, although differences in classroom practice mean that not all classes regularly perform at these levels. The performance of all groups of pupils is monitored with equal care. Staff ensure equality of opportunity for pupils regardless of background or need. Discriminatory practice is not tolerated.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and creates effective links between subjects that help pupils to learn satisfactorily. There are clear expectations and planned activities to enable pupils to develop a satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Opportunities for children to learn and develop in the Early Years Foundation Stage include an appropriate balance of adult-led activities and those the children choose for themselves.

The school strives to develop positive communication between home and school. Although a very large majority of parents and carers confirm that the school keeps them well informed, a few would welcome improvements to communication. Inspection findings show that the school tries hard to communicate effectively with parents and carers.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](http://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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.**



27 April 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Mallard Primary School, Doncaster, DN4 9HU**

Thank you for your polite and friendly welcome when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed the time we spent with you and the more detailed discussions we had with some of you. It was interesting to hear some of you read and to join you in lessons. Most of you told us that you are happy to come to school and we saw that in your improved attendance, so well done!

We judge that Mallard Primary is giving you a satisfactory education. This means that some things are going well but that other things could improve. Your teachers help you to learn satisfactorily and the progress you make is improving. Your behaviour is usually satisfactory and you are aware of the rules to follow. You are usually kind to each other and help each other well in lessons.

We have asked your school to help you to make faster progress in your learning so that more of you reach higher standards in English and mathematics. We also want your teachers to make sure that the lessons they prepare for you are of a consistently good and better quality and that they always give you pointers on how to improve your work when they mark it. You can help by always trying to do your best work in lessons and reading the comments teachers make in your books. Try to remember what they say when you come to start your next piece of work. Last of all, we have asked the people who run your school to make sure that all the training staff receive ensures that teaching is better. The governing body is going to check more closely how well the school is doing.

Have fun using all the new play equipment when it arrives.

We send you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Hughes  
Lead Inspector

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