

Allerton Primary School

Allerton Drive, Immingham, Lincolnshire, DN40 2HP

Inspection dates 17–18 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Standards are below the national average at both key stages.
- Progress throughout the school is uneven and has been too slow in the past.
- Teaching and progress in Reception are not as good as in the Nursery.
- Teaching is not consistently good or better in Years 1 to 6 and requires improvement.
- Pupils' do not make good progress because sometimes work is not challenging enough and their learning is not checked thoroughly in lessons. Some pupils need more help to be clear about what to do.
- Pupils do not respond to teachers' marking consistently. Some teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation of work are too low.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and improve their writing and mathematics skills.
- Leadership at all levels over time has not moved the school forward sufficiently to bring about rapid improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher are a strong driving force. Together they have begun to improve the school at a good pace.
- Pupils behave well. They work hard in lessons and feel safe in school. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery.
- There is some good and outstanding teaching. The quality of teaching overall has improved recently.
- Technology is used well to support learning.
- Progress is picking up in Year 2 and in the upper junior classes. Standards are rising.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or part lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a few parents. There was also a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- The views of 28 parents who completed the online questionnaire Parent View were also taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a wide range of documentation including: national assessment data and the school's own assessments; minutes from governing body meetings; the school's own view of its work; local authority reports; safeguarding policies and procedures and samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Twaits	Additional Inspector
Rajinder Harrison	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school in which most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is broadly average.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A breakfast club is provided for pupils during term time.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2013. The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise standards and further increase the rate of progress the school must improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that work is always well matched to pupils' needs and particularly those who are less able
 - checking learning during lessons to make sure that pupils know what they have achieved and what to do next
 - maintaining high expectations of pupils with regard to the presentation of their work
 - making tasks clear enough by showing pupils what to do so that they can manage work on their own
 - making the marking of pupils' work more effective by giving pupils time to think about the guidance they get, correct mistakes and set new targets for themselves
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and improve their writing and mathematical skills.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that middle leaders, including of the Early Years Foundation Stage, are sufficiently trained and fully accountable for standards and progress in their areas of responsibility and contribute effectively to the evaluation of the school's work
 - maintaining the rigorous programme for checking the quality of teaching and acting swiftly to eliminate any weaknesses.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- When children enter the Nursery class their stages of development are generally below those typically expected for their age. They are well below expectations in their language and communication skills. They make good progress in Nursery where teaching and other provision is well matched to their development needs and they settle well into daily routines.
- Progress falters in Reception class. Activities do not build well enough on what children have achieved in Nursery because expectations of what children can do are too low and there is not enough challenge for them in some of the activities. This results in, expected, rather than good progress overall by the end of Reception. Children's development is still below expectations for their age when they move into Year 1.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average and have been for some time. Again, progress is uneven between Years 1 and 2. However, there are clear signs that progress is picking up especially in Year 2 where teaching is good. Pupils' work shows that more pupils are working at expected levels in writing and mathematics and evidence confirms that standards at the end of the key stage are currently on track to see a definite improvement. Improved teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) in both year groups is having a positive influence on pupils' early reading and writing skills.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 were below average in the 2013 national tests. School assessments and standards in pupils' work indicate that currently most pupils are achieving the expected levels in writing and mathematics and that standards overall are improving quickly, although few make better than expected progress. In the lower junior classes where teaching is not as strong, progress is slower.
- Pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading and are keen to read well. They use their phonic knowledge and skills well to sound out unfamiliar words. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and discuss sensibly the books they are reading. By the end of Year 6, pupils have mature attitudes to reading. They select from a broad range and understand the value of being able to read well. Their reading is accurate and fluent and they read with appropriate levels of understanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make uneven progress across the school. Support for these pupils is beginning to be better planned under the new school leadership. Specific training has been undertaken by staff so they are better equipped to address pupils' particular needs. Although good practice is at an early stage, provision and progress are improving.
- The most able pupils are now identified by the school and ambitious targets are set for their achievement. Again, this practice is recent and there is still scope to increase their rate of progress further. Past results show that not enough of the most-able pupils achieved their potential.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium do well in relation to national figures and often do better than others in the school because the additional help they get is well targeted. In the most recent national tests pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did better than others in the school in mathematics, reading and writing combined. Too few, however, achieved a higher level. Nevertheless, data show remaining gaps are beginning to close.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although some good and outstanding teaching is evident, the quality is currently too variable and over time it has not been good enough to enable pupils to make sufficient progress.
- Recent monitoring by external consultants and school leaders has begun to improve the quality of teaching and bring out some common strengths. Teachers' questioning, for example, is generally good. They test pupils' understanding by asking them to explain things to others and

this moves learning on. Time is used well. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning during practical times. Checking by teachers during the lesson to make sure that pupils are achieving lesson targets and keeping them on track is not always done well enough.

- Pupils do not always work with the same clarity of purpose, however, because although they are told what to do, they are not shown, and therefore not clear about what is expected of them. This prevents pupils, especially those who may be less-able, from working confidently at tasks and achieving their best.
- Resources, particularly technology, are used well to help pupils learn. Hand-held devices and laptops feature regularly in lessons and teachers use electronic smart-boards confidently to keep pupils focused on their learning.
- Where pupils make good progress in lessons teachers provide a clear context for learning so that pupils can see the purpose of what they do. In their learning about China, for example, Year 6 pupils formulated questions to ask a 'Hun warrior' (in role play) about his lifestyle before using their information to write detailed descriptions. Pupils worked in pairs independently of the teacher. They were challenged well, including the most able pupils and so all were engrossed in this interesting activity.
- There is insufficient focus on improving basic literacy and numeracy skills. While some writing reflects different styles and work in other subjects, the range is limited. Mathematics mostly covers number calculations and not enough opportunities to use those and other skills in mathematics investigation and problem-solving activities.
- There is some good marking by teachers, but this, too, is uneven across classes and subjects. Pupils do not have time to respond to the guidance teachers give them, so often there is no notable improvement in their next piece of work. Teachers do not challenge pupils often enough over the presentation of their work which is frequently untidy.
- Teachers mostly keep pupils busy in lessons and value the contribution they make. This gives pupils the confidence to 'have a go' and encourages them to work hard. Pupils say that their lessons are enjoyable and feel that they have improved over the past year.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy lessons and they work well with partners and in small groups. They are keen on the after-school clubs which include gardening and sports and provide well for pupils' personal development and physical well-being.
- Behaviour is good. In lessons, pupils show respect for their teachers and work hard. They move sensibly around the school and behave exceptionally well in assemblies and in the dining hall. They say that behaviour is getting better and they give themselves about, 'eight out of ten'. Pupils are very polite and well mannered.
- They feel safe in school because they have very trusting relationships with the adults who care for them and are confident that help is at hand when needed. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber-bullying, and are adamant that there is no bullying or serious name-calling in the playground.
- Year 6 pupils are trained as play leaders and make an important contribution to younger pupils' safety and sense of fair play in the playground.
- The vast majority of parents agree that their children are cared for well. They are supportive of the school and appreciate, for example, the additional care provided through the breakfast club which gives their children a welcoming and safe start to the day, as well as encouraging them to be punctual to school. Pupils' attendance is similar to the national average.
- Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school. The active school council gives all pupils a voice in school matters and that helps to bring improvements, such as better playground equipment and the cultivation of a wildlife garden. School council members also wrote booklets for infant and junior pupils about keeping safe following an anti-bullying week in school. Pupils give generously to charities and work hard to help organise events for the annual Christmas and summer fairs.

- By the end of Year 6 pupils are confident in their own abilities and are well prepared socially and emotionally to move to the next stage of their education.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in the leadership and teaching staff in the school. Shortcomings in the quality of teaching and in the standards reached were identified and recognised as not being addressed.
- With support from the local authority and the governing body, the newly appointed headteacher carried out an incisive and accurate audit of the school's work and set about the task of appointing new staff and improving teaching quality. Since the appointment of the deputy headteacher that process has accelerated. Priorities for the school are clear and shared with all staff. Progress in the key area of teaching is evident and achievement is on track to improve for all pupils. Nevertheless, leaders are aware that the journey of improvement has just begun and that there is still some way to go.
- A local authority consultant currently works with the school. Teachers as well as leaders have responded well to the support provided. The staff are a more cohesive team. Most staff members say they are 'refreshed' by the new leadership and welcome the opportunities that are opening up for them. The current drive from staff, leaders and governors and the improvement over a short period of time indicate the school has the capacity to continue its improvement to create a good school.
- The deputy headteacher's appointment has added strength to the senior leadership team, particularly through his ability to analyse data and follow-up any issues linked to pupils' progress.
- The management of teachers' performance is a main thrust of leaders' work. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher evaluate teaching accurately and have a clear picture of where the strengths and weaknesses lie. Expectations regarding the acceptable quality and effectiveness of teaching are clear. Staff are supported on their journey to improvement through rigorous targets. All know that their performance is measured against the Teachers' Standards. Leaders are not complacent and know that this rigour must be maintained to iron out shortcomings swiftly.
- The role of middle leaders requires improvement. Responsibilities have changed with the changes in staff and some have only recently taken on their roles to coordinate specific curriculum subjects. Development of leadership skills has not been a priority in the past. More opportunities are opening up at present for specific training and further professional development. At present, subject leaders maintain an adequate curriculum that engages pupils in an enjoyable way and provides for their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have become a stronger force since the previous inspection because of the training they have undertaken and the quality of the information they now demand. Their astute appointments to the most senior positions are proving to be successful and they clearly share with them the direction and ambition for the school. Governors understand national data and measure their school's outcomes against that. They are aware of potential barriers to pupils' achievement so equality of opportunity is at the heart of pupil premium spending. Pupils benefit from the support they receive and governors check carefully to make sure that this continues to be the case. Governors are aware of the need to establish sustainable good quality provision for physical education. Their action plan for the use of sports funding is clearly aimed at improving teachers' skills and pupils' physical well-being. Governors know that ways of checking that those outcomes are achieved are an essential part of their action plan. The governing body is determined that the school will improve quickly. To that end, governors are watchful over the progress of new teachers especially and maintain a clear overview of quality in the whole school and how it is linked to teachers' salaries. Financial matters are managed efficiently and safeguarding arrangements meet the government's requirements.

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	131451
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	429647

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Fannon
Headteacher	Amanda Turner
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2009
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