

South Milford Community Primary School

Sand Lane, South Milford, Leeds, North Yorkshire, LS25 5AU

Inspection dates 24–25 June 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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The consultant headteacher, a strong senior leadership team and new governors have driven significant improvements since the last inspection. As a result, pupils are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attendance is excellent because pupils enjoy school. Pupils' good behaviour contributes well to their achievement and they are proud of their school.
- Teaching over time is consistently good and some is outstanding. Leaders have carefully guided staff to improve their skills and have taken positive action to rectify any previous underperformance.
- In 2014, by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' progress in mathematics and writing was in the top 20% of schools nationally. Pupils' progress in reading was also good.
- Pupils cooperate maturely together. They are polite and friendly towards adults and visitors. Conduct around the school is exemplary. Pupils say they feel safe in school and most parents agree.
- Provision for children in the early years is outstanding. Excellent teaching, leadership and a passion for nurturing children as individuals underpin this notable achievement. Consequently, children are well prepared for learning when they move into Year 1.
- An inspiring curriculum successfully develops the three aspects of community, resilience and enterprise. Pupils show respect for differences, such as diversity in culture, religion or ability because their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Strategic planning to teach British values ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The newly-constituted governing body is highly effective. Governors understand the school's strengths and hold the staff to account for improvements. Supported by the local authority and an alliance of local schools, governors have managed the school most skilfully through a very a difficult period of staffing turbulence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The rapid rates of progress made by some groups of pupils in school are not consistent for all groups.
- Pupils' handwriting, presentation and spelling are not always as good as they could be.
- Pupils do not always respond to the guidance provided by teachers on how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of subjects. In addition, they made a number of short visits to classrooms and listened to pupils read. Inspectors gathered other evidence from many sources relating to the quality of teaching over time.
- The inspectors observed two lessons jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the consultant headteacher, senior and middle leaders and other staff. The inspection team talked to governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors checked the work in pupils' books and scrutinised the school's own data on pupils' current progress and attainment. Inspectors reviewed the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, teachers' planning, minutes of governing body meetings and other monitoring information. They examined records relating to behaviour and attendance and other documents linked to safeguarding and child protection.
- Inspectors took account of the 48 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also talked to parents when they collected children from school or visited school for special assemblies. Inspectors read letters and emails sent by parents and considered results from the school's own recent parent survey. They also analysed 19 responses from the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Anne Humble, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- There are seven classes with one class for each year group of pupils from Reception Year to Year 6.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through the pupil premium, is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding the school receives for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- Children attend full time in the Reception class.
- The school has been through many unavoidable changes in leadership and management since the previous inspection. The leadership of the school is shared between two senior leaders supported by a consultant headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed to begin her role in September 2015.
- Two new teachers have taken up post since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has appointed a newly constituted governing body since the last inspection which has been supported by the local authority. It has recently joined an alliance of local schools in order to support staff and governors' development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers receive specific targets to improve their performance that lead to more rapid progress for all groups of pupils across school.
- Continue to raise standards, particularly in literacy, by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to make the improvements that teachers suggest when they mark their work
 - improving the quality of handwriting, presentation and spelling so that pupils' written work is of a consistently high standard
 - ensuring that pupils always apply themselves to complete their very best work
 - sharing the best practice that exists in the school so that it is consistent across all age groups.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Resolute leadership from the consultant headteacher, new governors and senior leaders has led to considerable improvements in teaching and pupils' behaviour. All share a passion to raise standards and place pupils at the heart of every decision.
- Working closely alongside other staff, leaders have created a strong team. Together they are committed to improving the quality of teaching and so pupils now make good and sometimes even more rapid progress.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous. Senior leaders regularly analyse data to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well. Leaders accurately identify key priorities and thoughtfully plan future actions. Increasingly, teachers have taken ownership of data to track the progress made by their pupils. 'Raising Achievement Plans' that teachers produce for each class have increased pupils' progress even further.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school owing to frequent checks on teaching, learning and pupils' progress. Middle leaders have many opportunities to observe and monitor teaching. They carry out pupils' conferences to find out pupils' views on learning in different subjects and evaluate the work in pupils' books. Decisive action is taken to remedy any shortcomings that may be identified. Recently, this process led to changes in the way teachers mark pupils' work, by improving the specific guidance offered.
- Teachers are keen to improve their skills and appreciate the feedback received from leaders following observations of teaching. Training has supported staff to develop the necessary skills and assessment has been enhanced by enabling teachers to work alongside colleagues from other local schools.
- Leaders manage teachers' performance well by linking pay awards to pupils' progress. Although leaders set clear targets for teachers to achieve, the targets are not always specific nor challenging enough to ensure rapid progress for all groups of pupils in each year group.
- The curriculum is interesting and engages pupils' interest. It uses the three aspects of community, enterprise and resilience to create inspiring activities that are meaningful to pupils. This was exemplified in one class where pupils planned an imaginary journey around Britain by organising travel arrangements, planning an itinerary and costing out their finances. Pupils made excellent progress as a result of the opportunities for problem solving in this real-life scenario.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils understand that everyone is different as an individual and value this. Relationships between groups of pupils are excellent. Equal opportunities are fully promoted for pupils and staff do not tolerate discrimination in any form.
- Strategic planning by senior leaders ensures that pupils are frequently taught about British values as this is built into many subjects and activities. Pupils' books in Year 6 showed several pieces of writing about different aspects of culture and society, such as non-chronological reports that explained the purpose and politics of the recent general election. All pupils have the opportunity to present exciting assemblies for parents and the rest of the school and this promotes their love of learning. Governors are keen to improve pupils' all-round well-being and to prepare pupils for their future as citizens. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively to ensure that eligible pupils make good progress. Gaps in attainment between these pupils and others in the school are beginning to close more quickly because of the additional support provided.
- One-to-one guidance and supervised small group work mean that the needs of all pupils are catered for well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are closely monitored by senior staff and additional support is tailored to their specific requirements. Staff are passionate to ensure that these pupils are included in whole-class activities as much as possible, so they are very well integrated into the wider life of the school and do not feel isolated.
- Primary school sports funding has been used to extremely good effect with staff training alongside qualified sports coaches. The strong impact of this approach was evident in a tennis lesson where all pupils were fully engaged and focused in practising their shots, while the class teacher attentively guided and coached their techniques. Pupils have more opportunities to tackle a wider range of competitive sport and swimming lessons for those in the early stages of learning to swim.
- The school now works closely with other schools as part of the local 'star alliance.' Staff appreciate the additional support that is offered by working with colleagues in other schools. They have moderated assessments together and have visited other schools to share best practice. The local authority has sustained a close working relationship with governors and senior leaders. This close team-work has allowed pupils to make continued progress despite unavoidable staffing and leadership turbulence that has

affected the school in recent years.

- Although not all parents are 100% happy with every aspect of the school, leaders have developed highly effective methods to consult with families and to listen to their suggestions. Recently, this closer engagement has led to improvements in homework and more frequent communication about school events. During the inspection, most parents who shared their views with inspectors agreed that the school has vastly improved since the previous inspection.
- All safeguarding requirements are fully adhered to in the school. The school carries out rigorous checks on new staff and the single central record is meticulously kept.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are now extremely effective. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and understand data about the achievement of different groups of pupils. An accurate view of the school and a commitment to rapid improvement drive their agenda and they focus every decision on what is best for their pupils. Governors use their specific skills impressively to support different aspects of school improvement, such as finance or community development. They are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and ensure all legal requirements are met, particularly in safeguarding.
 - Governors are not afraid to make difficult decisions when needed and ensure that the school's performance-related pay policy is rigorously managed. Any aspect of underperformance is challenged but governors also work cooperatively with staff to support improvements.
 - Governors ensure that finances are used effectively to raise pupils' achievement and increase progress. Additional funding, including the pupil premium and primary school sports funding, are closely monitored to make sure that they have positive impacts on pupils' performance. A former deficit in school finances has been turned around since newly constituted governors with specific financial expertise have taken charge.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff have high expectations for behaviour and the vast majority of pupils show respect for adults in school. Pupils' conduct around school is exemplary as they are calm, quiet and very sensible.
- Staff consistently manage pupils' behaviour effectively in lessons, reminding them of expectations if they ever veer off their set tasks. Pupils cooperate well with their peers when taking part in paired or group tasks. They generally show good levels of concentration and keep trying even when tasks become difficult.
- Pupils are highly positive about their school and appreciate the specific targets that they now have for their learning. They say that staff explain clearly how they can be successful at their tasks and this helps them to focus and achieve well. They are polite, well mannered and articulate during discussions.
- The school has successfully improved behaviour over time. Pupils keenly take on responsibilities, such as representing their classmates on the school council or acting as a buddy to younger children. They take these roles seriously and are proud of their achievements.
- Attendance is outstanding. Pupils say they enjoy school and attendance has continued to increase since the last inspection.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and most parents agree. Specific comments made include, 'Teachers and assistants do a very good job of looking after, inspiring and encouraging my children.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying that they need to be aware of, such as name calling, using racist remarks or cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is rare at their school and that staff deal with it immediately if it does ever happen. Pupils know how to respond to bullying if it arises and inform staff straight away. They speak highly of the care they receive and say staff will listen to any of their worries and concerns if they are unhappy.
- Records of misbehaviour and bullying are rigorously maintained and monitored by senior staff and clearly outline the effective actions taken to prevent any further occurrence. Safeguarding meets all requirements and staff are regularly trained in safety matters. Arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils have recently been improved following discussions with parents.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They recall specific visitors and workshops that have helped them learn how to keep safe, such as the local police and

road safety experts. They enjoyed designing road signs mounted around the village to ask drivers to slow down near their school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Senior leaders have taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Consequently, teaching across the school is good with some that is outstanding. Good levels of progress have been sustained for the past two years and pupils' attainment has increased.
- Staff value pupils and this promotes excellent relationships in the classroom with a positive ethos for learning where pupils feel safe and secure.
- Teachers plan exciting lessons to suit a range of abilities that often involve problem solving or investigation. Mathematics is taught effectively in this way. An example of this was seen in a Year 2 class where pupils were creating potions for a wizard that had to contain specific amounts of liquid. Different groups used their knowledge of number and capacity to add and subtract millilitres until they reached the correct levels needed to solve the problem. Each group worked on the same theme but used different methods or apparatus to assist their calculations.
- Teachers explain tasks clearly and guide pupils well during lessons by reshaping tasks or by providing detailed verbal feedback about their work. They mark pupils' work regularly and often in detail. However, this does not always have the required impact to improve pupils' skills when pupils do not follow the guidance provided for them. In some classes, pupils methodically carry out corrections and respond to their teachers' suggestions but this is not consistent throughout school.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for vulnerable pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teachers plan work that closely matches their specific needs so that they are helped to catch up in any areas where this is needed. The most able pupils are now taught well with increased levels of challenge provided to enable them to excel.
- Pupils enjoy reading at home and school and recent improvements to the teaching of reading have promoted good attitudes.
- Pupils have many opportunities to write at length across the curriculum and have a love of poetry that is notable. Year 5 pupils have produced moving poems about their emotions and other classes have written poems about the First World War 1. Pupils do not always try their best in writing tasks, however, and at times they do not take enough care with their handwriting, spelling and presentation. This prevents them achieving higher standards in English.
- Pupils enjoy a rich curriculum. Opportunities to develop history skills are encouraged through exciting research of artefacts. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively across the curriculum. Art is a favourite subject for many pupils and the displays around school show high levels of care and attention to detail in this subject. Pupils study a variety of artists and styles with many imaginative activities that capture their interest, such as when they created abstract portraits in the style of Picasso by dissecting and re-assembling two portraits of their own design.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is now at least good in all year groups. More pupils are working at higher levels than previously and all groups are making better progress.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonic (the sounds letters make) screening check is well above the national average.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment has risen to above national averages in reading and mathematics and average in writing. At the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the highest standards in reading and mathematics was significantly above average. This represents a vast improvement on the standards achieved at the time of the previous inspection.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with national averages in all subjects. Previous gaps in pupils' attainment have been closed over the past two years. In writing and mathematics, pupils' progress from Key Stage 1 to Year 6 was excellent, in the top 20% of all schools nationally. In reading, pupils' progress was good and similar to that made by other pupils nationally.
- Over the past two years, the school has raised the level of challenge for the most able pupils. This improvement has resulted in the most able pupils making rapid progress and more of them reaching

higher levels in national tests at the end Year 6.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress owing to support from teachers and teaching assistants and careful monitoring by senior leaders. Specialist programmes to support this group of pupils are closely analysed to measure their effectiveness and the school's own records show that they have particularly improved pupils' reading skills.
- Inspection evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' books, observations of learning during lessons and the schools' own data on progress made by each year group show that pupils across the school are making good progress. Standards are rising for all groups as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching. The rate of progress made by different groups of pupils varies across classes because of inconsistencies in expectation that still persist in some classes.
- The school is beginning to close the gap in achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared to others in the school and has continued to do so successfully since the last inspection in 2013. Only four pupils were eligible for the pupil premium in Year 6 last year, so it is not possible to make statistically significant comparisons between this group and other pupils in school and nationally.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years leader ensures that provision is of the highest quality so that children are nurtured as individuals. Most make excellent progress from their different starting points which are varied but overall typical for the children's age. By the end of the Reception Year, a higher proportion of children have gained the skills that are typical for their age and the vast majority are ready to make a good start in Year 1.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding because of the calm and purposeful atmosphere created by staff. Every child is listened to and valued and the staff provide superb role models for respectful behaviour. As a result, children quickly learn how to make friends, how to share and take turns. They cooperate well and are very mature for their age. They are polite and helpful to one another.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Parents commented on how quickly their children settle in and how much progress they make. Parents' comments included, 'You are such an inspiration to me as my child has come on leaps and bounds, even to the point where he wants to come to school on a Saturday.'
- Staff in the Reception team keep a check on children's progress and make sure they plan activities to help children continually improve their skills. This was seen in a session where an assistant helped children to form letters accurately on computer tablets. The specific letters that were chosen for each child to practise had been identified in the marking comments made by the class teacher after the previous day's writing task.
- 'Well done notes' are posted around the walls to celebrate, display and record each child's specific skills. These include detailed comments relating to how well children have completed tasks, for example, 'You were determined to balance your model. You persevered for a very long time.' Comments of this kind help children to understand the process of learning and do not concentrate on the end product alone.
- Parents follow the staff system of recording success by adding comments about their children's accomplishments at home on the 'Wow Wall' so that all adults involved in each child's life contribute to their records of learning.
- The curriculum provided is outstanding. It follows children's interests very closely and offers many unique experiences to widen their horizons. Mathematics is taught using real-life problems, such as working out how many 'sleeps' it will take until the duck eggs hatch. To work out their solutions to this problem, children drew their own calendars and tally charts to mark off each day.
- Intricate drawings, maps and designs adorn the walls showing evidence of the children's imaginative skills. Children have drawn their own story maps to help them tell detailed stories which staff have then written down. Using children's own drawings as a tool for thinking and to stimulate their talking is used to stunning effect across all areas of the curriculum.
- Reading is taught effectively by skilled practitioners who build up children's understanding of phonics with regular practice. Staff also help children to remember how to read and spell tricky words which cannot be decoded by simply sounding out the letters alone.
- Leadership and management in the early years are outstanding, as are the systems for keeping children safe and healthy. For example, children knew they needed to wash the germs from their hands after they had investigated to find out what it looked like inside the body of a real fish.

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	121418
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	462221

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Hattam
Headteacher	Yvonne Methley (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2013
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