

Inspection of Mallard Primary School

Cedar Road, Balby, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 9HU

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Mallard Primary is a warm and happy school. Leaders know the pupils and community very well. Pupils enjoy the good-quality experiences in music, art and dance on offer at the school. Leaders are ambitious for pupils and plan these experiences to raise pupils' aspirations.

Leaders have improved the quality of education since the previous inspection. Pupils are making better progress, especially in reading and mathematics. A more coherent curriculum has been developed in some other subjects. However, there is still much to do to ensure that learning builds securely over time and pupils can use prior learning to make greater progress.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say that they feel safe here. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their emotions to support their mental well-being. They say that adults in the school listen to them. Most pupils show high levels of respect for adults and for each other.

Behaviour for learning is generally good. Pupils focus well in the lessons that have been planned well. They move around the school quietly and calmly, with a focus on 'wonderful walking'. Some pupils do not always behave as well at less structured times. Pupils say that occasionally bullying or discrimination occurs at playtimes and it is not always dealt with swiftly enough.

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

Following the previous inspection, leaders recognised that there was much to do to improve the curriculum. Leaders introduced new resources to support teachers to plan structured, sequenced lessons in reading and mathematics. These approaches have been embedded over time and have started to have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Senior leaders have ensured that children from Reception class onwards learn to read quickly. They have introduced a systematic approach to phonics teaching. Staff are trained to ensure that they understand the approach and follow it with consistency. Pupils take home books that help them to practise the skills and knowledge taught in class. Leaders use regular assessment to identify any pupils who are falling behind. However, teachers do not always use these assessments effectively to close gaps in pupils' knowledge. Currently, not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to catch up quickly enough.

The curriculum introduced to teach mathematics is used well by some teachers to deliver effective lessons that build on prior learning. Pupils in some classes are confident to talk about this learning and are making good progress. However, this is not consistent across the school. Some teachers have adopted different approaches and the curriculum is not always being delivered as leaders intend.

Leaders have started to improve the curriculum designed for early years. However, this is still in the earliest stages of implementation. Leaders know that more can be done to ensure that learning builds from Nursery into Reception class and then progressively through the school.

Improvements to the wider curriculum subjects have started to be made. Leaders have ensured that most subjects are coherently planned, which helps to support teachers to build learning over time. Pupils talk with confidence about their learning in subjects such as design and technology and geography. Subjects such as religious education (RE) are not as well developed. Consequently, pupils' learning about different faiths and religions is not as secure. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is not yet taught consistently across the school. This means that some pupils have a limited understanding of different families, British values and equality.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the support they need to access the full curriculum. Teachers carefully target resources or change the environment to help pupils focus on learning. The pastoral team supports pupils to build their self-confidence as they learn life skills in the cookery sessions.

Opportunities to explore talent go beyond the planned curriculum. Leaders engage companies such as The Royal Ballet to enable some pupils to experience the best of teaching in dance. All pupils can attend after-school clubs, including those for yoga, drama and story. Pupils are excited to create artwork, play music or recite poetry in the annual Eisteddfod.

There is a renewed vigour in the governing body in the school. Governors recognise that leaders must be held to account more effectively to ensure that they themselves are aware of what is happening in the school and the impact of school improvement plans.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their pupils and families well. They have a team approach to managing concerns. They seek help and support appropriately from outside agencies. Staff receive regular training to understand the risks pupils face in the local area. They are clear about how to report any concerns. There are rigorous staff training records in place and safeguarding is a high priority in the school.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe and are encouraged to talk to staff about any worries that they have. Leaders then ensure that these worries are followed up through targeted work with individual pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Children in early years experience a range of activities that are not always planned to build on prior learning from Nursery. This is because the curriculum for early years has not been planned sufficiently from the very first days of school. Leaders need to review and develop the early years provision, establish a clear and coherent curriculum for early years, and ensure that all staff have the highest expectations of what children can achieve. This will then enable children to be better prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Teachers do not always follow the curriculum that leaders intend. This results in inconsistency in approaches and, at times, a lack of ambition for what pupils will learn. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum across all subjects is well understood by teachers and that they consistently plan lessons that support pupils to know more and remember more.
- There is an inconsistent approach across the school to helping pupils who are finding reading difficult. Consequently, in some classes, help is not sufficient or timely enough to help them to make progress. Leaders must do more to ensure that all pupils who need extra support are identified and supported to catch up.
- Assessment is not used well enough to enable teachers to plan lessons that ensure that pupils make good progress. An example of this is the inconsistent approach across the school to helping pupils who are finding reading difficult. Consequently, in some classes, lessons are not matched to pupils' needs, or help is not sufficient or timely enough to support pupils to make progress. Leaders must regularly check that teachers are adapting lessons and identifying pupils who need extra help, so that they can be helped to keep up or catch up.
- Staff do not understand the systems that leaders have introduced to record concerns around behaviour. This means that leaders do not know about the use of inappropriate language or bullying quickly enough and so cannot address these. Leaders must ensure that all staff are sufficiently trained and systems are monitored robustly.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	134235
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10212276
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Dougherty
Headteacher	Theresa Siverns
Website	www.mallardprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has Nursery provision.
- The school is located in one of the most disadvantaged parts of the country. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than the national average.
- The school has a breakfast club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.

- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and the leader for SEND. Meetings were also held with subject leaders, class teachers, staff from across the school and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, design technology and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at books and samples of work.
- During the inspection, a range of safeguarding information was scrutinised, including the school's policies and records. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and adults.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View, including comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

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