

Mountford Manor Primary School

Bothwell Road, Walcot, Swindon, SN3 3EZ

Inspection dates 9–10 September 2014

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.

- A strong and effective working partnership between the school and the White Horse Federation has helped support the improvements made.
- Senior leaders have ensured that all teachers are working together to raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils enter Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities below those expected for their ages. They make good progress and this provides a good start for Key Stage 1.
- The action of the leadership team to improve teaching has resulted in pupils making good progress through Key Stage 2, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a great strength of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and they are respectful to each other, staff and visitors to the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe at the school and they know who to talk to should they have any concerns.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Parent governors have worked effectively to engage with all parents to help share the vision for the school to continue to move forward.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the atmosphere at the school and how it has changed in the last 18 months. They say that 'teachers are caring and always willing to talk if there is an issue'.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as that in reading and mathematics. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects.
- Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils clearly how well they are doing and what the next steps in learning are.
- On occasions work is not demanding enough for the more able pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 12 lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the principal. In addition, inspectors made visits to the specialist resource provision and observed a small group of pupils.
- Inspectors observed two assemblies.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 reading and also held a meeting with pupils from the school council.
- Inspectors were shown around the school by a group of pupils who spoke about the school’s values and how well they learn.
- Inspectors spoke to the Chief Executive Officer for the White Horse Federation, Managing Director, Primary Director, parent governors and staff including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school’s data on pupils’ current progress, planning and monitoring documents, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children. Inspectors scrutinised the school’s arrangements for spending the additional sport funding and pupil premium funding.
- Inspectors were unable to observe any lessons in either the Nursery or Reception, as children have a later start date than the rest of the school. However, inspectors used the opportunity to talk to Year 1 pupils about their work in Reception and took the opportunity to look at their learning journeys with them.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaires from 25 members of staff.
- Inspectors were unable to take account of the results of the on-line Parent View questionnaire because there were not enough responses. However, inspectors used the start of the day to talk to parents.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones , Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Buist

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mountford Manor Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of The White Horse Federation, a Swindon-based multi-academy trust that sponsors eight primary schools and one special school
- The principal took up her post in May 2014.
- Since the last inspection there has been a high turnover of staff.
- There is a specialist resource provision within the school for pupils with behaviour, social and emotional difficulties. This resource is available to pupils within the Swindon area who find it difficult accessing a mainstream curriculum.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a provision for two-year-olds, The Ladybirds, a Nursery and a Reception class.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, supports these pupils.
- A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with an above average proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2014, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club on site for pupils with a range of activities to engage with before starting the school day, for example reading, board games and artwork.
- The school provides a number of after-school activities and the chance to engage with local festivals, such as art, music, science and sport.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standards in writing, so that achievement at least matches that in mathematics and reading by making sure that:
 - pupils have the opportunity to practise their writing skills in different subject areas
 - pupils regularly make amendments and improvements to their work following feedback from teachers and other adults.
- Ensure that teachers set work for all pupils, but especially the more able, that is consistently challenging and provides opportunities to develop a deeper understanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The principal and senior leadership team have a clear vision and are ambitious for the school. Improvements in pupils' attainment, particularly in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6, along with the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, are now evident. The newly appointed principal has lost no time in putting in place effective measures which are accelerating pupils' achievement and improving the quality of teaching. These examples of recent success are evidence that there is a good capacity to continue to improve.
- Teachers report the leadership team is determined to push the school forward. One member of staff said, 'We are on an amazing journey and huge steps are made daily.'
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the school's development plan identifies clear priorities to support the school to continue to improve.
- School leaders and managers track and monitor pupils' progress regularly to make sure all pupils achieve equally well, and individual needs are well provided for. This includes those supported by additional funding. As a result, the gap between different groups of pupils is now reducing.
- Leaders manage the performance of staff effectively and hold teachers to account for the progress pupils in their classes make. Leaders regularly observe lessons to monitor the quality of the teaching. They regularly look at pupils' work and talk to pupils about their learning, to bring about further improvements in all pupils achievements, including the more able.
- Middle leaders have a clear understanding about their areas of responsibility and what they need to do to continue to support the improvement in pupils' progress in all areas. Although some leaders are very new to these roles, they are aware of the priorities and have started to work on these.
- The subjects pupils study are well adapted and work is set at the right level. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the different topics. They spoke with enthusiasm about the topic on 'Chocolate' and another on *War Horse* by Michael Morpurgo. Pupils shared their understanding of using their reading skills when studying different subjects and how reading helps develop their vocabulary. One pupil shared his enthusiasm for mathematics and science and the chance to conduct investigations. The school grounds provide many stimulating opportunities for pupils to learn in an outdoor context.
- The school has training scheduled from the federation to support teachers when working towards the preferred approach to assessment now that National Curriculum levels are no longer used.
- Additional sport funding is used to employ specialist sports leaders to work alongside pupils and staff to help develop teachers' skills in physical education. Pupils have the opportunity to engage in swimming lessons, as well as the chance to experience more unusual sports such as fencing and martial arts.
- The school ensures that every pupil, including those with different cultural backgrounds, is able to take advantage of all it has to offer. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the school's key values. There are opportunities for pupils to share their cultures with one another and to celebrate and learn about different faiths and festivals. These include an understanding of why some children fast at certain times of the year and the celebration of events such as harvest at the local church.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The White Horse Federation provides good support to the school and is making a strong contribution to its improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, within the wider White Horse Federation, has a clear understanding of the school's performance in relation to other schools. It is aware of its strengths and areas for development within the context of the community it serves and the needs of the pupils. This includes the promotion of different faiths and values, which are central to the school's beliefs. There is a clear understanding of the priorities for the school, with an awareness of the importance of both challenge and support to make sure the improvement continues. Statutory requirements, such as safeguarding requirements, are fully in place and effective. Governors have a good understanding of the school, including the changes to the curriculum and revised approaches to assessing pupils. They are aware of the quality of teaching and the management of teachers' performance and implementation of the national Teachers' Standards in relation to tackling any underperformance. Governors monitor spending carefully and are aware of how the school is using additional funds, including the pupil premium and primary sport funding, to improve pupils' overall achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of the pupils is good. Pupils report that there has been an improvement in behaviour. A positive climate was observed in both lessons and about the school, and school records confirm that this is typically the case.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and willing to help one another as well as adults. They have a good understanding about the difference between right and wrong. During an assembly on respect, pupils had the chance to share their understanding and say why respect is important.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they have as peer mediators and young leaders, which include arranging activities for younger pupils at break times in the playground. Representatives from the school council appreciate the chance to contribute to improving the school, for example the new arrangements for tuck time and changes to the school uniform, and would like further opportunities to be involved.
- There are few bullying incidents in the school and, when it occurs, staff deal with it very quickly.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying. The school's work to keep the pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, this includes the importance of internet safety and the impact that cyber bullying can have on someone.
- Attendance is average and is improving. This is because the parent support officer has worked successfully with parents, with regular reminders on the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to provide a wide range of activities that promote pupils' skills in both numeracy and literacy.
- Pupils describe their lessons as fun and exciting and say that this helps to support their understanding. During the inspection, Years 1 and 2 were very excited about the topic on 'Dragons', this included evidence of green slime in the classroom after a dragon visit. One pupil spoke at length about the visit and how the experience had helped his imagination when completing his written work.
- In a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher used her good subject knowledge when questioning and guiding pupils with differing ability levels to use more complex sentences in their writing. The questioning found out what pupils were thinking, to move the learning forward.
- Teachers plan their lessons with a focus on setting work at the right level, supporting pupils' understanding as well as extending their speaking and listening skills. They make sure that pupils know what they will be learning so that they understand what is needed to be successful.
- Pupils read regularly and enjoy reading. They use their understanding of letters and sounds to read more difficult words. Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to read at home, which hinders their progress.
- Teaching assistants guide and question pupils effectively, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They help these pupils to make good progress alongside developing their self-confidence and self-reliance.
- Teaching in the specialist resources provision is carefully planned, with a clear structure and well established routines. The individual and specific needs of each of these pupils is very carefully considered and the 'Best of Me' books showed progress in participation and engagement.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils, although effective in some classes, lack consistency across the school. Not all teachers provide clear enough advice for pupils about how to improve their work further and do not always make sure that pupils follow up this advice by applying it and showing their teachers that they have understood.
- Where teaching is less effective, pupils' progress is slowed and lesson time wasted as pupils sometimes wait for others in the class to catch up with them. Occasionally, more able pupils are given extra work when they complete a task, which does little to extend their thinking or strengthen their skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Improving pupils' achievement has been a priority for the school. As a result, there is evidence of pupils making good or better progress, and this is particularly evident in Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils making good progress compares favourably with national averages. As a result, they are well prepared for the next phase of their education.
- The progress of pupils who left Year 6 in 2013 was not consistently strong for all subjects, including

writing where some pupils did not show the progress they should have.

- The reasons for this slip have been identified and quickly addressed, so that both attainment and progress have improved sharply. Detailed information presented by the school provided firm evidence to show that all groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are now making good progress across all year groups.
- The progress pupils make in writing is weaker across all year groups. School plans and teachers' planning demonstrate that writing is a priority for all year groups, with further opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in all subjects; however, it is too early to see the impact.
- The attainment of Year 1 pupils in the national screening check for reading in 2013 was below the national average. However, the effective actions the school has taken to improve the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are already having a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. They are well supported in the early stages of learning English and, as a result, achieve in line with their peers at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The attainment of pupils who are eligible for the additional funding is lower than that of other pupils. In 2013, such disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were two terms behind other pupils in the school in reading and one and half terms behind in writing. In mathematics, pupils' achievement was in line with other pupils in the school. Compared to pupils nationally, Year 6 pupils were two terms behind in writing and mathematics and three terms behind in reading. Money spent on initiatives to improve the achievement of this group has helped them catch up with other pupils. In 2014, their progress in comparison to other pupils in the school is in line for mathematics, with the gap rapidly closing from the previous year for reading and writing.
- The more-able pupils generally make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics, in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Sometimes more-able pupils are given work that is too easy for them. This is when the lesson is less challenging and pupils finish the work quickly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils in the specialist resources provision, make good progress. The school regularly checks their progress and makes changes to the support they need. As a result, some pupils catch up rapidly and no longer require the additional support.

The early years provision

is good

- Senior leaders arrange home visits and early assessments to enable staff to take account of children's differing abilities and interests in order to plan activities at the right level for all children.
- Children enter Nursery and or Reception with skills and knowledge below the expected levels for their age. Children develop writing and number skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage through activities that capture their interest and this enables children to make good progress.
- Children are happy and secure because staff are supportive. There is a good range of activities for children to choose from and the activities are well planned so that children want to engage and learn. The two-year-olds enjoyed using shaving foam to create patterns using their hands and brushes.
- Children have the opportunity to engage with activities, using both the inside and outside classroom space, with a clear emphasis on learning through play and investigation. Funds have been raised to further develop the Reception outdoor space.
- By the end of the year, the progress children make whilst in Reception is good, and for some it is outstanding, with the learning journeys illustrating this. Year 1 pupils enjoyed looking back through their learning journeys and talking to inspectors about their work.

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	138308
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	449075

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joss Jarvis
Executive Principal	Lauren Connor
Principal	Rachel Skates
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2012
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