

# Castleford Wheldon Infant School and Nursery

Francis Street, Castleford, West Yorkshire, Wf10 1HF

**Inspection dates** 11–12 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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. It is not good because

- Too much teaching requires improvement throughout the school, leading to not enough pupils making good progress during their time in school.
- Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 has shown a decline since the last inspection until the current year groups.
- Questioning by adults does not always develop pupils' thinking skills and learning.
- Teachers do not always explain clearly to pupils what they need to do to be successful in their learning and do not always challenge the more-able pupils.
- Teachers' marking does not always provide pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work.
- Subject leaders and governors have not had sufficient time to apply their newly developed skills to impact fully on school improvement over time.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher now has rigorous systems and procedures in place for checking the work of the school, which within a very short time have started to move the school forward.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported, which enables them to achieve well overall.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly throughout this academic year, improving pupils' progress and attainment to the highest levels for three years.
- The school provides a caring and nurturing environment for all pupils. Pupils feel safe, work well together and behave well.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons, two of which were conducted jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms.
- Inspectors analysed pupils' work and the school's data about their attainment and progress.
- A formal discussion was held with pupils across Key Stage 1 as well as informal conversations during lessons and at break times.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body and with senior and middle leaders. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority and the headteacher's mentor.
- Pupils read to inspectors and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation including: safeguarding records and those relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; records of the school's views on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning; the school's view of its performance; improvement plans; and recent reviews carried out by the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 23 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and discussions with parents carried out during the inspection.
- Sixteen staff members completed the voluntary staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Julie Harrison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Derek Pattinson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care or those whose parents are in the armed forces) is below average.
- The school has received several awards, including the 'Spirit of the Community' award, the Active School Mark and the Clean, Green School Gold Award.
- A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2012 following the tragic death of the previous deputy headteacher.
- Children attend the Nursery class for either mornings or afternoons. The registered childcare managed by the governing body enables children to attend the nursery setting in the afternoons in addition to their morning session.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is consistently good or better in order to help accelerate pupils' progress and drive up standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that all groups of pupils are sufficiently challenged to make at least good progress, especially the more able
  - ensuring that pupils know what they have to learn and how to be successful
  - ensuring marking gives good-quality feedback by highlighting strengths and shows the next steps for improvement to enhance pupils' learning so that time is not wasted repeating known skills, particularly in mathematics
  - improving the questioning skills of all adults who work with pupils in order to improve their thinking skills and learning.
- Build on the recent implementation of effective leadership and management strategies that are beginning to move the school forward by:
  - further developing the skills of subject leaders and teachers and enabling them to apply these new skills to analyse and review pupils' attainment and progress so that they take a full part in driving the school forward
  - ensuring the governing body continues to develop its skills to hold the school fully to account and lead its direction.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because attainment has declined since the last inspection. It has recently started to rise but it is too soon to see sustained improvement over time.
- The majority of children start school with skills and understanding below those expected for their age. They make at least expected progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, but progress is inconsistent across the school. More-able pupils are not consistently challenged and do not always make the best possible progress.
- Attainment declined since the last inspection in reading, writing and mathematics but still remained broadly average until a significant dip in writing and mathematics in 2012. However, the majority of pupils still made the expected amount of progress in all subjects.
- This academic year these issues in achievement are being addressed by improving teaching and learning, effective tracking of pupils' progress and extra support for those children falling behind in their learning. Consequently, the results of the 2013 Key Stage 1 national assessments show significant improvement in pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading and mathematics is now above expectations and writing is broadly average, giving the highest results for the past three years.
- The results of the national assessments in reading for Year 1 pupils last year were well below national expectations for boys and girls. The school leadership's response was prompt, with the introduction of a new scheme to teach pupils their letters and sounds. This is reaping benefits and attainment for the current Year 1 is well above expectations. Additionally, the current Year 2 pupils have improved their skills and closed the gaps identified in their previous results. These skills are beginning to support pupils' spelling and writing in literacy and across the curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy reading the school's 'reading scheme' books. They tackle unfamiliar words using their improved understanding of letters and sounds. The more-able pupils read with expression and fluency. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to read a wide range of texts.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved sharply throughout the current school year after last year's significant dip but it is still inconsistent throughout the school and weakest where the more-able pupils are not moved on early enough due to repetition of known skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well from their starting points due to well-targeted support which meets their individual needs, particularly in phonics.
- The pupil premium funding is being used to provide extra help for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. As a result, their current attainment in reading and mathematics is above average and is broadly average in writing, similar to that of other groups of pupils. Their progress is also similar to that of other groups of pupils, highlighting the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although the quality of teaching is improving, it is still judged to require improvement overall because not enough teaching is good. This is confirmed by lesson observations, data and pupils' books.
- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers do not always make it clear to pupils what they need to learn and how to be successful. Questioning by adults does not always challenge pupils' thinking and the needs of all ability groups are not met, especially those of the more-able pupils, who are not consistently challenged.
- Where teaching is stronger, expectations are high, tasks are interesting, resources are of a good quality and all ability groups are challenged. This motivates pupils, enabling them to make good progress, as seen when the Reception children had to measure the 'Wheldonsaurus'.
- Reading is taught well. The teaching of letters and sounds is well organised. Pupils are taught in ability groups daily. Sessions are practical and enjoyable and this is having a positive impact on

pupils' spelling and writing.

- Teaching assistants usually support the learning of disabled pupils, those pupils with special educational needs, those who are eligible for pupil premium funding and those causing concern. They enhance these pupils' confidence and basic skills and enable them to achieve well.
- Teachers' marking is not consistent across the whole school. The best practice includes good-quality feedback highlighting strengths and next steps for improvement, with assessment informing planning for all ability groups. Where this does not occur, pupils are not challenged and spend too much time consolidating known skills when they are ready to move on with their learning. This is more evident in numeracy lessons.
- The outside learning area is now being used more effectively in Key Stage 1 to enhance teaching and learning as recommended in the previous inspection report. This was seen during a science lesson recording sounds in the wildlife area and a geography lesson to plan a 'Seaside Day'.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The school has a friendly and helpful ethos. Behaviour is usually good in classrooms and around the school. At break times pupils enjoy playing on the large equipment as well as making up their own 'clapping' games.
- Staff follow the behaviour policy, using a variety of strategies effectively. As a result, pupils are clear what is expected of them. There have been no recent exclusions.
- Pupils usually have positive attitudes to learning and they work well together, sharing, taking turns and listening to each other. Where teaching is weaker, some pupils occasionally lose concentration and low-level misbehaviour occurs.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to look after themselves. Pupils see this as a friendly and kind school. This view is supported by parents' views.
- Pupils are happy to come to school and know that attendance is important for their learning; attendance is broadly in line with national expectations.
- Pupils know the school rules and want to achieve certificates awarded for effort, achievement and good behaviour.
- Pupils say bullying is not a problem in school and know that if they talk to an adult any problems will be sorted out.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because recent improvements achieved by the school's leadership, although clear and secure, have not yet been sustained over a longer period of time.
- The headteacher initiated local authority support during the autumn of 2012. This has enabled staff to work positively together after the tragic circumstances of the previous academic year which impacted on teaching and learning, especially for the 2012 Year 2 cohort. As a result, and further guided by mentor support, the school is now rapidly moving forward. Staff questionnaires are very supportive of the school and its strategies.
- The headteacher is now providing an effective steer for the school's development, ably supported by the deputy headteacher.
- Newly appointed subject and team leaders have received effective training and support from the senior management team which has helped them to develop the skills they need so that they are ready to take on their roles of responsibility independently.
- The school's checks on pupils' progress and evaluation of its performance are accurate. It has rigorously evaluated the decline in standards since the last inspection to 2012, noting the exceptional circumstances impacting on the 2012 results.
- The school's self-evaluation and development priorities contain actions to address the issues

identified. Within two terms teaching and learning have improved rapidly from inadequate to requires improvement. The senior leadership team are skilled and accurate in observing teaching, recognising strengths and areas for development and giving highly professional feedback. This has improved teaching, pupils' progress and attainment this year so that the end-of-Year-2 2013 results are the highest for the past three years.

- All performance management procedures are in place and targets are linked to school priorities which focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. Salary awards for teachers are linked to the achievement of targets relating to pupils' attainment and progress.
- The thematic approach to planning the curriculum, such as the 'Seaside' topic mentioned earlier, is in its early stages. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through worship, Aboriginal art, links with the Fatch School in India, the webcam link to the bird nest, and various visits and visitors including the Sikh Education Service and the Salvation Army.
- The school works closely with parents, and Parent View and discussions show that the majority of parents are supportive of the school. The 'Wow House' enables parents to give evidence of pupils' learning outside school.
- The school meets all safeguarding requirements and there are no accounts of discrimination.
- The registered childcare within the nursery setting is well organised and extends the learning opportunities of those children who attend this safe and secure environment.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The local authority held a review of governance in the spring of 2013. A new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body were appointed. Since then there has been a rapid implementation of rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures to enable the governing body to hold the school to account and lead direction, but this work is still in its early stages. Governors are kept informed by means of high-quality reports from the headteacher and by their visits to school. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and evaluate standards and the use of the pupil premium. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and the Chair of the Governing Body has been involved in the regular local authority monitoring and review meetings and attends pupil progress meetings.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108236
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	412215

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	187
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joyce Field
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracey Lake
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 723070
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