

Inspection of Mount Pleasant Primary School

Mount Pleasant, Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 2YN

Inspection dates:	12 and 13 November 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Members of the Mount Pleasant school community are united in their view that this is a special school to attend. The school values of positive relationships, being respectful and showing resilience are the lived experience for pupils and staff at the school each day.

The new leadership, supported by a dedicated team of staff and governors, recognises that there is more work to do to ensure that pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement. While these expectations were not realised in the most recent key stage 2 outcomes, early work to improve the curriculum is beginning to make a positive impact, with further developments planned to ensure all curriculum subjects are delivered effectively in each phase of education.

Pupils welcome visitors to their school with smiles on their faces and a willingness to share their experiences of school life. Pupils learn in classrooms where disruption is rare. They form positive relationships with adults and their peers.

Everybody is included at Mount Pleasant. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and respect and know that when bullying occurs, they can report it to a trusted adult, who will help to resolve their issues. Pupils enjoy opportunities to hold leadership positions. Opportunities to be school council, student leadership and anti-bullying representatives help pupils to take responsibility for making their school a welcoming place to attend.

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

A new leadership team has brought stability to the school following a period of challenge and uncertainty. The school is ambitious for pupils to do well. It is redesigning the curriculum to meet pupils' needs with greater accuracy. Some subjects are more developed than others. Early reading, mathematics and art and design are subjects with effective learning sequences. However, in some other subjects developments are still in the early stages. In these subjects, leaders do not check effectively on how well pupils are understanding their learning.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. They learn to read from the first days in school, learning new sounds and rhymes and enjoying stories that are read to them. Most read books that are well matched to the sounds they know. Those that fall behind with their reading catch up quickly. Most pupils leave key stage 1 reading fluently and enjoying reading.

Adults have high expectations of the children in early years. They have established strong relationships and routines that enable children to flourish and be ready for their next phase of education. The development of children's communication and language is at the heart of the early years curriculum. The school makes effective checks on each child's language development and then adapts the curriculum to support their individual needs.

Outcomes in reading and writing at the end of key stage 2 are below where they should be. The school understands this and has plans in place to improve outcomes in English and mathematics. Evidence shows that the school's actions are starting to have a positive impact. However, the school does not monitor the impact of its actions with a sharp enough focus. This means it does not routinely check that the actions it takes are having the maximum intended impact.

The basic skills of handwriting, letter formation and presentation require further improvement. Some pupils do not show a pride in their work because expectations about what is acceptable are not clear or consistently applied. This affects pupils' ability to write fluently and recall previous learning.

The school is strengthening its identification of, and offer for, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Closer working with external agencies to provide advice, guidance and resources is enabling staff to adapt pupils' learning to ensure that they can access the full range of subjects on offer.

Most pupils know and demonstrate the school rules. Behaviour in classrooms is calm and pupils show respect to staff and each other. Most pupils play nicely together and feel that the playground is a place where they are safe and happy. The school has effective systems in place to promote good attendance. It has worked well with parents and carers to improve the attendance of those pupils that were previously persistently absent from school.

The wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. It prepares them well for their next stage of education and helps build and strengthen their talents and interests. Pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships and know how to keep themselves physically and mentally well. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, both in the real world and online. Pupils have access to a wide range of experiences. These include sports and arts clubs, as well a variety educational visits and residential trips. Pupils play an active role in their community, including the opportunity to improve provision at the local hospital and the children's ward it serves.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not monitor the impact of its improvement actions with a sharp enough focus. This means it does not routinely check that the actions it takes are having the intended maximum impact. The school should ensure that improvement targets are impacting positively on its quality of education by identifying where practice could be further improved.

- There are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered and impacts upon what pupils know, remember and can do. This is particularly the case in wider curriculum subjects where checks on pupils' understanding are not taking place systematically. The school should ensure that all subjects are taught consistently well and that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are identified and addressed.
- The basic skills of handwriting, letter formation and presentation require further improvement. Some pupils do not show pride in their work because expectations about what is acceptable are not clear or consistently applied. This affects pupils' ability to write fluently and recall previous learning. The school should ensure that staff have higher expectations of pupils' presentation and accuracy, and support pupils to take pride in their work.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103780
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10343765
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	369
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jack Richards
Headteacher	Claire Grinsell
Website	http://www.mount.dudley.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- There is a new headteacher in place at this school since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including those responsible for the curriculum, teaching and learning, behaviour, attendance, personal development and safeguarding.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, history and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard a selection of pupils read.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with the local authority school improvement officer.
- The lead inspector also spoke with the chair and the vice chair of governors and one other governor.
- Inspectors considered the survey responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments from parents.
- Inspectors also evaluated the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Darren King, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Edgerton	Ofsted Inspector

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