

Robert Bakewell Primary School and Community Centre

Barsby Drive, Loughborough, LE11 5UJ

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils are safe; they enjoy school and their good behaviour makes a big contribution to their learning.
- They make good progress and attainment is above average by the time they leave.
- Progress is particularly fast in reading and writing because of the good teaching of word-building skills (phonics) and the many opportunities teachers give for pupils to read and write in all subjects.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Reception classes, and parents and carers say how much their children look forward to school.
- The good teaching is a key reason why pupils do so well. Pupils say how teachers make lessons fun and use technology such as the interactive whiteboards to help them learn.
- The leaders and governing body run the school well and ensure that weaknesses are rectified quickly. They evaluate the quality of teaching and learning well and make it clear how lessons can be improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At Key Stage 2, not all pupils make the best possible progress in mathematics, particularly girls and lower-attaining pupils.
- The school does too little to ensure that all parents and carers are fully informed about their children's work and the progress they make.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of brief visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Terry Elston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patricia Underwood

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of the pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are both above average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 matches that in English by:
 - encouraging girls to answer their full share of questions in lessons
 - ensuring that the tasks for lower attaining pupils are challenging yet achievable
 - checking on the progress of different groups of pupils throughout the year
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills in all subjects.
- Strengthen the partnership with parents and carers by providing comprehensive information about the work that their children do and the progress they make.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from starting points that are below those typical of their ages. Pupils, as well as nearly all the parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire, believe they do well at school and feel proud of their attainments.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. They settle quickly into school life and do particularly well in their reading and writing. They learn quickly how to break down words into sounds and some write confidently about topics such as the features of cold countries.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and their attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. They read confidently and develop good phonics skills that help them tackle new words. Their scores in the 2012 phonics test at Year 1 were above average.
- Pupils take care with their writing and more-able pupils use exciting words to make their work interesting. For example, their recounts of the story of Winnie the Witch gave a vivid picture of her adventures. In mathematics, pupils by Year 2 count accurately and have a good understanding of what makes some shapes symmetrical.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils maintain this good progress, and attainment is well above average in English and above average in mathematics by the end of Year 6. These attainments continue the upward trend over recent years.
- Pupils read very fluently, and have the confidence and skills to read to the whole class with good expression. One group, for example, read excerpts with great aplomb from their excellent research into countries in the world whose people speak German.
- Pupils do equally well when writing stories as when explaining how to make magic potions or describing how Aztec people lived. They write poignant poems as well as extended pieces of work that give full rein to their skills.
- In mathematics in this key stage, most pupils are confident when calculating quickly in their heads and use their number skills well to tackle problems such as how to judge the ingredients needed to make a cake. Some more-able pupils show exceptional skills in mathematics, and benefit from exciting challenges that develop their skills to the full. A few pupils, however, notably girls and some lower-attaining groups, make slower progress in mathematics than others.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Those with reading difficulties make rapid progress because teachers and teaching assistants give them the skills and confidence to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress, and the gap is closing markedly between them and others in the school. The school uses the designated funds well to support these pupils including providing individual teaching, extra help with English and mathematics and additional staffing in the Reception classes.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress, as do those who speak English as an

additional language; their parents and carers say how well the school gives them confidence in using and understanding English.

The quality of teaching is good

- In typical lessons, teachers provide a good balance between teaching new skills and pupils working at tasks matched well to their abilities. More-able pupils benefit from exciting challenges that make the best of their talents and ability to work independently.
- Teachers make the learning expected in lessons clear and remind pupils of these goals to ensure that they are on track to achieve them. At the end, pupils have good opportunities to talk about their work and say whether there is anything they need to improve upon.
- The teaching of English is consistently good and often outstanding, which is why pupils do so well in reading and writing. Daily phonics sessions from the Reception classes onwards ensure that pupils are confident in tackling unfamiliar words.
- In writing, teachers ensure that pupils think carefully about grammar and punctuation while making their work interesting by using exciting words. For example, one class in Key Stage 1 read the story of *The Billy Goats Gruff*, and went on to retell the story vividly with pictures and 'speech bubbles' that explained precisely how the Troll was defeated.
- In mathematics, teachers are very good at teaching basic number skills, and the daily mental mathematics sessions do much to speed up pupils' calculations. Teachers ask searching questions to make pupils think, but sometimes in Key Stage 2 they allow the more assertive boys to provide all of the answers and girls are happy to let them.
- Teachers set clear rules for behaviour and pupils respond well by listening carefully and always putting their hands up to answer a question. This begins in the Reception classes where children learn to give others the chance to speak.
- Teachers mark pupils' work promptly with helpful comments to help them improve. Pupils value this guidance, and subsequent work shows that they take good note of the teacher's advice.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. In most lessons, the teachers plan tasks that are challenging yet achievable and ensure that they have every opportunity to ask and answer questions. Where progress is slower, mostly in mathematics, the tasks provided are either too hard or too easy.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well because they know what is expected. Teachers make good use of rewards and sanctions, and disruptions in lessons are uncommon. Pupils concentrate well, and persevere with challenging tasks. Occasionally, pupils become restless when they have to sit too long on the carpet or when the work set for them is too hard or too easy.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive punctually; attendance rates are around the national average. The school works closely with parents and carers to emphasise the importance of regular attendance, which is improving steadily.
- Parents and carers say their children feel very safe at school. They appreciate the way staff

respond to the rare instances of bullying, and records show that such acts are decreasing year by year. Pupils know much about different types of bullying and have helped develop the good systems in the playground where pupils can report any unacceptable behaviour.

- Pupils show courtesy towards adults and one another. They listen carefully in discussions, and accept opinions different to their own. For example, they share ideas sensibly with their talking partners and are not afraid to change their minds about an issue.
- They know how to keep safe and have a very good awareness of the potential dangers of talking to strangers and using the internet without adequate supervision.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher sets ambitious targets for the school to achieve and manages change at a sensible pace. She is supported well by senior and middle leaders, who share her commitment to high standards of pupils' work and behaviour.
- At the end of each year, the leaders use data on pupils' progress well to see where improvements need to be made. This has helped improve achievement over recent years, particularly in English, where training for staff has helped raise attainment in both reading and writing since the last inspection. The school now recognises the need to check more carefully throughout the year on groups such as boys and girls, and those of different ability, to support any pupils who are falling behind.
- The good systems to evaluate the quality of teaching provide teachers with clear guidance on how to improve. Annual reviews of teachers' performance arising from these observations are rigorous, provide challenging targets for their development and help make informed decisions about their pay.
- The leaders make good use of local schools to share expertise. The schools provide joint, cost-effective training that enables teachers to learn from each other's best practice. For example, the leaders are currently making good use of the skills of the staff of a nearby school to help raise achievement in mathematics.
- Safeguarding systems are robust and meet all requirements. These are reviewed regularly by the leaders and the governing body.
- Parents and carers welcome the way adults care for their children and help them feel secure. They appreciate how well the staff listen to their concerns, but rightly feel that the school provides too little information about the work their children do or their progress during the year.
- Pupils find the activities provided for them interesting and appreciate the many clubs at lunchtime and after school that enhance their skills in music and sport. They enjoy the broad topics and the good opportunities to conduct their own research using the internet. Pupils have many good opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills in the topics, but this is less the case with mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy many opportunities to reflect on issues such as the wonders of nature and how it must have felt to be one of the poor people of ancient Greece. They learn much about diverse cultures through studying different religions and finding out about life in contrasting countries such as India and Africa.

- The school has made good use of the expertise from the local authority in the past to improve the teaching. This support is appropriately less evident now that the school has made such considerable improvements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including its performance compared with other schools, gained through regular visits and meetings with the headteacher and subject leaders. Governors have the knowledge to challenge the leaders and they take a full part in school improvement. They are closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' performance and the decisions about their promotion. Governors have benefitted from useful training based clearly on their needs. They have a good awareness of the school's budget and know how the funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent, why it is allocated in this way and the positive impact it has on their academic and personal development.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119992
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	405900

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Williams
Headteacher	Nikki Parkinson
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2011
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