

Montgomery Primary School

Redvers Road, St Thomas, Exeter, Devon EX4 1BS

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The changes to the leadership structure resulting from the federation in January 2016 hampered the school's capacity to maintain a good standard of education.
- The governing body, since the federation, has not been robust enough in tackling weaknesses in the school in order to bring about improvement.
- Leaders have not made effective use of their monitoring to provide teachers with timely and precise guidance to ensure that they help all groups, particularly disadvantaged pupils, to make better progress.
- Leaders have not been thorough in using the school's system to track pupils' progress. Consequently, they do not have an accurate understanding of the progress made by key groups of pupils over time.
- Teaching is not yet good across year groups and between subjects. Not all teachers provide pupils, including the most able, with enough challenge. This hampers the progress of some pupils in some year groups.
- Teachers do not use assessment effectively enough to help pupils to improve. As a result, pupils who are falling behind in their learning do not consistently get the help they need to make progress.
- Teachers do not manage behaviour consistently well. Off-task behaviour sometimes goes unchallenged. Often, pupils lose concentration and learning is stalled.

The school has the following strengths

- The early years provision is good. Children make good progress from their starting points because they are curious and enthusiastic about learning.
- The teaching, tracking and monitoring of pupils' phonics skills have resulted in improved outcomes for current pupils in Year 1. The teaching of reading is effective.
- Some teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use to enable pupils to make progress.
- Pupils and parents value the interesting curriculum.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders establish a consistent system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress
 - pupils in danger of falling behind receive appropriate and timely support so that they catch up quickly
 - leaders evaluate more effectively the consistency of teaching and learning across year groups
 - the governing body challenges leaders more rigorously to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils
 - leaders check on the quality and presentation of pupils' work more effectively.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able
 - teachers make better use of information about what pupils know, understand and can do to help pupils make rapid progress.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by ensuring that teachers consistently challenge inappropriate behaviour in lessons.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The creation of the federation in January 2016 resulted in a change of leadership structure. This, coupled with subsequent turbulence in staffing, has meant that efforts to secure good-quality teaching and learning have been hampered. The current senior leadership team has been in place since September 2016. The improved capacity for leadership, since September, is beginning to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders and governors carry out their statutory duty to manage the performance of teachers; however, this is not tightly focused on improving pupils' achievement. Leaders' expectations of the progress that particular groups of pupils make, including disadvantaged pupils, are not precise or challenging enough to bring about rapid improvements, particularly when considering the use of funding for these pupils.
- Until recently, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have not had a sharp enough focus on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils. This is because systems to track and check the progress made by different groups of pupils and assessment were not secure. Changes since September 2016 are starting to remedy this issue. Middle leaders are providing advice and guidance to teachers in a timelier manner and there are encouraging signs of improvement. However, inconsistencies in teaching across year groups and subjects still remain.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are not detailed enough and do not reflect the urgency needed to accelerate pupils' progress in some subjects and year groups. This has meant that teachers have not had clear guidance to ensure that all groups of pupils, including the most able, make the progress they are capable of. Moreover, leaders have not made effective use of their checks of pupils' books and teachers' assessments to ensure that all groups of pupils are making good enough progress.
- Leaders' monitoring has not identified pupils' academic needs quickly enough to intervene and halt the recent decline in performance, particularly for disadvantaged groups. Disadvantaged pupils are not making enough progress as they move through the school because leaders do not use additional funding for them effectively.
- The school's strategies to improve outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving. The special educational needs coordinator has established a clear system for deploying staff to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. This ensures that additional funding for these pupils is used wisely. However, these new arrangements have not yet brought about the improvement in progress and attainment that is necessary for these pupils.
- Older pupils say that they find work interesting, particularly the challenges in the self-organised learning environments. Parents agree with this, commenting that the school 'provides a varied, interesting curriculum' and 'actively nurtures an approach to independent learning'. One parent said she chose the school because of its 'forward thinking educational model'. However, there is too little evidence that pupils have a sense of identity or learn enough about modern British values.
- Parents spoke highly of the 'homework learning platform' which, they say, 'supports learning through tasks, activities and discussions at home'. Pupils also say they enjoy

the topic-based homework projects.

- Leaders use the additional sports funding effectively, providing a range of sporting activities such as swimming, hockey and dodgeball for the pupils to enjoy. Pupils say they take part in sporting tournaments locally, while coaches are employed to teach skills. This is improving pupils' confidence and sense of achievement.
- The federation has recently provided support across schools and teachers now feel they are gaining the confidence and skills needed to improve their teaching. Joint planning, tracking and moderation systems are supporting the school to improve the quality of teaching.
- Leaders and teachers, particularly those in the early years, are developing positive working relationships with families and building their trust. While some parents feel that they have not been adequately supported by the school, many parents appreciate the help they receive from teachers to locate additional support, such as for pupils' behavioural and emotional needs.
- Staff who responded to the questionnaire indicate that they are well supported in their professional development. They say everyone feels valued and as a result pupils are happy, safe and enjoy their lessons. They are proud to be part of Montgomery Primary School but some feel that behaviour is not consistently managed.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been effective in holding leaders fully to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. As a result, the recent decline of standards has not been addressed quickly enough. Governors understand that their capacity to oversee the schools in the federation is limited. For example, they have not ensured that the website displays the information they are required to publish.
- Governors have not shown the urgency needed in challenging senior leaders over the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Governors do not make a careful enough analysis of the effectiveness of pupil premium funding.
- Governors have challenged the school on the progress made by other groups, such as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who speak English as an additional language and low-achieving pupils.
- Governors are committed to the work of the school and are keen to improve the capacity of leadership. They have a clear understanding of the school's position and hold leaders to account in terms of pay progression, recruitment and financial spending. The chair of the governing body is a weekly volunteer in the school and understands the particular needs of the pupils he works with, as well as the wider needs of the pupils and their families in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make sure that checks on all staff, volunteers and governors are well managed, continuously reviewed and updated.
- Safer recruitment information and policies are fully compliant. Documentary evidence shows that staff appropriately engage the support of other agencies when they suspect

that a pupil may be vulnerable. Safeguarding records are comprehensive and up to date and stored securely in an electronic system. Staff clearly understand their responsibilities and recognise that safeguarding is everyone's concern.

- Leaders and governors ensure that staff are up to date about keeping pupils safe. Training is in place, including 'Prevent' duty training, for all staff and governors and careful records kept so that new staff all receive appropriate training on appointment to the school.
- A culture of vigilance prevails in the school as leaders are extremely diligent in checking that policies are kept up to date and policy guidelines are adhered to. Parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Changes in leadership and teaching staff over time have led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching at this school. This has slowed the progress for many groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils, who have not achieved the standards expected of them.
- Leaders and teachers do not have a full picture of how well pupils are achieving because assessments of pupils' work have been of variable quality. As a result, support to help pupils catch up quickly or to challenge the most able pupils has not been put in place until very recently.
- Teachers too readily accept work that has poor spelling and grammar or where pupils have taken little care with presentation. This has stalled progress in writing for some pupils.
- Teachers do not hold consistently high enough expectations; work set is too easy for some pupils. Most-able pupils, in particular, too often complete work quickly because it is not pitched to build on their knowledge and skills. In some year groups adults do not pick this up early enough and it restricts the level of challenge for pupils. This results in pupils not achieving as well as they should, as well as them occasionally disrupting other pupils' learning.
- School leaders have put a wide range of actions in place to ensure that pupils in danger of falling behind receive the help they need to catch up. However, these actions are not evaluated well and consequently some less-effective support work continues.
- The teaching of phonics has improved since September 2016. Outcomes for current Year 1 pupils suggest that they are in line to achieve the expected level in the phonics check at the end of the year. Year 2 pupils have tailored interventions to ensure that they make progress in phonics over the year. The teaching of phonics is now more consistent across key stage 1 and in the early years, although the most able pupils are still not challenged sufficiently.
- The teaching of reading is effective. The school encourages older pupils to choose their own books to increase interest and enthusiasm. Pupils read to inspectors with fluency and expression, showing comprehension of the text and an ambitious choice of reading matter. Those pupils new to learning English, as well as those who find reading challenging, enjoy the range of books and the regular reading sessions in school which

help them to make progress.

- Homework is helping pupils to find out about their world as well as consolidating other skills by using the 'learning platform'. Parents and pupils say they enjoy working together at home on tasks set, which promote research and investigation into topics covered in lessons to consolidate learning.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge in Years 3 and 4 ensures that pupils' progress in lessons is improving. Teachers use questioning effectively as well as modelling tasks to help pupils make better progress.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils help to create a purposeful working atmosphere where children are keen to learn. Pupils say they value opportunities to earn rewards for 'good learning'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders identify pupils who need extra help and guidance, for example through provision of emotional, social and behaviour support programmes. These interventions, however, do not always impact positively on pupils' confidence and ability to interact with others or develop their learning sufficiently.
- Pupils' thinking skills are not supported effectively by the activities set in key stages 1 and 2. This is particularly true when pupils have finished their work and do not know what to do next.
- Pupils show good attitudes towards school. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, and parents agree with this. They show care for one another, while older pupils show a thoughtful attitude to younger children in the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know who they can turn to if they have any problems or worries. They understand different forms of bullying and how to keep themselves safe. They can talk with confidence about some of the risks of using the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- A few pupils in some year groups do not always demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. In some lessons, when pupils are working without direct adult supervision, they lose concentration and do not make the progress they should.
- Some parents and staff have concerns over the way behaviour is managed in the school. They say they do not feel behaviour is consistently well managed and so is not good in the school. Inspectors agree and noted during the inspection that inappropriate behaviour was not challenged by some teachers.
- Overall, attendance is in line with the national average. However, leaders fail to analyse the trends and patterns of absence thoroughly. They do not act swiftly enough

to ensure the attendance of some groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs/and or disabilities, improves.

- The school's inclusive ethos ensures that all pupils feel well cared for. They say they can share their worries with anyone in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment and progress are too variable. While pupils' progress in reading was in line with expected standards in 2016, progress in mathematics and writing was below these standards.
- Standards have declined. In 2014 and 2015 outcomes at key stages 1 and 2 were above average, with all pupils meeting expected standards and some pupils achieving higher levels. Nearly all pupils made expected progress from their starting points with many exceeding expected progress. However, in 2016 too few pupils in key stage 1 and 2, including disadvantaged pupils, met expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some most-able pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not make the progress of which they are capable. Too few of the most able pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, are currently producing high-quality work and reaching higher standards.
- Attainment in phonics is inconsistent. While additional support is in place for pupils in Year 2 in phonics, outcomes are not yet as good as in Year 1. In 2015, the number of pupils who met the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 was in line with national expectations. In 2016 this number fell, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have accurately identified what needs to be done to improve, and the proportion of current Year 1 pupils set to reach the expected level at the end of the year is higher than last year.
- The school's assessment information for current pupils shows that too many pupils are not working at the standards expected for their age. Work in books provides evidence that more disadvantaged pupils make expected progress from their starting points than is recorded in teachers' assessments. However, from their different starting points several pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are not making good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children join the school in Nursery on a part-time basis. Many enter school with knowledge and skills below those typically found for their age. From their starting points, children make good progress across all areas of learning. As a result of high expectations from teachers, most start Year 1 as confident learners with the skills and knowledge expected for their age.
- Effective arrangements for starting school ensure that children make a positive start to school life. Routines are established quickly, building children's capacity to learn.
- Most parents are appreciative of the care taken to ensure that their children are happy and make good progress. They speak highly of approachable staff. They are keenly involved in their children's learning and make valuable contributions to their child's

online learning journey.

- Over the last three years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been above average, with all groups achieving well. All children made good progress from their starting points.
- The early years leader puts equal weight and importance on each area of learning and development so that children know, understand and can do what is expected. The children are curious and enthusiastic for learning.
- Teaching is typically good and children benefit from well-planned teaching as well as self-chosen activities. Children enjoy the routine of stopping and listening together in a large group. They listen carefully, understand what is required and quickly become fully engaged in their learning after returning to their chosen activities.
- School leaders check that all possible steps are taken to ensure that children are safeguarded. There are a large number of adults who supervise the children closely. As a result of this, children understand the safety and hygiene rules as well as playing together cooperatively. Good relationships ensure that they thrive. Behaviour is good and learning moves forward.
- Children's early speaking and listening skills are well developed. Children are encouraged to take turns, wait until someone has finished speaking and say please and thank you. The youngest children listen carefully and follow instructions. They were able to describe the shape of the zoo animals' hooves as they printed them, saying, 'They are like small circles.'
- The teaching of phonics is inconsistent. Phonics is well planned and taught effectively, and with a high level of challenge, across all areas inside and outside the classroom. However, the children are not getting enough opportunities to write or apply the phonic knowledge they may have. Leaders use additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have a high level of adult support to help them make good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	113082
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10003038

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Vickery
Executive Headteacher	Martyn Boxall
Telephone number	01392 285240
Website	www.montgomery.devon.sch.uk
Email address	admin@montgomery.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about governors' information and duties, a statement of the school's ethos and values and the pupil premium on its website.
- Montgomery Primary School is a larger than average primary school and part of the Exeter Children's Federation. The school joined the federation on 1 January 2016.
- The school has a combined Nursery and Reception class, taking children part time from the age of two, four mixed-age Year 1 and Year 2 classes and two mixed-age Year 3 and Year 4 classes. The Year 5 and Year 6 mixed-age classes were reorganised into two Year 5 classes and two Year 6 classes in January 2016.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2010 and became executive headteacher across the three schools in the federation in January 2016. An acting head of school has recently been appointed.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, although a wide range of ethnic groups is

represented in the school. The number of pupils whose first language is not English is below average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly above average.
- There is an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the proportion of pupils who are on the school's register of concern is greater than that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors made visits to lessons in all classes, some of which were joint observations with the head of school or the executive headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, two members of the governing body, the head of school and assessment coordinator, the special needs coordinator, the phonics lead, the early years and key stage 1 lead. Discussions were also held with the safeguarding lead, teachers, including a newly qualified teacher, and members of the mathematics team, as well as a telephone conversation with a local authority representative.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including governing body meeting minutes, documents relating to performance management, school improvement plans, records of pupils' progress for parents and records in relation to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work, met with pupils and heard a selection of pupils read. They looked at examples of work in pupils' journals and spoke to groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons and playtimes. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, in lessons, at lunchtime in the dining hall and at play.
- The 93 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account as well as the 37 response to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors consulted with parents informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Julie Jane, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Adrian Massey	Ofsted Inspector
Adam Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Ivermee	Ofsted Inspector
Non Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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