

Headfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Vicarage Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 9PD

Inspection dates 19–20 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Until recently, the progress that pupils have made in their learning has not been good enough and has varied between year groups and subjects.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is too much teaching that requires improvement. As a result, there are too many lessons where pupils do not learn as well as they might.
- Teachers do not always plan their lessons to make sure work is hard enough for all pupils, particularly the more-able.
- Sometimes teachers spend too long introducing tasks and do not leave enough time for pupils to make good progress.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent. Teachers do not always provide pupils with clear written comments and guidance on how to improve their work. This means that pupils do not improve their work as well as they could.
- Some subject leaders have not yet had sufficient time to improve on the quality of teaching in their areas.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are working successfully to bring about improvements in pupils' achievement, teaching, and in attendance. There is some good and outstanding teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and say they feel safe there.
- Pupils make good progress in writing.
- The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support. Governors work successfully with senior leaders to promote strong partnerships with parents.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons and 23 teachers.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils about their learning in lessons and their safety in school. They listened to some pupils reading and looked at pupils' work in their books.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and a representative of the local authority. In addition, inspectors looked at a range of documents including pupil progress data, the school's review of its performance, its development plan, safeguarding information, school policies, and records of pupils' behaviour and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors analysed 11 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to some parents during the school day. They also analysed parents' responses to a school questionnaire.
- The views of 30 staff who returned questionnaires were taken into account.

Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Platt

Additional Inspector

Stefan Lord

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This primary school is much larger than average.
- The proportion of girls is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, those from armed services families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The majority of pupils at the school are classified as speaking English as an additional language. However, there are only a small minority who enter the school with no spoken English or a low level of understanding of the English language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school part way through their primary education is very low.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, school leaders have managed a new build project and have implemented the move into this new accommodation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise standards of achievement in English and mathematics, particularly in Year 5, increase the proportion of teaching that is of good or better quality by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan to meet the needs of all of the pupils in all lessons
 - there is sufficient challenge for all pupils and, in particular, the more able
 - pupils have sufficient time in lessons to work independently and finish tasks
 - teachers provide better information, through marking, to help pupils better improve their work.
- Strengthen the capacity of leaders, managers and governors to accelerate improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
 - the system for checking the quality of teaching and learning ensures that their quality continues to improve to be, at least, consistently good
 - the best practice demonstrated by teachers is consistent across all classes
 - the skills of newly appointed leaders are fully developed, giving them increased independence and accountability in the tasks allotted to them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, over time, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics on entry to the school has been broadly average and when they reach the end of Year 6, it is still broadly average. This is because not all pupils, in particular the more-able pupils, have progressed quickly enough to ensure that they reach higher levels of attainment.
- The rate of progress pupils make in different subjects and in different years has been variable. Although current school data shows that progress has accelerated, particularly in mathematics, it is still inconsistent across year groups and is particularly slow in Year 5.
- In the previous three years, pupils' progress has been better in writing than in reading. The school, having identified this as an area for development, has put in place a wide range of strategies to develop further pupils' reading skills. These include encouraging parents to come into school to support reading sessions and promoting reading in all subjects. Pupils are reading with increasing confidence, and reliable current school data show that progress is accelerating.
- Pupils' writing skills are good because they get plenty of opportunities, in all subjects, to practise regularly these skills, for example, in writing in different styles for various purposes.
- Overall, progress is improving. In the current academic year, more pupils are making better than expected progress. However, the current year's better progress has yet to be sustained over time.
- The progress of most groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, is similar to that of other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make steady progress because they are well supported and because work is carefully matched to their abilities.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to enable eligible pupils to attain standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are comparable with others in the school. Their progress is at least in line and, sometimes, better than that of other pupils. Additional learning opportunities, for example, the school's extra-curricular clubs, extend pupils' learning and social experience very well.
- The school works diligently to give all pupils equality of opportunity to succeed. There is good liaison with feeder schools to ensure that pupils are provided with appropriate and additional support matched to their specific needs.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, there has not been enough good or better teaching to ensure pupils make good progress across the school. The school's checks on the quality of teaching show that there is now more good and outstanding teaching and that pupils' progress is improving as a consequence. Outstanding teaching was observed during this inspection and there was none that was inadequate. The majority of teaching seen was good or better but has not yet resulted in pupils' sustained good achievement.
- Weaknesses remain. In some classes, pupils spend too long listening to teachers before being allowed to get on with planned activities, and the more-able pupils are required to listen to explanations or to complete work they are already able to do. On these occasions, pupils of differing abilities, especially the more able, do not always make as much progress as they should.
- The teaching of reading has developed through the use of helpful, whole-school strategies which include the provision of books which pupils find interesting, reading workshops for parents and children, regular in-school and local library visits and training for all teachers on the teaching of phonics.

- Development of pupils' literacy skills is a strong focus in all lessons. Key words are highlighted and pupils are presented with many opportunities to practise their writing skills. For example, when researching information on the internet, pupils are encouraged to summarise their findings using different words, but always using correct grammar and spelling. Neatness of handwriting is a priority.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving as a result of training that has been provided to teachers and teaching assistants on using strategies and resources to help to improve pupils' mental arithmetic skills. This, along with catch-up sessions and parents' mathematics workshops are contributing to the pupils' increasing rates of progress in mathematics.
- Teachers plan a range of learning activities which interest learners and, in the better lessons, provide a range of tasks that are matched to the abilities of different groups. The best teaching is characterised by work that is matched closely to the needs of each pupil in the class. In these cases, questioning encourages pupils to think for themselves and deepens their understanding. They are also given opportunities to work independently of the teacher with ample time to complete tasks.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and often present topics in an interesting way for pupils. Pupils said, on a number of occasions, that what they liked best about school was that their 'learning was fun'. For example, in a Year 6 class, pupils very much enjoyed working in groups to discuss the methods used by ancient Egyptians to carry water from the River Nile. This was followed up in design technology, where they made models of some of the structures they had learned about.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide appropriate support for all pupils and are quick to address misconceptions when they arise. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are involved in activities alongside their fellow pupils because work is adapted to enable them to do so, and support is regularly available. Help from teachers and teaching assistants enable those pupils eligible for the pupil premium to achieve, at least, in line with other pupils.
- There are examples of high quality marking of books, but it is inconsistent across the school. Teachers do not always provide written guidance about what pupils should do to improve their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. The good relationships they have with their teachers mean they want to work hard for them. They are polite and courteous when walking around school and readily engage in conversation.
- Pupils are keen to learn as much as they can in lessons. They enjoy discussing their work in pairs and groups and frequently talk about their learning.
- Pupils enjoy school. They appreciate the wide range of activities provided for them beyond normal lessons and the rewards they get for positive behaviour. For example, 'Friday Fine Dining', when they are waited on by members of the school council and enjoy eating their dinner with a special visitor.
- They have good opportunities to contribute, such as being on the school council, or raising money for charity from ideas they initiate. The exercise equipment available to all pupils in the outside play area was bought following suggestions from pupils, represented by members of the school council.
- All pupils spoken to say they feel safe in school. The school building and grounds are large, but there are plenty of adults around during lunchtimes and breaks. The vast majority of parents and staff are unanimous in agreement that children are safe at school.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, but say that it is rare and that there is always an adult available to sort out any situation which arises.

- Mentors provide good support for vulnerable pupils and work closely with these pupils and their families, ensuring their safety, good behaviour and full integration in classes with other pupils.
- There have been no exclusions over the past four years. Attendance has steadily increased, and the number of persistent absentees decreased, over the past four years. Most pupils arrive on time to school and to lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- All school leaders, including governors, share a passion for all pupils to achieve their best.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully managed the new building project and the move into this new accommodation. At the same time, they have managed to improve the quality of teaching. There is now more that is good or outstanding, and pupils' progress is accelerating well.
- Systems for tracking and checking on pupils' progress are rigorous. Pupils' progress targets have become more challenging, all staff now take responsibility for the achievement of the pupils they work with and are committed to ensuring good progress by improving how well they teach.
- This is an inclusive school in which equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled. Children identified as underachieving, or those with particular learning needs, receive additional, targeted support to enable them to achieve in line with their peers.
- Leaders' view of the school's performance is accurate and improvement plans well focused on key priorities. The strong focus on reading and mathematics over the past year has resulted in increased rates of progress for pupils in these subjects.
- The leadership of teaching is good although newly appointed subject leaders are still developing their skills in checking on and improving the quality of teaching. Performance management is robust and is resulting in improvements in the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils.
- Teachers are supported by a range of training opportunities, which is targeted to whole-school priorities and individual need, for example, to hone teaching skills in reading and mathematics.
- The school has a focus on the teaching of English and mathematics, but also offers a wide range of subjects for pupils to study. These subjects are supplemented by many imaginative activities within and beyond the normal timetable.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were learning about Indian culture. This was followed up with a workshop where they learned and presented a Bollywood dance. Pupils get on well with each other and clearly understand right from wrong, as reinforced by the consistent messages given by all staff. There is good access to cultural and multicultural aspects of the community through assemblies and other opportunities offered to pupils.
- Leaders have worked diligently to develop strong partnerships with parents and other schools for the benefit of its pupils. Ongoing work with families has served to improve attendance year-on-year over the past four years.
- The school has good links with the other schools and is developing these further.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet current requirements.
- The local authority categorises this school as one receiving light touch support, which means the school receives one visit per year from a link officer.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed to the school. They systematically check on the progress of the school's development plan and provide challenge and support for school leaders, holding them to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors understand and regularly review the school's data about pupils' performance and know how it is used to set targets. They have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching and learning. Governors manage teachers' performance well and ensure

that resources and staff are efficiently deployed, including linking staff pay to pupils' achievement. They account for the use of the pupil premium funding and understand how it is contributing to the raising the attainment of eligible pupils. Governors are committed to working in partnership with the local community and actively encourage parents to come into school.

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	107707
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	412083

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	589
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mushtaq Ghani
Headteacher	Geoffrey Smith
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2009
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