

Wilthorpe Primary School

Greenfoot Lane, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 1EG

Inspection dates

19–20 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils are not making enough progress in reading and writing.
- Not enough pupils supported by the pupil premium make similar progress to that of others in the school and the gaps between their attainment and that of others in the school are too wide.
- Teaching requires improvement because too often, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading and writing are not high enough, so work is not hard enough and does not always suit the needs of all pupils.
- The leadership of teaching requires improvement because checks on the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough.
- Not all teachers consistently check how well pupils are doing and when this is the case, the most-able pupils spend too long on tasks that they find too easy and less-able pupils are not given enough help.
- Senior leaders, including governors, do not judge accurately the performance of the school by taking into account the progress of all groups of pupils in lessons and over time.
- Sometimes pupils do not behave well and their behaviour disrupts their learning and that of others.
- Behaviour around the school is not always good because the school's systems to promote good behaviour are not implemented consistently.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress in reading and spelling has improved. By the end of Year 6, pupils have well-developed skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils make good progress in Year 6 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage because their needs are met well.
- The progress that all pupils make in mathematics throughout the school is good, because of good teaching. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is high.
- The senior leaders of the school have led the amalgamation of two schools well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, taught by 19 teachers. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and the KS1 deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read. They also met formally with pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.
- Inspectors observed pupils in the playground at break time and in the dining hall at lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with the Chair of Governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Responses from 73 parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. Inspectors also held discussions with several parents from the Parent Council and in the playground during the inspection. They also considered evidence from the surveys parents have completed in the last 12 months.
- Inspectors scrutinised the pupils' work. They also looked at school documentation, including data on pupils' progress, the school's development plan, evidence from the school's checks on how well it is doing, evidence of monitoring records and the arrangements for safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the questionnaire responses from 27 members of staff.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Marsh

Additional Inspector

Angela Shaw

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils is White British.
- A smaller than average proportion of pupils speaks English as a second language.
- There are fewer than the average number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding. (In this school, the pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after.)
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement for special education needs is below average.
- In January 2013, the school opened as a primary school, coming from a separate infant and junior school. The school operates on a split site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better in Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading and writing, so that pupils make good or better progress, particularly those pupils supported by the pupil premium and the most able by:
 - checking how well pupils are doing more often and using the information to reshape the learning to meet pupils' needs and to move learning on more quickly
 - ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can do so that activities planned are appropriate for pupils' needs and provide all pupils with the level of interest that encourages them to learn
 - ensuring that marking is more frequent and that the guidance pupils are given on how they can improve their work is of a good quality and that pupils have the opportunity to respond.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance by:
 - ensuring that there are strong procedures for gaining an accurate view of the school's performance and leaders can quickly act upon areas of weakness
 - ensuring that leaders, including middle managers, have the skills to assess the quality of teaching in their own areas of responsibility accurately in order to challenge underachievement at all levels effectively.
- Improve pupils' behaviour so that it is at least good by:
 - ensuring that there are established routines to support good behaviour and the smooth transition between different aspects of work and that these routines are used consistently
 - developing systems that ensure pupils' behaviour is managed well around the school and that pupils are supervised well at all times.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make enough progress in reading and writing. In Key Stage 1 attainment is improving, but progress is not rapid enough in reading and writing. Too few of the most able pupils reach the higher levels in reading and writing at the end of both Key Stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, the progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium is too far behind that of other pupils in reading and writing.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below the levels typically expected for their age. Children make good progress because the quality of teaching is good and matches their needs well. However, when children are learning out of doors their progress is not as good as with indoor activities.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is broadly average. However, their attainment in writing is significantly below average.
- The teaching of phonics (the letters and the sounds they make) in the Reception class and Key Stage 1 has improved and this is beginning to provide pupils with a secure start to their reading. Despite this, pupils are still not confidently applying these skills when tackling unfamiliar words in reading and spelling. The school has taken good action to prioritise reading. For example, pupils who are not making good progress are now identified and supported well. Improved library provision for pupils in both key stages and better teaching are starting to encourage pupils to read widely and to be passionate about reading.
- The 2013 end of Key Stage 2 test results showed that those pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium funding were a year behind other pupils in reading and writing. The school is not taking good enough steps to ensure that the gap in attainment between these pupils and others in English is narrowing. In mathematics the school has been successful in narrowing the gap between these pupils and others at Key Stage 2.
- In mathematics, pupils' progress is good. Pupils of all abilities make better than expected progress in the school, seen in the good standards pupils reach by the end of Year 6. This is also reflected in the progress made by pupils in mathematics lessons and in the pupils' mathematics books, where teachers' written feedback helps pupils to understand what they have done well and how they could do even better. In both key stages there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils studying pollution in science created tally charts of different types of pollution they found in their local park such as plastic litter, paper litter and cans.
- The most-able pupils do not consistently make good progress in reading and writing because teachers do not provide enough activities to give them the challenge they need. In mathematics, the most-able pupils make good progress and reach the higher levels in external tests.
- The attainment of pupils currently in Key Stage 1 and those who left Key Stage 1 recently who have special educational needs, is below average. However, this is being addressed well by the leaders in school, including the special educational needs coordinator and, as a result pupils not in Year 3 with special educational needs are doing better and the gap of attainment is closing.
- The weaker achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the variable attainment of pupils with special educational needs demonstrate that the school leaders, although aware of the problem, are not yet providing all pupils with equal opportunities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because the teaching of English is not consistently good. In English, the work is sometimes too easy for pupils, which prevents them from progressing well. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils and plans do not consistently take into consideration the pupils' different levels of ability, particularly the most-able pupils. This means that activities do not always suit pupils' needs.

- Routines that ensure good behaviour and smooth transitions from one activity to another are not securely in place. In these instances, time is wasted and some pupils do not behave well.
- There are not as many opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy skills meaningfully in other subjects as is the case with mathematics. In pupils' topic books, writing is not marked regularly enough and there is not an expectation that pupils will persevere and finish their work and apply the skills learnt in English lessons to writing in other contexts.
- Teachers do not check regularly how well pupils have understood what they are learning, and so do not adapt the activities accordingly, to support if necessary or to provide greater challenge. In English, unlike in mathematics, teachers do not consistently build on what pupils already know, particularly the most-able pupils, and this slows their progress.
- Teaching is consistently strong in Year 6, where pupils also make the most progress. Teaching in mathematics is good and particularly strong at Key Stage 2, with teachers making sure that pupils understand what they need to know before moving on to the next step in their learning.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is also good. Teachers are skilful in both Year 6 and the Early Years Foundations stage in questioning and have effective strategies to keep children and pupils interested and focused throughout the activities. Equally, on these occasions, pupils' behaviour is at least good and they show good attitudes and real enthusiasm for learning.
- Where teaching assistants have specialist training and work with pupils who have special educational needs, they support pupils well and ensure that they can participate well in lessons. Where teaching assistants work to support better progress for certain groups, including pupils who receive support from the pupil premium funding, the teaching is less strong and not yet making a strong enough difference.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. It is more effective in mathematics, in particular in the marking of what pupils have done well and how they can move their learning on. However, the marking of pupils' books in English and topic books is less strong. Often, there is little guidance offered to the pupils to show them what they need to do to improve and there are occasions when errors are not identified, which means pupils continue to make the same errors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. In those lessons where learning does not capture pupils' interest and where their particular needs are not closely matched by the activities and resources, many lose interest and the motivation to learn.
- When this happens pupils are not always willing to follow teachers' instructions. Some teachers fail to make sure that pupils do as they are told the first time they are asked.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement, even though some good improvements have been made. This is because pupils' conduct outside of lessons, around the school and in the playground is not always good. There are times of the day when pupils are overcrowded in small areas and adults do not respond quickly enough to make sure they move on to where they need to be. In these situations, pupils become noisy and there are incidents of pupils pushing one another, mostly accidentally, because they are too crowded.
- The school's behaviour records show that there was a sharp rise in the number of serious incidents of poor behaviour which resulted in exclusions over a 12-month period. However, in the past six months, the number has fallen and some pupils who previously behaved badly have made significant improvements to their behaviour. This is as a result of strong strategies of support for these pupils and a concerted effort to engage with their parents to support the school in its efforts to diminish serious behaviour incidents.
- The school ensures that pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe. There are opportunities through lessons and specialist events for pupils to understand about how to use the Internet safely. Pupils report that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school which is reflected in the strong attendance of pupils and good punctuality to lessons. The large majority of parents and all staff state that behaviour is managed well in the school.

- Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of what bullying is and older pupils can describe different forms of bullying. Pupils and parents agree that bullying is rare and dealt with immediately and effectively when it occurs.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the checks made by senior and middle leaders on the quality of teaching and learning and on pupils' behaviour are not yet effective enough. Not enough account is taken of the progress individual pupils make and that of different groups such as the most able and those eligible for the pupil premium, when judging the quality of teaching.
- Although leaders have taken strong action to ensure that there is no longer weak teaching in the school, their view of provision and the effect this has on pupils' progress are sometimes overgenerous. Senior leaders and middle leaders are not making full use of the evidence that they have from their own system for tracking progress pupils' progress and the school's results in national tests, sometimes because their skills are not sharp enough in doing this.
- The headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders understand that raising pupils' achievement, most particularly in reading and writing in Key Stage 2, is the priority and have started to put good plans in place to support this. However, leaders accept that actions so far, such as the improved teaching of phonics, have not yet had time to improve the overall performance of the pupils in English.
- School leaders, and in particular governors, have not focused well enough on checking on the quality of support and subsequent progress of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. Thus the gaps in their attainment in English are not closing, despite a much better picture in mathematics.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, ensuring that children make good progress and that teaching focuses well on children's next steps in their learning. There is good provision for children to learn in a warm and welcoming environment where children's good personal and social development helps them learn how to cooperate with others.
- The school uses the Primary School Sport funding to provide expert sports teaching. Coaches come into school to provide effective training in physical education (PE). The teachers and teaching assistants observe and support these lessons so that they can learn from the coach. Some well-planned links with mathematics, for example, extend pupils' learning.
- The curriculum provides a full range of subjects that engage pupils' interest and enjoyment in learning. However, teachers' planning in different subjects is not always consistent enough to ensure that key skills in English are reinforced and securely established. There are enrichment opportunities for pupils to develop a better understanding of the world around them. For example, pupils recently visited the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds as part of their learning in history. Although behaviour still needs improving, much of the curriculum planning promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the opportunities they have for visits and of visitors who come to the school.
- Leaders identified a decline in pupils' standards for those entering Year 3 this year and they recognised that pupils' learning had slowed because of personal, social and emotional development. In the light of this, the school has set up a 'nurture base' for pupils who would benefit from the opportunity to develop these skills and this is beginning to support improved behaviour for those pupils whose behaviour had been particularly poor. It has also supported better progress for them.
- Coming from a newly amalgamated school, the headteacher has rightly focused on ensuring that there are good relationships between staff from the two sites. For instance, teachers from the two sites now always train together and have much stronger links than previously. All teachers who were asked praised the headteacher's work on this issue.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school since its amalgamation in January 2013. It rightly identified where leaders needed the most support and has been helping the school to use

the information about the progress of pupils currently in school to determine what the school needed to prioritise in making the necessary improvements and where further training is needed.

- The school ensures that safeguarding procedures are in place and meet current statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are committed to the school and the community and are keen to help the school move on. In general terms, the governors are realistic about the strengths of the school, as well as what requires improvement. However, they do not have a clear enough understanding of the details relating to either strengths or areas for improvement with regard to the progress pupils make. They are aware of budget limitations and, in general, use funding appropriately. For example, they know how the Primary School Sport funding is used to increase the quality of teaching and coaching in PE in the school. They know how much the school receives in pupil premium funding and how this is used, but do not understand how to evaluate the usefulness of money spent. Although they know that more needs to be done to ensure better progress for these pupils, they do not have a clear view of how the school is planning to achieve this and how to check, after a lapse of time, whether the school has been successful. The governing body has effective arrangements to ensure that pay awards are linked to teachers' and leaders' performance. They understand that a review of governance might recommend improvements, which they would be happy to make.

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	138393
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	430655

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	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Heggie
Headteacher	Claire Brady
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01226 205364
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