

# Merton Park Primary School

Church Lane, Merton Park, London, SW19 3HQ

**Inspection dates** 1–2 July 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils typically reach standards of attainment that are much higher than the national average by the end of each key stage. The large majority of pupils exceed age-related expectations.
- There are very few gaps in the achievement of any groups of pupils in the school. Disadvantaged pupils, and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, receive excellent support and make good progress.
- Leaders, including governors, are relentless in their ambition to make this school the best it can be. Consequently, it has improved significantly since the last inspection, and it continues to do so.
- The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about their subjects in interesting ways. They experience a range of rich and varied visits and outdoor activities that help to bring their learning to life.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers are highly professional. They assiduously plan lessons that will inspire pupils and give them memorable learning opportunities. As a result, pupils love coming to school and make excellent progress.
- Pupils' communication skills are excellent. They are highly articulate, confident speakers with a rich vocabulary. Their skills are shaped by the wealth of books and other reading opportunities they have in school.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They work hard at all times and persevere with tasks that are frequently challenging.
- The warm, mutually supportive relationships that staff and pupils have with each other make this a very caring, nurturing school. Staff morale is high and pupils describe their school as 'one big family'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Attendance is consistently above the national average. Pupils know their rights and responsibilities towards each other. They report that there is very little bullying at the school.
- Parents overwhelmingly support the school and would recommend it to others.
- Provision in the early years is outstanding. Children make rapid and sustained progress due to excellent teaching and imaginative activities. They are very well prepared for starting school in Year 1.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons, some of which they jointly observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also scrutinised a range of pupils' work taken from across all subject areas, and heard some Key Stage 1 pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, including the headteacher, other senior leaders and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times of the school day, including at break and lunch times. They spoke to two groups of pupils and to many others informally over the two days.
- Inspectors reviewed the 76 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. They spoke to parents at the beginning and end of each inspection day. Inspectors also considered the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including leaders' overview of the school's effectiveness and their improvement plans. Inspectors looked at a range of documents in relation to pupils' welfare, health and safety, and behaviour. They looked at leaders' records of monitoring teaching and learning and evaluated how this information was being used to improve the school further.

## Inspection team

Philippa Darley, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Bruno Grzegorzec

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Merton Park is an average-sized primary school which aims to 'help our children be happy and responsible citizens of the global community'.
- The proportion of pupils known to be disadvantaged and entitled to receive pupil premium funding is well below average. Pupil premium is extra government funding given to schools to help support the achievement of pupils who have been, or are, entitled to free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is also below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is well above average, at about half of the school's population. Most of these are from Other White, Asian or mixed ethnic backgrounds. A higher than average proportion speak English as an additional language.
- Children in Nursery attend part time either in the morning or in the afternoon. Children in Reception attend full time.
- In 2014, the school met the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Continue to improve teaching and, by this, further raise standards, particularly in writing, so that the small gaps in achievement between boys and girls continue to close.
- Ensure that pupils continue to make excellent progress across all subjects by working with partner schools to secure new approaches to assessment and the curriculum in line with new National Curriculum requirements.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has an uncompromising vision of excellence for the school. She insists on 'not standing still ever', encouraging all leaders and staff constantly to refine and improve their practice. Her vision is shared by everyone in the school and has led to a culture in which outstanding teaching and behaviour are flourishing. Staff morale is extremely high. All staff and parents agree that leadership is a significant strength of the school.
- School leaders accurately evaluate the school's effectiveness by forensically analysing information on pupils' progress. They are not afraid to identify aspects of relative weakness, because they continually seek to improve the school. Their plans for improvement are highly effective. Leaders have acted upon these and have quickly driven up standards in phonics (the sounds that letters represent) and achievement for boys and the most able pupils over the last two years. This shows that there is excellent capacity for further improvement in the school.
- Subject leaders, particularly for literacy and mathematics, are highly effective in providing support and professional development for their colleagues. They monitor standards in their areas of responsibility well and model best practice in their own teaching. Their work has had a direct impact on improving the quality of planning and assessment in these subjects. Consequently, teaching across the school is improving.
- All adults in the school are singularly ambitious in wanting each and every child to succeed and thrive. They identify pupils' talents and nurture them, providing pupils with memorable learning experiences, both in lessons and through a broad range of extra-curricular activities. As a result, there are very few gaps in the achievement of any groups of pupils in the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs all make at least good progress. Leaders make very effective use of the pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils. This shows leaders' commitment to equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The curriculum is excellent. It promotes a real love for learning in pupils, as they have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills within a real-life context. For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 5 were developing their own 'true tests' to see if skipping is the best activity for keeping yourself fit. Reading is central to each subject. Pupils read extensively and create their own books that detail their learning, for example on the Greek hero, Odysseus, in Year 6.
- The curriculum contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning in school is complemented by frequent visits to develop pupils' understanding in depth. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 visited The Globe theatre to see 'Macbeth' and could talk about Shakespeare's plays with confidence. Pupils regularly enter, and win, national competitions which enable them to visit and perform in places of national interest, such as the National Theatre and on the BBC.
- The school prepares pupils very well for life in modern British society. The school's policies have been developed with Unicef's 'Rights of the Child' at their heart. Consequently, pupils understand their rights and responsibilities very well. They know it is important to show respect for others and that freedom of speech and the democratic process should lie at the heart of decision-making. They have written their own 'charters' for the playground and the classroom, which detail the values they uphold.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used highly effectively. Teachers have benefited from well-organised professional development that has improved their own skills in teaching physical education. The school now offers many more sporting opportunities for pupils, such as tag rugby, dance, competition-level gymnastics and boccia, a form of bowls. Participation has increased and competitive entries have grown. Since 2013, the school has moved from the bronze to silver Sportsmark award, evidence of the high level of sporting achievement now in the school.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are highly effective.
- School leaders have listened to parents' views and improved communications with home, for example through external whiteboards that detail the successes from each class during the day. The vast majority of parents would recommend the school to others.
- The local authority has a 'light touch' approach to the school, recognising its considerable strengths and the expertise it can bring to the support of others. An adviser visits the school to discuss achievement and to support governors with the headteacher's performance review. Governors and school leaders value this support and the helpful external advice she provides.
- The school has begun to work with partner primary schools, developing new approaches to the curriculum and to changes in assessment in the light of the new National Curriculum and assessment without levels. This work is still in process.

**■ The governance of the school:**

- Governors are highly committed and keep themselves extremely well informed about the work of the school and the quality of teaching. They have an astute understanding of their role and direct their skills and priorities very well. This ensures that leaders are held to account, teachers only receive a pay increase if they meet their annual targets, and resources are directed effectively.
- With a limited budget, governors have secured excellent value for money, ensuring that standards continue to rise, including for disadvantaged pupils. They keep a close eye on how the pupil premium is spent, receiving termly reports and expecting a detailed breakdown of the impact this funding is having.
- Governors know how the school performs in relation to similar schools and in comparison to the national picture. They recognise that standards are high. However, they are not complacent and constantly reflect on how and where the school can improve even further. As a result, standards have risen across all areas of the school since the last inspection.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils frequently become completely absorbed in their learning, and this has a noticeable impact on the progress they make. Their work shows that they complete challenging tasks with determination. For example, even those pupils who find writing difficult respond well to a demanding curriculum which expects them to read and write extensively.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times is directed by the values of mutual respect and consideration for each other. They play together very well in the playground and have created a 'buddy bench' to make sure no one feels left out. Those pupils who spoke to inspectors described their love for their school, where they all know each other's names.
- Parents, pupils and teachers all agree that the school is a harmonious community, where children and adults of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds work and play together extremely well.
- The school's behaviour records confirm that behaviour is outstanding. There are very few examples of poor behaviour and no pupil has been excluded in the last two years.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school's work to become a 'Rights Respecting' school ensures that pupils have a good understanding of their own rights, and their responsibility to uphold these for others. Pupils report that bullying is extremely rare. Their charter teaches them that if it happens 'Several Times on Purpose' they should 'Start Telling Other People' (STOP). This means they are not afraid to report any concerns they have to adults and are confident that these would be dealt with.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe online. The school has worked hard to support parents' understanding of the programmes and websites their children might use. There are regular class blogs which are overseen by teachers, where pupils can express their viewpoints in a safe environment. This encourages them to speak out and have an opinion, while taking care not to offend others.
- Attendance is well above the national average for primary schools. Leaders understand the direct link between pupils' attendance and their safety, and follow up any absences robustly.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- The quality of teaching is outstanding because teachers have very high expectations of themselves. They are highly professional and plan their lessons assiduously, always considering how best they can capture the interest of their pupils. They mark pupils' work regularly and provide written and oral feedback that has a noticeable, positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers support each other well and, because of this, the quality of teaching remains consistently strong and pupils make excellent progress across the school.
- Pupils often have rich, creative learning opportunities that pull together a number of subject areas and through which they investigate and solve challenging problems. As a result, pupils make rapid progress across their subjects and develop a deep understanding of the topics they have covered.
- Underpinning the quality of teaching and learning in the school are the excellent relationships pupils and teachers have with each other. Pupils remain highly attentive at all times. They want to learn and they

have great respect for their teachers.

- Teachers have ensured that pupils have excellent communication skills. Pupils are very articulate and have an extensive vocabulary, supported by the range of texts and books they read each day in class. These skills directly influence the quality of their written work. Consequently, many more pupils are now reaching the highest standards of attainment at the end of each key stage than was previously the case.
- The teaching of phonics is particularly strong. Even those pupils who find reading difficult, and have little support outside school, can decode unfamiliar words well and read with fluency. They are able to describe what they have read with understanding. Very effective teaching of mathematics ensures pupils progress very well in this subject.
- Teachers ensure that those pupils who are new to speaking English develop their spoken English quickly and so make rapid progress from their starting points. These pupils are also very well supported by their articulate classmates and the very many opportunities they have to discuss and listen to each other's ideas in class.

### The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils reach levels of attainment that are well above the national average at the end of each key stage. By the end of Key Stage 2, the proportions of pupils making expected progress and exceeding this are high in comparison to national figures. This is particularly the case for pupils currently at the school, where two thirds are on track to make more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, pupils attained above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. However, given their starting points, fewer attained above their age-related expectation than should have been the case. This picture has now improved, with over a third of all pupils achieving a Level 3 in the teacher-assessed tests this year.
- In 2014, Year 6 pupils attained above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Many more pupils achieved the higher grades, particularly in reading and mathematics. This year, the current Year 6 are set to exceed even these high levels, with the school reporting that over two thirds of the class are due to achieve a Level 5 or higher across all subjects. This represents excellent progress for the most able pupils, who increasingly represent the majority of each class.
- The progress of pupils in other classes in the school also reflects this picture. Progress is consistently at least good, and it accelerates as teachers secure basic skills and pupils develop as very confident learners in the later stages of Key Stage 2.
- There are very few gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language all achieve at a level similar to that of other pupils in the school. Progress is slower for a few boys in each class, particularly in reading and writing. Consequently, leaders and teachers have developed the curriculum with a particular view to supporting these pupils to make better progress. Current data show that the gaps in achievement between boys and girls are closing consistently across the school.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs make at least good progress, because teachers and other adults plan learning activities that interest them and meet their needs well.
- There were insufficient numbers of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to compare their progress against that of non-disadvantaged pupils either in the school, or nationally. Across the school, disadvantaged pupils are well supported and make at least good progress.

### The early years provision

is outstanding

- Pupils join Nursery and Reception classes with the skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for children at this age. Some children join with skills above their age level. The progress all children make across the early years is never less than consistently good. Many more achieve a good level of development by the end of this stage than is the case nationally.
- A significant number of children complete the early years phase able to read and write with some fluency. This demonstrates achievement at a very high standard. There are no gaps in achievement, with boys making as much progress as girls and reaching the same standard across all the areas of learning. This is better than the national picture, where boys typically achieve less than girls do, particularly in literacy.
- The quality of teaching and the provision for learning are outstanding. Adults know each child extremely well and check that they are engaging fully with the rich and stimulating learning activities that are available during the day. The children delighted in exploring the theme of 'A Shark in the Park', writing

the names of play equipment, pretending to police the park and painting the lake. Teachers ensure there are many activities that will sustain children's interest and develop their language and communication skills.

- The leadership of the early years is outstanding. The early years leader is passionate about maintaining the very high quality of provision. Parents have great confidence in her leadership, and communication with home is excellent. She has established a robust, detailed system for assessing the progress children make. From this, she ensures that activities are adapted to meet their developing needs. Consequently, the children make excellent progress and they are very well prepared for Year 1.
- The behaviour of children in the early years is outstanding. They play together considerately and can sustain their concentration on activities for long periods. This ensures they make very good progress with their learning. The safe environment of the early years setting develops children's self-confidence; they are eager to investigate and initiate their own learning and show adults and visitors what they can do or what they have made. Children start to take responsibility for their learning at a very early stage, following the 'cycle of activities' on the board so they know what to move on to when they have finished a task.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102639
<b>Local authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	449722

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

<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>	258
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Bisson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kirsty Gooderick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8542 7128
<b>Email address</b>	senior.admin@mertonpark.merton.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

