

Marsden Infant and Nursery School

Brougham Road, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6BN

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not consistently good over time.
- Teachers do not always use their earlier assessments when planning work. More-able pupils have work that is too easy for them, and in mathematics, less-able pupils are sometimes given work that is too difficult.
- Teachers' marking does not tell pupils how well they are doing and how to improve further.
- Pupils are not taught to find things out for themselves and rely heavily on their teachers for help.
- Senior leaders are beginning to take on more responsibility but this is at an early stage.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms focuses more on the strengths of the lesson rather than on the improvements required.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy writing and make increasingly good progress.
- Reading and the sounds that letters make are taught well so that most pupils are enthusiastic readers.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are inquisitive learners who feel very safe and really enjoy school.
- Senior leaders thoroughly check pupils' progress and makes teachers accountable for the progress of pupils in their class.
- The governing body is now fully informed about all aspects of school life and has effective systems in place to challenge and support senior leaders.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons including two joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff including senior and subject leaders. The inspectors also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including data on pupils' current and previous progress, the school development plan, pupils' work over time, performance management documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Brenda Clarke, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Baljinder Khela

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding allocated to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority or the children of forces families.
- The majority of pupils are White British and there are few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is similar to that seen across the country.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school has recently appointed a new assistant headteacher who will take up post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics, to consistently good or better in order to further improve rates of pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers use their assessments more effectively to plan work that challenges the more-able pupils and is not too difficult for less-able pupils
 - ensuring that teachers' marking informs pupils of how well they are doing and what they need to do next
 - providing more opportunities and support materials to encourage pupils to think for themselves rather than always relying on an adult for support
 - extending opportunities for teachers to observe exemplary practice in the classroom
 - planning more opportunities for children in the Reception classes to practise their skills when working independently.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the oral and written feedback given to teachers gives an accurate picture of their strengths and areas for development
 - developing the roles of senior leaders so that they can more actively support the headteacher in bringing about school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Over time pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been broadly average and pupils have achieved satisfactorily. Reading has been the strongest subject and writing the weakest. Boys have attained significantly less well than girls in reading and writing. Since the last inspection, the school has taken effective steps to develop pupils' writing skills across the school. Inspection findings indicate that while pupils' standards for the current generation of Year 2 pupils remain broadly average, pupils' progress in writing is accelerating rapidly. The letters and sounds programme has recently been reorganised so that pupils are now regularly taught in small groups where the learning closely matches their differing needs. This has been successful and has enabled most pupils, including boys, to write with confidence and enthusiasm and pupils' standards are moving closer to those seen nationally.
- Pupils' mathematical skills have declined slightly since the last inspection and are not yet good. Pupils do not always have quick recall of number facts. Scrutiny of pupils' work over time indicates an over-reliance on practising sums, so that pupils' skills in applying their number knowledge to solve problems are weaker.
- Overall, more-able pupils attain similarly to those across the country but opportunities are missed to ensure that they receive work at a higher level in writing and mathematics to lift their attainment even further.
- The progress of less-able pupils in mathematics lags behind their progress in other subjects because work is not always tailored to their differing needs and is sometimes too difficult for them. There is a similar picture for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They do as well as other pupils overall in reading and writing because of the good support they receive in lessons from knowledgeable teaching assistants but their progress is slower in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in reading remains good. Pupils read with enthusiasm. They confidently use the links between letters and sounds to read unfamiliar words.
- Most children start school with skills and understanding which are largely typical for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress overall during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make very good progress in their personal and social development. They are enthusiastic, behave well and sit and listen attentively. The newly introduced programme of learning the sounds that letters make is enabling children to make good progress in their early reading and writing. This prepares them well for their next steps in education.
- At the end of Year 2 in 2012, pupils in receipt of pupil premium were making less progress than their peers and there was a significant gap between their standards in reading and writing and those seen across the country. The good use of additional funding to provide effective targeted learning has halted this decline so that this group of pupils is now making good progress and the gap is reducing significantly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Across the Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught the skills of good sitting and good listening so that most are attentive learners. Staff are very good role models for children. They demonstrate high levels of respect and thoughtfulness. This results in children behaving well and making strong relationships. Teachers plan exciting activities that grab children's attention; for example, outdoors children enthusiastically used a posser, an old fashioned device for washing, and lots of water to launder dolls' clothes.
- Teaching in the Nursery is good. Children are taught regularly in small groups. They develop high levels of confidence and make good progress.
- Children's progress in the Reception classes is satisfactory rather than good. There is a sound

mix of adult-led activities and those which children access independently. However, these independent activities sometimes lack any clear purpose and opportunities are missed to reinforce children's early reading and mathematical skills.

- In Years 1 and 2, teachers do not use their assessments well enough, planning work that is sometimes too easy or too hard for differing groups of pupils. For example, in a mathematics lesson observed, pupils were given the same task but with higher numbers for the more-able. There was a lack of challenge for more-able pupils and opportunities missed for pupils to apply their skills in practical ways. Scrutiny of work in pupils' books also indicates that less-able pupils often receive the same work as others in the class and so make too many mistakes.
- Even in the good lessons observed, pupils have an over-reliance on adult help and often put their hands up when they could find the answer themselves. For example, more-able pupils will ask the teacher to spell out a word for them rather than using a word list and time is wasted as pupils wait for help.
- Teachers' marking does not always inform pupils of how well they are doing. Errors in work are not corrected; for example, numbers and letters that are reversed.
- Overall, these weaknesses mask some positive improvements to the quality of teaching. Teachers have effective behaviour management skills so that lessons run smoothly and pupils behave well. This shows improvement on the findings of the last inspection report.
- Throughout the school, letter sounds are taught very effectively. This is a key reason why pupils' progress in writing is accelerating.
- Teachers plan topics that really interest pupils; for example, work on the Second World War and a visit to the railway station have motivated boys to write at length.
- Knowledgeable and well-trained teaching assistants provide skilled support to learning in the classroom.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils clearly know right from wrong. They have good manners and listen respectfully to others. They get on well together. Hence, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school is calm and orderly, and relationships at all levels are good. This means that pupils feel very safe. Pupils say they receive good care from adults and trust them to help when problems occur.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They persevere with their work and share resources so that lessons run smoothly.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say there is occasional bullying but that this is quickly resolved.
- The school works closely with parents in ensuring that pupils attend regularly so that attendance is above average and steadily rising.
- Pupils enjoy being members of the school council and take their roles seriously. However, there are relatively few opportunities for pupils to take on additional roles and duties around the school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Systems to check the quality of teaching and learning in lessons require improvement. Teachers receive written feedback on lesson observations but this focuses strongly on the strengths of teaching and insufficiently on areas that require development. Hence, some inadequacies in teaching go unchecked when revisits are made.

- The headteacher is aware that teachers have too few opportunities to observe others' exemplary practice.
 - Senior leaders, other than the headteacher, are at an early stage of developing their duties and responsibilities. They have extended their subject leadership roles but do not yet play a significant part in planning for the future improvement of the school.
 - Senior leaders are all in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this reduces their impact on other areas of the school.
 - The school has resolved some significant issues since the last inspection in March 2012. Areas for school improvement outlined in the school development plan are precise, measurable and challenging giving a strong steer to school improvement.
 - The headteacher has developed a thorough process for checking pupils' progress. This is shared regularly with teachers, making them accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. The headteacher and governing body ensure that teachers fulfil stringent criteria before they can achieve the next salary level.
 - Pupils' targets are ambitious but achievable so that more pupils are now making better than expected progress.
 - The school tackles any issues of discrimination well and this contributes to the harmony of the community.
 - The school takes good care of its pupils. The headteacher and her staff are passionate about ensuring pupils enjoy their learning and feel safe. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are thorough and meet legal requirements.
 - Links with parents have improved since the last inspection. Parents particularly appreciate the new school website and good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning.
 - The curriculum has been revamped so that it includes pupils' interests and suggestions. Themes such as Pirates have been added to better engage boys. This has been successful and the gaps between boys' and girls' writing and reading scores are reducing significantly.
 - The local authority provides regular and appropriate support. It has provided additional staffing, effective subject specific training for teachers and support and training for the governing body which has had significant impact on provision.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have clarified their roles and reorganised themselves to give a more strategic lead to school improvement. They are now knowledgeable about pupils' progress and standards and the issues facing the school. Governors acknowledge that some less-able pupils are making less progress than their classmates in mathematics and are striving to reduce this gap further. They are knowledgeable about the use of pupil premium funding and have ensured that pupils in receipt of this are now making good progress in line with most pupils in the school. The gap between the attainment of boys and girls has now closed in reading and writing. These factors indicate that governors are now in a much stronger position to hold the school to account and to challenge and support the headteacher.
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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	107644
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	408869

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Hoey
Headteacher	Frances Swallow
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2012
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