

Inspection of Mason Moor Primary School

Helvellyn Road, Millbrook, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 4AS

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils feel safe and well cared for because the values of 'nurture, grow and achieve' permeate through all activity. Pupils behave well most of the time because, as one said, 'We know where we stand.' Expectations are clear and applied fairly and consistently. The whole-school community recognise a positive shift in culture, and behaviour is described as having been transformed.

Pupils benefit from feeling part of the wider community. Leaders seize every opportunity to build purposeful relationships linked to their character hero, 'Community Chloe'. The intergenerational club allows pupils to mix with older members of the community and share their learning. Pupils feel that they bring joy into the lives of others, as well as growing respect for people with differing life experiences. Leaders are determined to open the world up to pupils and build their aspirations. Older pupils enjoy the links made with universities and the sessions they attend.

Recent curriculum development has resulted in improved attitudes to learning. Pupils come to school to learn. They take pride in their work and want to be successful. They are making progress but still have some catching up to do, due to the deficiencies in the previous curriculum.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher's unequivocal mantra, 'Whatever it takes', is keenly felt by all. Since his appointment, he has skilfully pulled together a school community that had experienced extremely unsettled times. High expectations now run through all aspects of school life. Staff, pupils and their families respond to these expectations with pride in being part of this journey of change. One parent summed up the thoughts of many when they said, 'The headteacher has done wonders with the school, and it is quickly becoming a truly amazing place to be.'

Over time, pupils' academic outcomes have been poor. Since September 2022, improvements in the school's curriculum have been substantial and effective. The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils and relevant to the school's context. In all subject areas, there is clarity about what pupils need to learn from early years through to Year 6. This also includes informative and manageable assessment systems. Pupils are catching up quickly. However, they have not benefited from a clear learning journey over time, and this means that there are significant gaps in their knowledge and skills. In early years, children have experienced this improved curriculum for most of their time in school. This means they are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. They promote a love of reading through a range of activities. Pupils are delighted when they win tokens with which they can

select a book from the school's vending machine. Staff teach reading by using a phonics-based approach, and pupils have access to books that match the sounds they are learning. Any pupils who need extra help with their reading are identified and supported. Many are gaining confidence and fluency. However, there is still a significant number of pupils who do not yet read as well as they should.

In most subjects, teachers have strong subject knowledge. They encourage pupils to use appropriate vocabulary. For example, in science, pupils describe plants using the correct biological terms. Teachers question pupils to check their understanding of the essential learning. This is highly successful in some subjects. For example, in history, pupils can explain the concepts and impact of invasion and slavery. However, this information is not always used effectively to adapt learning. As such, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator has established clear processes to identify, track and monitor their learning. Parents are noticing the improvements. They have increased understanding about the support available for children through their participation in the school's SEND steering group.

Leaders' work to support pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. Their work around Black History Month and gender stereotypes results in pupils who are willing to challenge prejudice. They are accepting of diversity and difference. Leaders support pupils' physical and mental health through carefully considered systems, including appropriate use of external agencies. Pupils enjoy their breaktimes, where they are encouraged to use their year group equipment to be physically active. The supervising staff help them to develop their teamwork skills.

The governing body and local authority recognise the school's substantial improvements during the present academic year. They are fully committed to their part in supporting school leaders with this ongoing journey. Staff appreciate the professional development they are receiving, particularly through strong collaboration with other schools.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders create a vigilant safeguarding culture, with all staff knowing that 'it could happen here'. Extensive and frequent training means that all staff know how to identify and report any concerns. Contextual issues are well known to all. Safeguarding leaders secure support for families and refer to external agencies, when appropriate. They follow up their reported concerns with resolve. Pupils know who to talk to should they have any worries. They also know they can use the 'worry boxes' dotted around the school. Governors understand their statutory responsibilities and routinely check the effectiveness of the school's procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Improvements across the whole-school curriculum are in the early stages of implementation. As a result, pupils cannot always remember key knowledge and make links with their previous learning. Leaders should ensure that these curriculum improvements are embedded so that gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are addressed.
- Teachers do not always use checks within lessons to adapt the curriculum content to match the needs of all learners. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should continue to develop teachers' expertise at being able to make appropriate adaptations so that all pupils move on with their learning.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	116263
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10269125
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jolene Halsey
Headteacher	Daniel Constable-Phelps
Website	www.masonmoorprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in governors, school leaders and staff since the last inspection. There have been several changes in headteacher. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the

curriculum with the subject leader, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior school leaders, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspectors studied documents and records, including the school's single central record and child protection referrals. They spoke with the designated safeguarding leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspectors considered responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and additional free-text responses were considered by the inspectors. One inspector also spoke to parents on the morning of the second day of the inspection.
- The inspection team met with a range of pupils to learn their views of the school.

Inspection team

Kate Fripp, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Lower

His Majesty's Inspector

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