

# Mattersey Primary School

Thorpe Road, Mattersey DN10 5ED

<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Subject leadership requires improvement. Leaders' roles require further development as they do not yet have enough impact on school improvement.
- Governance has not been strong enough in the past. Governors have taken too much on trust and have not offered enough challenge to hold the previous headteacher to account fully for the leadership of the school.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teachers do not always set work that is well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not have high enough expectations of pupils. They do not insist on the highest standards of work at all times.
- Pupils' behaviour is not consistently good. Adults miss opportunities to model and encourage appropriate behaviour in certain social situations.
- Outcomes for pupils are not consistently good enough. Few pupils, particularly the most able and those on free school meals, make better than expected progress over time.
- Pupils are not given enough extended opportunities to practise the skills they learn in writing and mathematics. As a result, they cannot apply these skills as well as they should.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is not consistently good, most notably in phonics. The quality of provision and resources for children, both indoors and outdoors, requires improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher has made an immediate difference. His actions are already beginning to improve the school.
- School leaders have the full support of governors, staff and parents for their actions to improve the school.
- Class teachers extend pupils' learning through the use of thoughtful questioning.
- Staff care deeply about the pupils and the community served by the school. Parents feel that this is a strength of the school.

## Full report

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

- Raise the standard and impact of subject leadership by:
  - monitoring subject leaders' performance and ensuring that they hold all staff to account for the outcomes of all pupils
  - developing the leadership skills of subject leaders.
- Increase the impact of governors on school improvement by ensuring that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to challenge school leaders effectively and to plan for the school's future.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure that teachers use ongoing assessment of what pupils can do in order to match work to pupils' specific abilities
  - applying whole-school policies and practice on marking and the presentation of pupils' work consistently
  - providing a range of opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they learn in lessons, particularly writing and mathematical skills, across a wider range of subjects and extended activities
  - raising teachers' and teaching assistants' expectations and aspirations for all pupils.
- Ensure that pupils understand and display appropriate behaviour, and that adults insist on the highest standards of behaviour at all times.
- Raise the number of pupils who make better than expected progress for their age, particularly the most-able and disadvantaged pupils, by holding teachers and teaching assistants to account more rigorously for the achievements of all pupils.
- Improve the provision in the early years by:
  - providing an environment that strengthens the learning of children, both indoors and outdoors
  - ensuring that all staff members receive training to improve the teaching of phonics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The recently arrived headteacher has correctly identified that school self-evaluation was over-generous in the past. There was too much trust placed in the over-generous judgements of the previous leadership. This has contributed significantly to the school now requiring improvement.
- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped. In the past, the headteacher took much of the responsibility for leading subjects. As a result, current leaders lack some of the skills they need to discharge their responsibilities to full effect.
- Historically, leaders have not been held to account for their actions. They have not understood information on pupils' achievement well enough or challenged colleagues about pupil underperformance. As a result, the outcomes for pupils have not improved over a number of years.
- The new headteacher has quickly begun to make the changes necessary to improve the school. He understands the limitations of sharing leadership responsibilities in such a small school setting and is receiving good support from the local authority and another local school.
- The headteacher has evaluated the school's position accurately and honestly. He has implemented an action plan for rapid school improvement and there are signs that this is already having an impact. He has ensured that teachers are clear about the direction of the school and the part they are expected to play in school improvement. This is also evident from the challenging performance targets set for teachers for the coming year.
- Parents say that they have already seen a difference at the school. They particularly like the greater visibility of staff at the start of the day. Parents feel that they are listened to and that the school will now take swift action to deal with any concerns. Parents value the extra-curricular activities offered by the school, particularly the provision both before and after school. They are also pleased that the school's Parent Teacher Association has been re-launched with a very successful children's disco.
- A new curriculum, which meets national requirements, is in place. This ensures that pupils are taught a broad and balanced range of subjects. Along with a new assessment system, this is helping teachers to assess pupil progress more accurately. Further development of the curriculum is underway to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are met effectively in the school's mixed-age classes. The curriculum also places a much greater emphasis on pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. A variety of religious celebrations are observed and there are links to a local church group. Staff deliver specific lessons and assemblies based around the teaching and understanding of fundamental British values, which are relevant to life in the local community and preparation for the wider world. Pupils are alert to the risks associated with the internet and the dangers of extremism in all its forms.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on meeting the welfare needs of the pupils at the school. They care deeply about each child and this gives the school the feel of an extended family. As a result, some pupils travel significant distances to attend the school. However, too much emphasis on care has sometimes overshadowed the importance of stretching and challenging pupils academically.
- School leaders know how the pupil premium and the sports and physical education grant have been used to support pupils in the past. However, records are less clear about the impact of this additional funding on outcomes for pupils.
- The local authority identified correctly that the school was underperforming and has increased the level of support available to the school during the last year. It has played an important role in addressing previous leadership weaknesses and is working with the new headteacher and governors to deliver rapid school improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a basic, but improving, appreciation of their roles and responsibilities. They make efforts to involve themselves in the life of the school. They have monitored lessons and looked at pupils' books in an attempt to understand the work of teachers and standards of academic achievement. However, they have relied too much on the views of the previous headteacher in coming to decisions about the school's performance. This has resulted in an inaccurately inflated view of the quality of teaching and the school's overall effectiveness.
  - Governors have offered some challenge to school leaders in the past, but they have not always been tenacious enough in getting to the bottom of particular issues, such as the school's financial deficit

and pupil underachievement. They have accepted too readily excuses for underperformance rather than demanding solutions. During the inspection, the inspector reviewed school documents that showed that this situation was made worse by the poor quality and inaccuracy of information provided to governors by senior leaders.

- The new headteacher has ensured that governors now have an accurate picture of the school's position. They are clear about the need to act decisively to secure the future of the school and to address issues such as pupil underperformance. Governors understand the importance of holding staff to account for pupil outcomes and have set demanding performance targets to help raise achievement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders have reviewed and implemented improvements to ensure that the school meets statutory requirements. Leaders record concerns about pupil welfare and behaviour, reviewing these regularly to look for trends or patterns that need to be addressed.
- Parents and pupils believe that the school is a safe place. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe from potential risks such as those found on the internet or extremist views. The school has effective relationships with external organisations and works closely with these to ensure pupil safety.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning over time is inconsistent. A lack of stability in the teaching staff in recent years has contributed to this.
- Work in books shows that expectations of pupils are often too low. Presentation of work is variable and is not always the best that pupils can do. Teachers and teaching assistants do not insist on pupils' best work at all times.
- Teachers do not always set work that is appropriate because they have not accurately assessed what pupils already know. Lesson observations and work in books show that pupils of different ages and abilities attempt the same tasks on too many occasions. This means that some pupils, such as the most able, are not always stretched enough in their work and they do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils are not always clear about what they are learning or why. They do not have enough opportunities to apply their learning to extended pieces of writing or solving mathematical problems. As a result, pupils do not see the relevance of their work and are not able to practise or use basic skills in a range of different situations.
- Teaching is strongest where teachers use thoughtful and carefully selected questions to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. The inspector saw good examples of this in both classes. In a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson on poetry, the teacher asked a range of probing questions about the use of particular vocabulary. Pupils responded with thoughtful, complex sentences, which showed a developing understanding of the subject and an increasing mastery of the spoken word. Teaching assistants are less accomplished in their questioning skills, and opportunities to extend pupils' learning are sometimes lost as a result.
- The quality of marking and feedback to pupils about their work is variable. In some instances, marking is unhelpful in identifying ways in which pupils can improve. However, in Key Stage 1, good quality verbal feedback during an observed lesson on day one of the inspection resulted in an improvement in pupils' work and understanding during an observation on day two.
- The teaching of early reading skills is rapidly improving under the new class teacher. She has assessed pupils' phonic ability accurately, but their skills are still under-developed because the quality of teaching has previously been too variable. This is reflected in pupils' under-achievement in national assessments at the end of Year 1. Pupils' reading books are well matched to their abilities. Younger children use their phonic skills to help identify new or tricky words. Older children often read with good expression.
- Parents are overwhelmingly satisfied with teaching at the school and the amount of homework their children receive. They feel increasingly well informed and involved in their children's education.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Social skills, such as listening to others and taking turns to speak, are not well enough developed in some pupils. In the dining hall, some pupils are unable to use cutlery properly and do not know how to behave appropriately at the table. In these situations, adult expectations are too low and these behaviours go unchallenged.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' experiences of life beyond their locality are extended through educational trips. They respect and tolerate others, regardless of their background. The headteacher has recognised that pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain is not as well developed as it might be and work is underway to address this.
- Pupils are punctual and enjoy coming to school. All pupils wear school uniform and take a pride in their school, where they feel a sense of belonging. Teachers and teaching assistants treat all pupils with dignity and respect. There is no hint of discrimination of any kind. Parents agree that the school is very effective in looking after the welfare of pupils.
- Pupil attendance is usually close to the national average, with the exception of last year. However, there were specific and unique circumstances behind this and the vast majority of pupils attend regularly.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is not yet consistently good. In Key Stage 1 lessons, pupils behave well, responding appropriately and quickly to adult instruction. In Key Stage 2, however, a minority of older pupils have to be reminded about appropriate classroom behaviour from time to time. Low-level disruption of this kind occurs mostly as a result of pupils becoming disengaged in their learning because work is not well enough matched to their ability.
- At playtimes, pupils play appropriately with each other and the playground is a safe and happy place. Older pupils are protective towards younger ones, and pupils of all ages are often seen helping and playing together. Pupils line up quickly and are eager to get back to class.
- Records suggest that incidents of very poor behaviour are limited and adults act quickly to address matters as soon as they are made aware. Pupils feel that the school is a safe place and that incidents of bullying or teasing such as homophobic name-calling are rare. They talk of how they feel like part of a large family and how this reminds them to look after each other.

## Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Over time, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The majority of pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics during their time at the school but very few make more than expected progress. As a result, the gaps between different groups of pupils and other pupils nationally is not closing. The most-able pupils do not make as much progress as they could because the work set is not well matched to their abilities often enough and as a result they are not stretched or challenged. Adults' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough.
- In the past, leaders have placed too much emphasis on measuring the percentage of pupils at different levels of attainment. They have not given enough consideration to the progress and achievement of individual pupils. This has led to a smoke-screen effect, where leaders and governors have excused underperformance rather than challenging it. This is now being addressed through detailed individual pupil tracking. The headteacher holds teachers accountable for pupil progress every six weeks. Teachers are expected to address underperformance in a more timely fashion than was the case previously.
- Work in pupils' books shows that there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write for more extended periods. There is also little evidence to show that pupils apply their mathematical skills to problem solving on a regular basis. This means that they are not encouraged to develop their understanding through the opportunity to practise and improve their basic literacy and numeracy skills over a sustained period.
- Pupils generally enter the school at levels of achievement which are below that typical for children of a

similar age. Reading, writing, speaking and number skills are often underdeveloped.

- In 2015, outcomes for the Year 1 national phonics screening test were well below the national average.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' progress typically accelerates and the majority of pupils reach average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Historically, during Key Stage 2, the rate of pupil progress slows and very few children leave the school with above average attainment.
- Information on pupil progress from the first half term of this year suggests that the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books suggests that progress in Key Stage 1 has been less strong during the same period. Groups such as pupils eligible for free school meals and the most able are not yet progressing at a fast enough rate to close the attainment gap against other pupils nationally.
- The achievement of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is broadly similar to that of other pupils in the school.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- The leadership of the early years has not been strong in the past. This has led to a period of under-investment in resources, both indoors and outdoors. Staff training has not been given a high enough priority and this has resulted in inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Adults do not model literacy and language skills consistently well. This extends to the teaching of phonics, which is not consistently good. This has an impact on pupil achievement as they pass through the school.
- Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are below those typical for their age. By the time they leave Reception, a small minority of children reach a good level of development. As a result, the majority are not well prepared for entry into Key Stage 1, particularly in their literacy and mathematical skills.
- The early years leader is also the class teacher and is very new to the school. Her leadership skills are not yet fully developed but she has already identified areas for improvement and begun to implement changes that will improve the quality of both the provision and also teaching. She has an accurate picture of each child's abilities and what is required for them to progress quickly. For example, the introduction of exercises to develop children's abilities to hold and manipulate small items.
- Good quality questioning by the teacher extends the children's understanding and vocabulary. Consequently, when working in small adult-led groups, children make better progress than when working independently. Children are over-reliant on adults in the class, particularly the teaching assistant. Consequently, their skills for learning independently are not well developed. Children are reluctant to access the different learning areas of the classroom without adult support and this reduces their learning opportunities and rates of progress.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective and children are happy and eager to learn. Relationships with staff are very positive and this enables children to settle quickly. Children of different ages mix well and show that they can work well and behave together.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122655
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10005629

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<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>	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Terry Yates
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Higginbottom
<b>Telephone number</b>	01777 817265
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mattersey.schooljotter2.com">www.mattersey.schooljotter2.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office28@mattersey.notts.sch.uk">office28@mattersey.notts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8–9 March 2012

## Information about this school

- Mattersey Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school. Pupils attend from the local village and the surrounding area.
- Children in the early years are taught in the same class as older children in Years 1 and 2. Nursery children attend part-time and Reception children attend full-time.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a very small minority from other minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. This funding provides extra support for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special education needs is currently below the national average.
- The small size of particular year groups means that data for pupil performance does not appear in published form. This is because it may be possible to identify individual pupils from this information.
- The headteacher has been in post for half a term and is also headteacher at a neighbouring school.
- There has been considerable teacher turnover in the last three years, with one teacher commencing work on the first day of the inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- The Inspector observed learning in eight lessons, including seven observations carried out jointly with the headteacher. He observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. He also talked to pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work in all year groups to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The Inspector spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day. He took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The Inspector looked at a range of documents including: the school's own self-evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning; the school's most recent data on the achievement and progress of pupils; information provided to families; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; and the school's most recent data relating to the attendance and punctuality of pupils.
- The inspector considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

## Inspection team

Stephen McMullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector



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