

Mason Moor Primary School

Helvellyn Road, Millbrook, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 4AS

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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 good school

- The headteacher leads the school with purpose and passion. After stemming the decline that took place shortly after the previous inspection, she has greatly improved the school. Her aspirations for pupils to achieve well have the enthusiastic support of staff, parents and pupils.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe at school, are proud to be part of it and appreciate all that it offers. Year 6 pupils aptly described Mason Moor as 'a good school keeping us safe'.
- The wider curriculum enriches pupils' learning and makes it interesting and relevant. The school offers pupils plenty of opportunities to enjoy learning through memorable visits.
- Pupils in the early years get off to a good start and quickly settle into the routines of learning. They enjoy their adult-led learning and their own child-initiated activities. They make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy writing and are developing a range of writing skills. However, pupils' spelling skills need developing further. Pupils are becoming more confident in mathematics.
- Leaders have identified that attendance needs to improve and are tackling a recent increase in pupils' absence, especially where it is persistent.
- End of year outcomes, in 2017, were low in reading. Leaders acted swiftly to increase the effectiveness of whole-school strategies to promote and develop reading.
- Leaders know their school very well and are driving forward the necessary improvements. They have implemented a large number of initiatives within a short timescale. They recognise that some minor inconsistencies remain in teaching and learning.
- In some lessons, pupils do not have well-matched learning tasks. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to deepen and apply their skills in a range of different ways.
- Outcomes require improvement overall, although pupils' progress is improving rapidly from their low starting points. A legacy of prior underachievement remains for pupils in upper key stage 2. In addition, some disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are not strong enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes by:
 - further strengthening teaching so that pupils' progress from their starting points is stronger, especially in upper key stage 2
 - enhancing pupils' spelling skills
 - raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Ensure that the curriculum in the core subjects provides a broader range of opportunities for pupils to deepen and apply their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides brave and decisive leadership. Since her arrival in September 2015, she has turned around a school that was regarded by the local authority as ineffective. At that time, pupils' standards were below the government's accepted minimum, parents had lost confidence and pupils were disengaged.
- Supported by her new leadership team, the headteacher set out to develop a school that has ambition and takes pride in itself. Parents, pupils, staff and governors are positive about the current school. A typical parent's tribute to the headteacher's leadership described her as having a 'majorly significant impact, to improve everything about the school, in making our children want to achieve and encouraging parental support'.
- Leaders have successfully tackled improvements to pupils' behaviour and built parents' trust in the school. They have supported new teachers to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The headteacher and governors have implemented effective policies for all aspects of the school's work. Leaders, governors and staff are determined that this work will result in consistently good achievement for all pupils.
- Senior leaders were disappointed by the 2017 outcomes, which were affected by pupils' responses to the reading test. Leaders responded energetically. They studied pupils' test papers in depth, for each subject. They identified pupils' errors and the questions they did not manage to answer, in order to renew the school's overall approaches to the teaching of reading, writing accuracy and mathematics. The resulting changes are already having an impact and improving current pupils' skills.
- Leaders know their school well and keep a firm grip on its performance. They constantly review the school's priorities and select current improvement actions wisely. A well-trained and highly motivated teaching staff support the leadership team. Teachers appreciate the way in which the assistant headteachers help them to develop the quality of their classroom practice, for example through coaching.
- There is a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school. The school's use of additional funding addresses their identified barriers to learning. Currently, the funding is used to provide enriching experiences and to support disadvantaged pupils to have better levels of attendance. Their academic progress is carefully tracked. Additional teaching addresses any gaps in learning to accelerate progress from starting points. However, in some classes, despite support, disadvantaged pupils achieve less well than other pupils.
- The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures that pupils' needs are correctly identified and provides well-matched support strategies for individuals. She carefully checks the progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, to make sure that they fully access all lessons and learn well. The SENCo recognises that her next step is to evaluate the quality of classroom provision for this key group of pupils and support all teaching staff to develop further expertise.

- A broad range of curriculum subjects engages pupils through interesting topics that come to life through memorable experiences, such as visits to the theatre and the New Forest Wildlife Park. Year 6 talked excitedly about their residential visit to Devon.
- Pupils enjoy the clubs that take place before and after school, such as those for completing homework or the targeted 'booster' classes. They are enthusiastic about their sports clubs, which help them to participate in inter-school competitions.
- Pupils develop understanding and respect for others who are different from themselves. For example, they understand that some pupils have a disability and need different care and support. Older pupils have a strong sense of why it is important to treat people fairly. The elected school council and the school charter help all pupils to understand what it means to be a good citizen.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through engaging topics and class reading books. For example, a study of the famous artist Gustav Klimt linked pupils' artwork with their reflections about what angels mean to them.
- Leaders' strategies are helping pupils to make rapid progress in reading, writing accuracy and mathematics. The curriculum in core subjects enables pupils to practise skills but does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply them at a greater depth.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and have a realistic view of its strengths and areas for development. They have become a more effective team during the past year, with the recent addition of a number of new members. Consequently, the governing body continues to develop its skills and expertise.
- Led by an effective chair, governors are supportive of the school and are committed to developing their own skills and expertise in order to support the school's continued improvement. Governors offer challenge by asking senior leaders searching questions. They are resolute that standards must improve and are holding leaders to account for this.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties diligently for areas such as safeguarding and financial management. By maintaining a regular overview of the school's procedures, they take an active role in the school's life. This is proving particularly helpful in promoting pupils' good attendance. Governors know how additional funding is used, such as the pupil premium. They know that they need to check the use of this funding and the impact on pupils' performance, but do not do so with sufficient rigour.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors fully understand their duty to keep every pupil safe. Recently, the school made important improvements to visitor reception and site security to benefit all pupils but particularly the safety of children in the early years. The deputy designated safeguarding lead makes sure that regular and comprehensive training

keeps all staff and governors up to date with safeguarding regulations and recommendations.

- Staff know pupils individually and offer each a high standard of nurture and care. Pupils say they feel safe. They learn how to keep safe and healthy, including in their relationships, when they are out in the community and when they are online.
- Leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures are up to date. Thorough checks have been carried out on all adults working in school. All statutory safety requirements are met, including in the early years. Records are carefully maintained and kept secure using the school's electronic system. This helps leaders to ensure that families have access to the support they require.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is effective because senior leaders have successfully shared their expertise in English and mathematics. Lessons are carefully planned to structure learning. Teachers check what pupils already know, which means they adapt learning tasks well. They carefully match their questioning and guidance to meet the needs of groups and individuals.
- Pupils say that the feedback they receive during the lesson helps them to improve their work, particularly in writing. They say that one of the reasons they enjoy their lessons is because teachers help them to find answers for themselves.
- Teaching assistants are skilled in their support for pupils who experience barriers to understanding. They provide high-quality opportunities for small-group work that help older pupils to catch up.
- Reception children and key stage 1 pupils have effective opportunities to learn phonics, linked to actions and writing. Pupils' reading books are matched to their abilities, and they confidently sound out words they do not know. When pupils struggle, they are quickly identified for extra teaching.
- Pupils' workbooks in mathematics show that all have regular opportunities to become fluent in their understanding of number. Increasingly, pupils are able to use their number knowledge to reason and solve problems. For pupils in Years 5 and 6, their rapid recall of basic number facts, such as multiplication tables, is strengthening.
- Teachers successfully help pupils to become writers by supporting the development of their ideas, and their ability to plan content and make their writing interesting to the reader. As pupils become more adept, they have increasing opportunities to develop their own style. However, some technical aspects of writing, such as spelling, are not as strong as other aspects such as pupils' ability to craft their writing.
- Pupils enjoy writing for real purposes and making connections across subjects. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used facts from their history topic to write entertaining biographies of King Henry VIII.
- More recently, teachers have improved the teaching of reading. This has included introducing pupils to challenging and inspiring literature. The more structured approach to reading is helping pupils to become fluent, to acquire the stamina to read at speed and at length, and to better understand the content of their reading. As a

result, older pupils are able to answer complex questions about what they are reading, and to find information from the text.

- Pupils persevere with learning tasks and value their lessons. Year 6 pupils realise that being a successful learner will help them when they transfer to secondary school. One of their parents told inspectors that, 'Teachers put a lot of time and effort into making learning fun, interesting and rewarding.'
- Parents have accurate information about their children's progress. During the inspection, teachers held parents' consultations. Parents appreciated these discussions, which demonstrated the strength of the relationships built between school and home.
- There has been considerable pace to the initiatives to improve teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes. Leaders know that some inconsistencies remain. Teaching over time shows that, on occasion, it is pitched to the majority of pupils and does not meet the needs of the most able or those pupils who need to catch up. This is because the planned task is the driver rather than consideration of pupils' prior learning. As a consequence, pupils do not always have the chance to apply their learning at greater depth.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are friendly and caring. They make sure that no one is without a friend to play with during breaktimes. Pupils are immensely proud of their school. Inspectors lost count of how many pupils warmly welcomed them and asked about their day.
- The school promotes five learning values, or behaviours for learning, that pervade the school. These help each pupil to be a 'respectful, independent, happy and healthy, confident and ambitious learner'. Pupils and teachers developed these values collaboratively and everyone understands what they stand for. Older pupils reflected on how the values also help them to be sensitive towards others.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe, including how to use technology safely and responsibly, road safety, including 'bikeability', and stranger danger. An impressive display based on promoting anti-bullying reminded pupils how to 'Be You, Be Brave, Be Heard' and helped pupils to understand that there are different sorts of bullying. Parents and pupils say that bullying sometimes happens at school but that it is easy to ask for help so it is sorted out.
- The school is inclusive, supporting all pupils and families in the community by making them feel welcome. Leaders recently established two nurture groups that are successfully providing for pupils who need extra support for their social, emotional and mental health needs. Parents say that the school helps their children to develop their self-esteem and to overcome any anxieties.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Years 5 and 6 pupils provide good role models, which help the school to be orderly. Pupils are motivated by rewards for behaving thoughtfully. They think that the consequences of breaking the school's rules are fair.
- Teachers make use of the clear policy that successfully promotes good behaviour in the classroom and around the school. The school's positive approach is used less effectively in the lunch hall.
- Staff skilfully manage the needs of emotionally vulnerable pupils so that these pupils develop personally and academically. A small number of pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties receive individual support to help them learn how to manage their feelings. Nurture groups and various 'on report' strategies meet the needs of a small minority of pupils. These have contributed towards the sharp reduction in serious incidents and exclusions.
- In 2017, persistent absence was much higher than in other schools nationally. Leaders renewed the school's attendance strategy, including by increasing the support and challenge for parents. Office staff are active in following up all absence and swiftly refer concerns to the school's attendance team. Currently, pupils attend well and persistent absence has declined. Leaders accept that this work on absence needs more time to have a proven positive impact on the school's overall attendance figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes are too inconsistent to be good, although practice in most aspects of teaching is improving. Current pupils in upper key stage 2 have a lot of learning to catch up on. They are working hard to do so, helped by their teachers' commitment and expertise. Focused teaching is also helping some disadvantaged pupils to make better progress. However, disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are not as high as those of other pupils.
- In 2017, outcomes were inconsistent at the end of key stage 2. Progress in writing was well above the national average, while mathematics was in line. Progress in reading was weaker. About one quarter of pupils moved on to secondary school with attainment at the expected standard in all three subject areas. However, disadvantaged pupils made less progress than other pupils, both in the school and nationally.
- In 2017, work done to develop pupils' confidence as writers paid off and Year 6 pupils' outcomes in writing were strong. However, a high proportion of pupils showed weaknesses in those technical aspects of writing tested in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test. Spelling was, and remains, a particularly weak area.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. A few pupils did not make strong progress from their starting points. Similarly, in Year 1, a few pupils did not make effective progress in the phonics screening check, given their prior attainment in reading at the end of the Reception Year. Disadvantaged pupils achieved less well than other pupils.

- Outcomes for current pupils are improving strongly now that all teaching strategies are firmly in place. Most pupils are making rapid progress in all subjects as a result of teachers' effective use of detailed assessment information that shows them what pupils can and cannot do.
- Leaders are aware that a legacy of prior underachievement remains for pupils in upper key stage 2. Inspectors saw that teachers and leaders are doing all they can to ensure that pupils are increasingly well prepared for their next stage of education. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are working impressively hard in response to their teachers' efforts.
- The school's own tracking information shows that, in most year groups, differences remain between the outcomes of disadvantaged and other pupils. Pupils' workbooks show that disadvantaged pupils are now making strong progress from their starting points. Due to prior underachievement, their outcomes are not securely good.
- The school's own analysis of pupils' attainment shows there is an increasing proportion of pupils who are 'on track' in each year group to meet leaders' demanding targets. Leaders are determined that pupils will reach these. Pupils in some year groups have much to achieve in the months that lie ahead. Their current work shows that good outcomes across all subject areas are not yet certain.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years team is well led. They have a confident understanding of the curriculum and know each child in the class as an individual. Children settle quickly into school because the adults support them so well.
- Most children enter the school achieving well below what is typical for their age. Many of them have not attended any pre-school provision. Teaching is effective and enables children to make rapid progress. Consequently, in 2017, two thirds of children achieved a good level of development. Children's attainment at the end of Reception is below the national average.
- Teachers' assessments of current children's progress show that children are developing skills effectively in all areas of learning. Teachers are ambitious for the most able children and want to ensure that they exceed the good level of development. Current children's learning and assessments show that, from their starting points, disadvantaged children make progress at a rate that is at least in line with that of other children.
- Teachers give particular focus to children's learning in communication and language, literacy and mathematics. Each of these is well taught, with children benefiting from a sensory approach that makes learning practical and fun. For example, in an adult-led mathematics session, children tackled addition sentences very capably, supported by placing coloured eggs in a nest. They looked forward to the imminent arrival of real eggs that will hatch into chickens.
- Teachers routinely identify a challenge for the following week to check that children can apply their developing skills. Inspectors observed children recalling their earlier learning by ordering bottles according to whether they were full, empty or at the halfway mark.

- Children are friendly and look out for each other. They know how to find things and tidy them away. All children showed a high level of independence in their well-equipped classroom. A few of the girls were particularly communicative and clearly liked to organise others.
- Leaders are reflective and seek ways in which to develop the provision further. For example, they have improved the way that Reception children are ready for Year 1 by giving them confidence to move on and ensuring that their needs will be well met.
- Parents have daily opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. They are invited into the class for the first 15 minutes of each morning to work alongside their children during the first learning activity of the day. Parents readily told inspectors that their children have made good progress since starting in Reception.
- Children show an interest in using their basic skills when they learn through their own child-initiated learning activities. A group of girls in the outdoor area looked for items in the sand tray to match the number they had just been learning about. Leaders are aware that there are not enough opportunities routinely available for children to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills when they direct their own learning.

School details

Unique reference number	116263
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10040715

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	262
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tina Selby
Headteacher	Emma Kerrigan-Draper
Telephone number	023 8039 0140
Website	www.masonmoorprimary.co.uk
Email address	info@masonmoorprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2014

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial changes to staffing and governance. The school now has a new headteacher and chair of governors. All senior leaders arrived at the school at the same time as the headteacher, as did a number of newly qualified teachers. Most middle leaders are new to their posts. Almost all governors are new to the school.
- The school has received support from a school improvement officer each term, brokered through the local authority.
- In 2017, the school met the government floor standard that sets out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress for primary schools.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.

- Most of the pupils who attend the school are White British.
- Almost two thirds of pupils in the school are disadvantaged. One fifth of pupils are identified as having SEN and/or disabilities. These proportions are much higher than in most other primary schools.
- Since the school was last inspected, it no longer has a specially resourced provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, more specifically, moderate learning difficulties. The specially resourced provision continues to be based on the Mason Moor site but the pupils are now on roll at Springwell School. As this provision is no longer a part of the school, it was not considered during this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons and undertook four learning walks focused on the breadth and balance of the curriculum and the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Almost all of the visits to lessons were carried out jointly with the headteacher or one of the assistant headteachers.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with eight members of the governing body, including the chair. She also spoke to two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the school's published information for the past three years and reviewed all information on its website. They examined a wide range of the school's documents related to: safeguarding; attendance; funding for disadvantaged pupils; self-evaluation and improvement planning; and minutes of the governing body's meetings.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's own assessment information and scrutinised a large sample of pupils' books, particularly in English and mathematics. They heard eight pupils read and discussed their books with them.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes, in lessons and around the school. To gather their views of the school, inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and on the playground. They also met groups of pupils more formally.
- In addition to speaking to a number of parents, inspectors considered written comments from 29 parents, and 12 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They considered 16 staff survey responses and took into account the school's own recent survey information.

Inspection team

Linda Jacobs, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Parfoot	Ofsted Inspector

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