

# Mount Pellon Primary Academy

Battinson Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 4RG

## Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Trust and school leaders have brought about a rapid increase in pupils' attainment at all key stages.
- The principal, senior leaders and trust leaders have worked together effectively to improve the quality of leadership and management and of teaching.
- Accurate self-evaluation and strong systems of accountability have led to effective action.
- Whole-school and trust approaches to teaching and learning have created a positive culture for learning in classrooms.
- School and trust professional development has led to consistency in the teaching and assessment of reading, writing and mathematics.
- The effective teaching of writing enables pupils to write at length in their own words and with a good standard of presentation.
- In mathematics, teachers' good use of resources helps pupils to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts and methods.
- Effective teaching strategies and a good range of books encourage pupils to read for a purpose and for pleasure.
- Pupils behave well. They have positive attitudes to learning. They cooperate with each other and staff. Pupils dress smartly. Attendance is good.
- At the last inspection attainment was low. In 2018, attainment was much closer to the national averages in the early years, at key stage 1 and key stage 2. Pupils are making good progress at all key stages.
- Effective leadership and teaching in the early years promote children's development well. The outdoor areas are underdeveloped.
- In a few classes, teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good.
- The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is inconsistent due to past weaknesses in leadership and management.
- The framework for teaching subjects other than English and mathematics does not give effective enough guidance for developing pupils' subject skills and knowledge in the wider curriculum.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen the consistency of good teaching and assessment and continue to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
  - giving precise guidance and clear examples to enable pupils to succeed in a task
  - checking pupils' understanding before starting a task or moving on to the next task
  - ensuring that all groups and individuals within a class have the right level of challenge, including the most and least able.
- Improve the leadership and management of the provision for pupils with SEND, by:
  - ensuring that plans for extra support meet pupils' identified needs more consistently
  - monitoring and evaluating the impact of support regularly and effectively.
- Further develop the provision in the early years, by:
  - developing a high-quality outdoor environment
  - using teachers' observational assessment to identify children's next steps in development.
- Improve the teaching and learning of knowledge and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics by planning and evaluating the wider curriculum more systematically.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the last inspection, the trust's and school leaders' vision, ambition and drive have brought about rapid improvement in outcomes at all key stages, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- The principal and senior leaders have created a positive ethos in the school. Staff are committed to bring about improvements and work well as a team. Teaching and support staff are highly positive about the school and its leadership and management. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging and are proud of their uniform and the school.
- The principal has developed a strong leadership team who give practical guidance for teaching and learning. The tailored coaching and professional development from school and trust leaders have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching. However, a few inconsistencies remain.
- Leaders' accurate self-evaluation identifies the correct actions to bring about improvement. Trust and school leaders' scrutiny of learning in classrooms and of pupils' progress leads to effective action to tackle identified weaknesses. Senior leaders' effective implementation of performance management has led to decisive action to tackle weaknesses in teaching.
- Senior subject leaders have developed and applied well-thought-out approaches to the curriculum for reading, writing and mathematics. Some are trust approaches, others are in-house. These strategies promote a positive culture for learning and promote good consistency and quality in teaching and learning.
- Leaders have rightly prioritised improvement in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Leaders have taken steps to improve the wider curriculum, but these are at an early stage of development. Pupils apply their writing skills well in other curriculum subjects. Pupils have little opportunity to apply their mathematical skills in science.
- The curriculum has local themes to interest pupils. These draw together the learning in different subjects. Leaders have begun to inspire learning by providing pupils with a wider range of visits and visitors. The range of subjects is suitably broad. However, curriculum plans are not sufficiently precise about how pupils develop subject knowledge and skills over time. There is some lack of logic in the sequence of subject topics and activities. The trust is developing a framework for the wider curriculum, supported by planned professional development.
- The programme of assemblies and lessons promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about British values and about people from different faiths and cultures. Pupil ambassadors and the work of the school council promote understanding of democracy. The breakfast club provides a calm and nurturing start to the day with healthy food and a range of games and activities, including reading.

- The sports premium funding supports participation and competition in traditional sports, including by disadvantaged pupils. The school is planning to extend the range of sporting and other physical activities.
- Leaders have used funding for the pupil premium effectively to increase the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. Staff have taken effective action to ensure good attendance and behaviour by disadvantaged pupils.
- Inconsistent planning for the provision for pupils with SEND has resulted in a lack of accurate and prompt support for a few pupils. Leaders have not reviewed the impact of actions often enough. Leaders have not always sought parents' views. These weaknesses are due to temporary staff absence. Current leaders have begun to implement realistic plans to rectify these deficiencies. Spending on externally commissioned services has been effective in meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities.
- Leaders have taken steps to increase the involvement of parents in the life of the school, to enable them to understand what goes on in classrooms and to celebrate pupils' learning.

### **Governance of the school**

- The trust's vision and its management systems give strong direction and support for school leadership, management and accountability. Trust-wide approaches to the curriculum, resources and assessment promote the consistency of teaching. Trust subject directors have given effective support for teaching in English and mathematics. Trust staff are passionate about school improvement and have close working relationships with senior and subject leaders.
- The trust has given strong support and challenge for senior and subject leaders. The trust knows the school well and understands the strengths and weaknesses in performance.
- The academy council is advisory and makes a good contribution to the challenge and support for the school. Governors of the academy council know the school well and offer a useful local perspective on school improvement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff training and clear procedures for acting on concerns contribute to the positive culture for safeguarding. Training is up to date and checks on recruitment meet requirements. Staff log any concerns and key staff can access records quickly to evaluate patterns in behaviour. Leaders take effective and prompt action to follow up any safeguarding concerns and to make referrals. Staff take proper account of the views of parents and pupils. Leaders of safeguarding have good links with outside agencies. Leaders follow the correct procedure for reporting to the local authority any children missing from education. The taught curriculum includes locally identified risks to safety.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Good teaching and assessment have brought about a rapid improvement in pupils' learning and outcomes at all key stages.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils have led to good engagement by pupils. Teachers' clear expectations and effective classroom routines promote good behaviour for learning and enable pupils to get on with their work. Pupils work hard and concentrate well.
- The teaching of writing, over a sequence of lessons, effectively promotes pupils' independence and helps them to apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to help pupils to apply features of grammar and language to their writing. As a result, many pupils write at length and express themselves in their own words. Pupils write to a good standard in subjects across the wider curriculum. Standards of handwriting and presentation are good.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) enables most pupils to develop secure basic skills in reading. Teachers use a good range of strategies to promote reading for pleasure, develop stamina and improve comprehension. Pupils have access to a good range of books. Focused tasks direct their reading well. Pupils enjoy selecting books and recording what they read. The purposeful use of adults and comfortable seating promote reading for pleasure.
- In mathematics, teachers' use of physical objects and pictorial representations is enabling pupils to understand abstract concepts and mathematical methods. Teachers' effective questioning gets pupils to think more carefully about problems in mathematics and develops their reasoning.
- Teachers use assessment well to review pupils' learning, identify gaps in their understanding and plan the next lesson. This has contributed to the increased progress made by pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support to enable pupils to catch up with learning.
- In a few classes, teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good. On occasion, work lacks challenge, including for the most and least able. At times, pupils lack precise guidance and clear examples to enable them to succeed in a task. Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding before pupils start a task or move on to the next task. As a result, pupils sometimes do not have enough time to practise new learning.
- Teachers and support staff provide effective support for pupils with SEND in key stage 1. However, support is not as effective at key stage 2. This is due to a weakness in the rigour with which staff assess, plan, meet and review pupils' special educational needs.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They want to please adults and do the right thing. They take pride in their work and their appearance.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility as mathematics and class ambassadors and to lead debates in English. The school council actively contributes to school developments.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Pupils spoke confidently about how to keep themselves safe online. Staff have considered the risks pupils may face in the locality and work with outside agencies to promote safety. For example, a police officer led a knife-crime workshop and the school ran a road safety workshop following a road accident.
- Pupils get on well with each other. When falling out or bullying does happen, adults manage this well and prevent repeated incidents.
- Staff assessment of pupils who are new to English leads to extra support to develop pupils' functional English. This helps new arrivals to integrate into the life of the school.
- The quality of the planning and review of provision for pupils with SEND have been inconsistent. Leaders have plans in place to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the support for pupils with SEND.
- Staff successfully encourage pupils from different ethnic backgrounds to play and work together. Pupils can explain why it is important to treat people from different faiths or countries equally. They have not had an opportunity to learn about some aspects of diversity, such as same-sex relationships.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils respond well to teachers' gestures and instructions. Classes have a calm and orderly atmosphere. Staff use teaching and behaviour policies well to communicate expectations and manage behaviour. Pupils have a good understanding of what the school expects of them.
- When adults are not supervising pupils, a few pupils do not always conduct themselves as well as they do when an adult is supervising them.
- Dedicated staff work effectively with pupils who display challenging behaviour. This has reduced the number of occasions when teachers send pupils out of the classroom due to misbehaviour. Staff analyse triggers for poor behaviour and tailor support which has enabled pupils to manage their own behaviour in situations they find difficult.
- Fixed-term exclusions have involved very few pupils. Records show that the reasons for exclusion have been justified.

- Adults tackle instances of derogatory language quickly by speaking with pupils and parents. The school keeps a thorough log of incidents and staff check to make sure they are not repeated.
- Attendance and rates of persistent absence are in line with national averages. The school has effective systems for monitoring the attendance of pupils. Staff follow up any concerns about attendance promptly, which encourages good attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Outcomes have risen significantly at all key stages. The improvement in outcomes is the result of good leadership of teaching and learning, the sharp use of assessment to inform teaching and effective support for pupils falling behind.
- Since the last inspection, leaders and teaching staff have brought about a rapid increase in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 1. Despite pupils' improved attainment and progress, the proportions of pupils that reached the expected standard, or above, in reading and writing remained below the national averages in 2018. Attainment in mathematics has increased more significantly. The proportion that met the expected standard almost met the national average in 2018. The proportion that reached a greater depth in mathematics exceeded the national average. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils that reached the required standard in phonics was below average. This year, leaders have improved the organisation of phonics teaching to focus more sharply on pupils' needs and to increase progress.
- At key stage 2, there has been a similarly rapid increase in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics over the last three years. In 2018 in mathematics, the proportion reaching the expected standard, or above, was close to the national average. The proportion reaching the higher standard was above the national average. However, the proportions reaching the expected standards in reading and writing remained below the national average.
- At key stage 2, the progress made by pupils has improved significantly in reading and mathematics. In 2018 in Year 6, the progress made by pupils in reading and writing was in line with the national averages. In mathematics, pupils' progress was above average and in the top 20% nationally.
- Within the school, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is similar to that of non-disadvantaged pupils. At key stage 2 in 2018, Year 6 disadvantaged pupils made better progress in mathematics than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- Current pupils are making good progress. Pupils have made slower progress in a few classes that have had inconsistent teaching over time. Leaders are taking effective steps to overcome these weaknesses. Attainment in writing lags behind that in other subjects. However, good teaching is developing the quality of current pupils' writing effectively.

- The progress of pupils with SEND is too variable. Some support is effective and meets pupils' special educational needs, includes them fully in the learning and results in good progress. In other cases, inconsistency in the quality and implementation of individual education plans has led to a lack of focus and support for pupils with SEND. Consequently, a few pupils with SEND have not made enough progress.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Good teaching and leadership in the early years has enabled children to make good progress from their starting points on entry to Nursery and Reception, which are typically below average. Since the last inspection, attainment has increased markedly. In 2018, the proportion of children that reached a good level of development was in line with the national average. In addition, all disadvantaged children achieved this standard.
- The well-organised indoor environments in both Nursery and Reception have a wide range of high-quality resources. The number of challenges in the Reception is appropriately greater than in Nursery. Children learn and play calmly and purposefully. They enjoy the activities, behave well and play cooperatively with each other.
- Adults interact well with children in planned activities and child-initiated play. Adults take opportunities to carefully develop children's vocabulary and mathematical knowledge.
- The strong focus on basic skills in early reading and writing enables children to write by themselves and to write words that rhyme. On occasion, adults ask children to write sentences before they can write individual letters. Leaders have correctly prioritised the further development of writing.
- Effective phonics teaching methodically reinforces and extends children's knowledge of letters and sounds. The range of multi-sensory approaches helps children to enjoy the learning and to remember letters and the sounds they make.
- The new leader of the early years has made significant improvements to the learning environment in a short time. The outdoor environment is less well-developed, which limits the range of opportunities for children's development.
- Professional development has improved the way adults model the language and vocabulary they want children to use. It has also sharpened the use of observation to assess children's development. However, assessments do not always identify the next steps in learning across the areas of development.
- Parents join in the stay-and-play sessions and become better informed about how to support children's learning. Leaders are planning to increase parents' involvement by running regular sessions to show what children have learned.
- Staff use their effective links with external providers to meet the needs of children with SEND effectively.
- The early years meets safeguarding and welfare requirements.

## School details

Unique reference number	139270
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10048299

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Les Walton
Principal	Chris Walton
Telephone number	01422 349618
Website	<a href="http://www.mountpellonacademy.org">www.mountpellonacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:chris.walton@mountpellon.calderdale.sch.uk">chris.walton@mountpellon.calderdale.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils arrive or leave the school at other than the normal times. A significant minority have not been at the school for the whole of the key stage. The number on roll has fallen in recent years.
- The school offers all children in Nursery a full-time place. There is a high take-up by parents.
- The school provides a breakfast club.

- The school is a member of the Northern Education Trust. The board of trustees has a chief executive officer who leads the trust. The trust board is the responsible body. The governors on the school's academy council act in an advisory capacity.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and carried out some observations jointly with senior and subject leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and reviewed samples of pupils' books with school leaders.
- They met with pupils, heard pupils read and observed and talked with pupils around school.
- Inspectors met with the principal and senior and middle leaders. An inspector met the executive principal, a subject director and a data analyst from the trust. He also spoke online with the deputy and chief executive officers of the trust. An inspector also met with the chair of the academy council.
- Inspectors evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school's monitoring and evaluation; information about pupils' progress; and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors spoke to several parents before school. There were too few responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire to take account of.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses from staff and four responses from pupils to the Ofsted online questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tim Scargill	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Hussey	Ofsted Inspector

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