

Mandale Mill Primary School

Thorntree Road, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 8AP

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. Children start Nursery with skills and abilities well below those typical for children of their age. They leave at the end of Year 6 with standards close to those expected nationally. This represents good progress for pupils.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. The focus on reading, writing and mathematics results in pupils making good gains in these basic skills as they move through the school.
- Pupils behave well, and know how to keep themselves safe. They are polite and considerate to others. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff.
- Leaders and managers focus relentlessly on improving the achievement and teaching. They have well-thought-out plans to ensure this is an improving school. They ensure that all staff are involved in implementing these. As a result staff are behind the drive for improvement and staff morale is high.
- Governors provide good support and challenge the school to improve further. Individual governors are linked to subjects and make regular visits to the school and so gain first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving.
- Parents are confident that their children are kept safe and are well looked after.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the quality of teaching is consistently good, there is not yet enough outstanding practice to ensure further improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to find things out for themselves through working independently.
- Teaching does not capture pupils' imaginations, so that they want to extend their knowledge and understanding, often enough.
- While attendance has improved it is still below average because some pupils do not attend as often as they should.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 part lessons taught by 10 teachers. Two of these were carried out jointly, one with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, a representative of the local authority and school staff.
- The inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the views of a small group of parents spoken to during the inspection, and 40 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, monitoring files, minutes of the governing body meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mick Hill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Pattinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mandale Mill is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are both average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after) is more than twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, largely Pakistani, is higher than in most schools, as is the proportion of pupils new to learning English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school manages specifically resourced provision for pupils with special education needs. The infant assessment class has places for 10 children with moderate learning difficulties.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the proportion of outstanding teaching increases in order to further improve pupils' achievement by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves through working independently
 - providing more topics and learning activities that capture the pupils' imaginations so they want to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- Improve attendance further so that it is at least average by working with parents to alert them to the damage to their children's education if they do not attend regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in Nursery with skills and abilities well below those typical for children of their age. This is particularly true of their communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional skills. They make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 most children are working closer to the expectations for their age.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school. Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. This represents good progress from pupils' individual starting points.
- Pupils across all age groups are keen readers. They say they enjoy reading and talk knowledgeably about the books they are reading. Supported through guided reading sessions, they make good progress. As a result, at the end of Year 6 in 2012, broadly the same proportion of pupils attained the expected Level 4 as seen nationally. In writing, the proportion was greater than that seen nationally, in part because of the extra grammar and handwriting lessons introduced by the school.
- The proportion of pupils making the progress expected between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in mathematics is similar to the national figure. In both mathematics and English an increasing number are starting to respond to challenging teaching and make more than the expected progress and reach above average attainment.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, including those in the infant assessment class, receive additional support, within small groups and individually. Overall, their achievement is in line with similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those new to speaking English as an additional language typically achieve well. In 2012, for example, the attainment of pupils of Pakistani heritage at the end of Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics was six months ahead of their peers nationally.
- The pupil premium has funded additional staff to support learning in literacy and numeracy and an improved system to closely track the performance of these pupils. As a result pupils supported by the funding make good progress. This includes the pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The average point score in English and mathematics indicates that their attainment is slightly lower than other pupils but the difference in attainment is continuing to close.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring all pupils, including those in the infant assessment class and those eligible for the pupil premium, have the opportunity to succeed.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The relentless focus on improving teaching has been successful. It is consistently good overall and sometimes outstanding and enables pupils to make good progress.
- There is a clear focus on developing pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is typically good and, as a result, pupils make good gains in these basic skills as they move through the school.
- Learning activities are skilfully planned by teachers to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Typically they work in groups with pupils with similar learning needs, with support from the teacher and other adults.
- Pupils' written work is marked regularly and their progress acknowledged and praised in teachers' comments. In the best examples, pupils are given detailed guidance on what they need to do to be better next time.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and challenge and encourage them to try hard. Additional adults are effective in supporting pupils' learning because they are fully involved in the planning of lessons and understand what the teacher is aiming to achieve.

- The drive to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy has led to teaching which is highly effective in equipping pupils with these basic skills. Teachers now have the base from which to develop their teaching so there are further improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Teaching does not currently give pupils enough opportunities to find things out for themselves through working independently. Where this is done, as in a Key Stage 1 lesson in which pupils worked independently in pairs to turn poems into mini plays, pupils consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills and also make significant and rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding.
- In some of the best lessons, but not often enough in others, teachers capture pupils' imaginations so that they want to learn. In a Year 6 religious studies lesson on the Aztecs, for example, pupils were hooked by the idea of human sacrifice. Skilful questioning sparked discussion about religion, morality and science. As a result pupils made outstanding gains in their knowledge and understanding and were left wanting more.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and are polite and considerate to others, including visitors. The school is a happy and positive place in which children from Nursery to Year 6 can learn and play.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They are aware of different types of bullying, including those involving the internet and mobile technologies, and they know about racism. They say these are rare in their school and they know what to do should they have a concern and are confident it would be dealt with quickly.
- Teachers and additional adults have high expectations of how pupils should behave. There are strong routines which pupils are expected to follow. Praise and encouragement are commonly used in every class and underpin the very good relationships between pupils and staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the positive ethos of the school; doing things 'the Mandale way'. Assemblies, on themes such as teamwork, are an important part of school life. There are opportunities to experience different religions and cultures, by celebrating Eid and Divali for example.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility and appreciate having their views taken into account, for example through the school council, which was responsible for extending the outdoor adventure trail.
- Attendance has improved in the last year, but it is still below average. The school has worked hard to bring this improvement about, with a focus on those pupils with a track record of poor attendance. However, more still needs to be done to alert parents to the damage to their children's education if they do not attend regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers, including the governors, are relentlessly focused on improving the quality of the education provided by the school. All staff share this ambition and work closely together as a team to help make further improvements. As a result staff morale is high.
- The school improvement plan identifies ambitious targets. Actions in the plan are followed through with determination so that improvements happen.
- The work of the school is regularly reviewed to identify any areas of underachievement and prompt action is taken to address any issues. The success of these interventions is investigated to ensure they are having an impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of how much progress pupils are making through regular meetings, where staff are held to account for pupils' achievement. The performance of teachers is closely monitored. Action is taken to give support where needed and only a few concerns remain.
- Teachers are set challenging targets based on their teaching and the progress pupils make. They do not progress through pay scales unless they are able to demonstrate they have met their

targets for pupils' achievement. Lots of training is provided to help teachers do so. There are many opportunities for staff to share and spread good and outstanding practice, especially approaches which capture pupils' imaginations and encourage them to work independently.

- The local authority provides regular and effective support and has contributed to the improvement of the school. The school-improvement adviser's termly reports have provided a valuable check on the school's progress for school leaders and managers, including the governors.
- There is a strong commitment by the school's leaders and managers to work with and support parents and families. The parent support adviser plays a key part in this, for example, through weekly coffee mornings and family learning workshops. Parents say staff are approachable and they are confident their children are safe and well looked after. Nevertheless, some parents still do not do enough to ensure their children attend regularly.
- The curriculum has a strong focus on developing basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils practise these skills throughout the school week. There are opportunities for more extended topic work, such as the excellent research into the Titanic by Year 6 for example, but there is scope for more such activities which capture pupils' imaginations and motivate them to learn.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good support and challenge the school to improve further. They are well informed about all aspects of the school through detailed termly reports from the headteacher and the school-improvement adviser, and ask searching questions about the school's performance.
 - Individual governors act as subject links, visiting classrooms and speaking with pupils and therefore have a good understanding of any strengths or areas for improvement. They see first-hand the quality of teaching and recognise any aspects that need attention. Governors review information about pupils' progress and so are able to ask questions if any concerns arise.
 - Governors ensure safeguarding systems are rigorous and that they meet all current requirements. They are effective in overseeing the arrangements for linking teachers' pay to their performance. They have a good understanding of the impact of the pupil-premium funding on the outcomes for these pupils. They manage the school's other resources equally well.

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	130378
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	412916

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	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Millie Scaife
Headteacher	Andrew Wright
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2010
Telephone number	01642 647010
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