

Mistley Norman Church of England Primary School

Remercie Road, Mistley, Manningtree, Essex CO11 1LS

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2018

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- A legacy of poor teaching has not enabled pupils to achieve as well as they might. While the quality of teaching is improving, it remains too variable. As a result, pupils, including some who are disadvantaged, do not make consistently good progress across the school.
- Outcomes at key stage 2 require improvement. Although outcomes of current pupils are improving, variability remains in pupils' progress between subjects. Writing and mathematics lag behind reading.
- Some teachers do not take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning or do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do.
- Learning activities do not routinely meet the needs and interests of all pupils. Some work is too easy, especially for the most able pupils.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their basic writing and mathematics skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils to develop their subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in, for example, science, history and geography.
- The school's behaviour policy is applied consistently by all staff, including visiting adults. However, some pupils, parents and carers are concerned that the poor behaviour of a few pupils sometimes interrupts learning in class.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and her team have established a caring community ethos.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are making good progress following improvements to the support they receive in class.
- Leaders are successfully promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils feel safe, and they look out for, and get on well with, each other.
- Children get off to a good start because provision in the early years is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
 - all teachers make better use of assessment information to plan lessons that meet the needs of all groups of pupils
 - all teachers deliver lessons that are sufficiently challenging to enable the most able pupils to achieve the higher standards
 - teachers and staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in all subjects across the curriculum
 - teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills in English and mathematics in other subjects
 - teachers continue to promote positive learning behaviours across all classes
 - pupils develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects, including science, history and geography, in greater depth.
- Improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - all groups of pupils are supported well, including disadvantaged pupils, to enable them to make consistently good progress
 - a higher proportion of pupils reach at least the expected standards for their age, particularly in writing and mathematics, by the end of key stage 2
 - the proportions of the most able pupils who achieve the higher standards by the end of key stages 1 and 2 increase so that they are more in line with the national averages.
- Improve leadership and governance by ensuring that:
 - training provides staff with the skills and subject knowledge to effectively teach foundation subjects
 - the expertise from leaders across the trust is used to develop the skills of middle leaders so that they are sufficiently strong to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching
 - leaders check more closely on the impact of additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since her arrival, the headteacher has shown determination to improve the achievement of pupils across the school. She has raised expectations and challenged underperformance. This has contributed to improving outcomes in the early years and in some areas of the curriculum throughout the school.
- On her arrival, the headteacher re-established the school's clear values and raised the aspirations and expectations of pupils and their families. Pupils are regularly rewarded for showing key behaviour and learning attitudes that the school strives to develop among pupils. Evidence shows that this has had a considerable impact on pupils in the last 18 months. Many pupils' attitudes to learning, and their behaviour, have improved significantly.
- The headteacher has significantly enhanced the early years setting with the introduction of the effective on-site Nursery provision. Through strong appointments, the strategic development of the setting and the good leadership of the early years leader, the Nursery has swiftly established itself as a strength of the school, complementing the good provision in Reception.
- While the headteacher has improved some aspects of the school's work, actions have not yet contributed to consistently effective teaching, learning and assessment in all year groups. Therefore, variations in quality remain.
- The headteacher, working with one of the governors, tracks pupils' progress every half term, and holds reviews with teachers about the progress of pupils in their classes. This is helping to make teachers more accountable for pupils' progress. The headteacher has not shied away from difficult conversations with staff where it is evident that pupils are not progressing well enough.
- Monitoring of groups of pupils within the school is still developing. Although there are often small numbers in each year group, the headteacher now recognises that this can sometimes mask, for example, that the most able pupils are not doing as well as they could.
- Leadership of special educational needs is strong. Processes are in place to ensure that pupils' needs are quickly identified, programmes of support begun and progress regularly checked. The special educational needs lead is determined that teachers and teaching assistants take responsibility for the progress of pupils in their classes who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, pupils are well supported and their progress is good.
- All of the staff at Mistley Norman are committed to developing a strong community ethos and are building even closer links, for example, with parents of children in the Nursery provision.
- Led by the headteacher, the curriculum has been reviewed. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, there is more work to do to ensure that pupils develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in sufficient depth in the wider

curriculum. Pupils say they like the trips that they sometimes go on and the visitors who occasionally come to the school, and they would like more.

- Leaders have used additional funding to support pupils' engagement in sporting activities, including gymnastics, tennis, cricket and rugby. Pupils say they enjoy practising their skills and the clubs that they can go to, to pursue their own interests in, for example, football, indoor games and cheerleading.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body is relatively new but brings together high levels of educational expertise and other relevant skills. This has strengthened and increased the ability of the governing body to hold leaders to account.
- Governors know their roles and responsibilities and take them very seriously. They have an understanding of the strategic priorities and of the strengths and areas for improvement.
- The local governing body works closely with members of the trust and the local authority to gain an objective insight into progress. However, over time, governors have not reviewed the impact of the pupil premium funding or physical education and sport premium funding closely enough, which they recognise.
- The chair of the local governing body meets regularly with the headteacher to check both on her well-being and the support that she or the school may need. Effective processes are in place to feed this information into governing body meetings and for actions to be taken if needed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors visit the school regularly and have used recent safeguarding reviews to ensure that pupils are being taught about safeguarding as part of the curriculum.
- Procedures for recruiting and appointing staff are appropriate and leaders ensure that the necessary checks on adults' suitability to work with children are carried out. Safeguarding training is provided for all staff and they know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil.
- Leaders respond promptly to referrals to external agencies. The headteacher is tenacious in her follow-up of actions to ensure that pupils are safe and families are supported. Work with the Virtual School for Children Looked After is effective and appropriate support is in place for any pupils who need it. The school employs the services of professionals to run, for example, a nurture group, which has had considerable impact on raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and, even from the very youngest children, they know about taking risks. Pupils are taught about being safe while using the internet, and know what to do if they spot any unsuitable material.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies between key stages and subjects, and this contributes to varying rates of progress across subjects and for different groups of pupils.
- Although there is acceleration of some pupils' progress within classes, and particularly in reading, the picture is more variable in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not always plan activities, therefore, that will challenge pupils and help them to think about what they already know and how this can support them in their learning.
- Although teachers promote positive attitudes to learning, planning of activities and tasks that are well matched to pupils' abilities is not consistent throughout the school. As a result, some pupils present with off-task behaviour or low-level disruption, which can distract other pupils' learning and which teachers do not consistently address.
- The subject leader for English recognised that although pupils largely read well, their comprehension and deduction skills are not well developed. He has recently introduced a new strategy for whole-class teaching of reading, using well-chosen class novels, which is paying dividends. Pupils say they enjoy reading. Even the youngest pupils, who are still learning to read and to apply their early phonics knowledge, are eager to read and resilient in their attempts to read both familiar and tricky words.
- Leaders have introduced strategies that are improving the quality of writing provision. These have contributed to a recent increase in pupils' progress and a larger proportion of pupils working at their age-related level. It is too early to see the impact this will have on the outcomes of pupils, particularly in Years 2 and 6, in 2018. Teachers do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their basic English skills across the curriculum and to write at length.
- Because of a legacy of weak teaching, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have some way to go to fill the considerable gaps that still exist in their skills and knowledge in mathematics. As the gaps are closing, teaching and pupils' outcomes are improving as pupils move through the school. The headteacher, who is also the mathematics subject lead, is committed to ensuring that teachers give pupils the opportunities to apply the skills they learn to real-life situations and problem-solving.
- Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator sets individual pupils targets which are regularly reviewed to check they are successfully addressing pupils' needs. As a result, pupils are well supported and make good progress in their learning and in their social and emotional development and their health.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' subject-specific skills and understanding in the wider curriculum in sufficient depth. This is because not all teachers are confident in teaching such subjects as science or geography. As a result, pupils do not make strong progress; nor does their work in their topic books reflect what they are capable of.
- Where the school has employed specialist teachers in physical education (PE) and music, pupils really look forward to these lessons. The skills and knowledge that pupils acquire and practise are much stronger than in other areas of the curriculum. It was a

joy to observe a music lesson with pupils in Years 3 and 4. The pupils were enthusiastic, fully involved in the lesson while they learned a new song, and confident to show their individual ability in solo renditions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are polite, friendly, helpful and welcoming. They have a genuine interest in visitors and treated the inspector with respect. They enjoy learning about the variety of faiths and cultures from within their school and outside of the community.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school because they are confident that adults will look after them. They know who to go to if they are worried about anything.
- The school curriculum provides pupils with age-appropriate information on how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about 'stranger danger', being safe when crossing the road, internet safety and mobile phone use.
- Pupils know what bullying is and what forms bullying can take. They say there is little bullying in school and that if there are any issues, teachers will sort them out.
- Feedback from parents indicates that they are very positive that their children are safe and well looked after. Although in the minority, some parents have concerns about the behaviour of a small number of pupils.
- Pupils understand the school's values well. They respect and support each other and are proud of their school, which they describe as building 'compassion, friendship and resilience'. They understand British values and can talk, for example, about how the school council works democratically.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to contribute to the school community. Older pupils look after the youngest children and will help anyone 'who looks sad or lonely' on the playground.
- During the inspection, the local vicar led an assembly that re-emphasised how we all need one another and that we each have different strengths that can be put to good use. Pupils listened attentively and offered creative suggestions about how two pupils might be able to help each other to eat a sweet from a spoon that was attached to a very long pole. Eventually, pupils decided that one pupil would have to 'feed' the other. Followed by beautiful singing, involving even the very youngest children, this experience will stay with the inspector for some time.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The majority of pupils are polite, courteous and well mannered. However, a minority of pupils and parents feel that learning can be undermined by low-level disruption.
- The majority of pupils are productive learners who apply themselves positively and work well with their peers. They subscribe fully to the positive learning behaviours

promoted by the school community through its ethos. Certificates for demonstrating one of the school's values or good work, for example, are proudly received by pupils.

- Leaders have worked hard with pupils to secure improvements in behaviour. There has clearly been a significant shift in the behaviour of some pupils. However, behaviour is still inconsistent across classes and, although strategies to address behaviour are well embedded, some pupils still struggle to adhere to the school's rules.
- The headteacher has worked with parents and pupils to improve attendance and to ensure that there is a clear expectation that all pupils will come to school regularly and on time. As a result, pupils' attendance in 2017 improved. Attendance across the school is also improving, including for those pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupils enjoy seeing their name on 'the hall of fame' for good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although very small in number, the proportion of pupils achieving what is expected of them in Year 6 is below the national average.
- Current pupils in key stage 2 make variable progress between classes and year groups, and between subjects. Progress in reading is better across the school than it is in writing and mathematics.
- There are signs of improvement in pupils' progress in key stage 1. Children get a good start in the early years provision, which is effectively built on as they move into Year 1. As a result, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2017 was a considerable improvement on 2016, and was nearer to the national average.
- The teaching of reading is a growing strength of the school. Pupils like reading and, in their writing, they are beginning to use effectively some of the techniques they come across in their well-chosen class novels. For example, a pupil wrote, 'Suddenly dead silence hit the young, beautiful girl. Almost like the room had gone into sound proof mode.'
- In 2017, there were too few disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 2 to comment on. However, the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the school from their starting points varies. Some of the most able disadvantaged pupils make good progress and are on track to achieve the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils do not make strong progress in the wider curriculum. Work in certain subjects, including science, geography and history, does not enable pupils to develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding in sufficient depth.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is strong. More detailed tracking and planning ensure that this group of pupils is effectively supported by timely intervention.
- Too few pupils achieved the higher standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2017. The most able pupils make varied progress across the school in their writing and mathematics. They say that work, particularly in mathematics, is sometimes too easy. Work does not always challenge them to think about what they are learning, or to use

their basic skills in everyday situations.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills that are lower than those typical for their age. Good teaching ensures that all children, including the most able, disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good progress.
- Good leadership of the early years provision ensures that the children have a high-quality learning environment, both indoors and outside. The school took over the running of the on-site Nursery in September 2017. It is clear that children benefit greatly from the well-planned shared activities between the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Children in the early years arrive full of enthusiasm and ready to learn. For example, during the inspection and even before the official start to the day, a group of children animatedly told the inspector about the 'doctor's surgery'. They were eager to explain what each piece of equipment was for and how injections 'can help you to get better'.
- Children in both classes in the provision learn well across a well-planned range of indoor and outdoor experiences that promote good progress and rapidly develop children's language skills. For example, children were seen sorting materials, predicting whether they would float or sink and then ultimately making a boat that would hold a small toy.
- Children typically concentrate for extended periods of time and have well-developed social skills; they share well and take turns. For example, two children at a time worked with an adult to make their own shield as part of their topic. They ably selected the shape they would like, and used scissors with precision to cut out their shields, patiently waiting for support. Independently, they decided on the materials that they wanted to stick on to decorate the template and shared the glue, taking time to admire each other's work.
- All adults plan activities that effectively develop early reading, writing and number skills. Phonics is taught well and children are beginning to use those skills in their writing.
- The tracking of children's progress is used to identify areas for further development. Parents say they value the electronic communication that they receive and that they are kept well informed about what their children have achieved. Equally, parents readily reply with photographs or examples of children's achievements at home.
- Children know the routines well, respond well to instructions and play well together, which supports their very positive attitudes towards learning.
- All staff work closely and effectively to keep children safe and ensure that all statutory welfare requirements are fully met. As a result, children feel safe, behave well and relate warmly and respectfully to adults, including visitors, and other children.

School details

Unique reference number	141658
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10041748

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Claire Epsom
Headteacher	Karen Jones
Telephone number	01206 392675
Website	www.mistleynormancofe.co.uk
Email address	head@mistleynorman.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Mistley Norman Church of England Primary converted to become an academy school in February 2015. When its predecessor school, Mistley Norman Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require special measures. The school is a sponsor-led academy and member of the Vine Trust.
- The Vine Trust is a multi-academy trust that comprises 14 schools. Mistley Norman is governed by a local governing body which reports directly to the board of trustees.
- The headteacher took up her position in September 2016 following a period in which there was interim and then substantive leadership.
- Mistley Norman is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception Years are taught separately. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils currently speak

English as an additional language.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was undertaken by one inspector over two days.
- During the inspection, the headteacher accompanied the lead inspector to observe learning in every class. The inspector observed learning in parts of other lessons across the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs leader, the early years leader and the subject leader for English. The inspector met with the chair and one other representative from the local governing body.
- The inspector heard pupils read, talked to them about their learning and looked at pupils' books in lessons.
- Together with the subject leader for English, the inspector scrutinised work in pupils' English and topic books, and discussed the attainment and progress of pupils currently in the school. The inspector also undertook the same activity in mathematics.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation summary; the school improvement plans; the school's assessment information; leaders' reports and evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning; minutes of meetings of the local governing body and the board of trustees; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including six texts.

Inspection team

Ruth Brock, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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