

Brocklewood Primary and Nursery School

Fircroft Avenue, Bilborough, Nottingham, NG8 3AL

Inspection dates

27–28 March and 23 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
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 has serious weaknesses.

- Pupils' progress is too slow in English and standards in speaking, reading and writing are too low. Pupils of different abilities do not achieve all they are capable of.
- Too much teaching is inadequate. The work set is sometimes too hard for some pupils or too easy for others.
- Staff do not plan enough activities that interest and motivate the boys to do well.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not make enough impact on accelerating their learning.
- Staff do not develop pupils' speaking skills well enough to enable them to become confident speakers using a wide vocabulary.
- Pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar are often poor.
- Pupils lose interest in learning when teaching is weak.
- Leaders do not always follow up areas already identified for improvement rigorously enough to check what progress is being made and what remains to be done.
- Leaders, other than the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, do not make enough impact on improving the quality of teaching and do not check the progress made by different groups of pupils rigorously enough.
- The school does not always deal effectively with the disruptive behaviour of a small minority of pupils who find it difficult to behave well.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior staff have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have begun to take effective action to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 6 generally make good progress.
- Most pupils get on well together, behave appropriately, and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed parts of 29 lessons. Several of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the special educational needs coordinator, and the literacy and numeracy leaders. A discussion with a representative of the local authority took place by telephone.
- There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to be considered, but inspectors spoke with several parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and listened to several pupils read. They also scrutinised documents, including the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documents, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- Following the inspection days on 27–28 March 2014, Her Majesty's Inspectors identified that some additional inspection evidence was required to confirm the inspection judgements. Jeremy Spencer HMI visited the school on 23 April 2014 to gather the additional evidence.

Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Judith Tulloch	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Capron	Additional Inspector
Jeremy Spencer	Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2012 when the adjoining infant and junior schools amalgamated to become a primary school.
- It is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Around one third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is a little more than average. About 10% of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is below average.
- The percentage of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is more than double the national average. In this school, this provides additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children. Because of the very small number of looked after children, they are not referred to in the report in order not to identify individuals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The percentage supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is a little above the national average.
- There have been several staff changes since the school opened.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching across the school is consistently good or better by:
 - improving the planning of lessons to ensure that work is not too hard or too easy for different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that activities interest the boys and motivate all pupils to produce their best work
 - making sure that pupils' work is marked regularly, the next steps of learning are made clear to pupils, and pupils respond appropriately to teachers' comments to accelerate their learning.
- Accelerate the development of pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills, and raise standards in English, by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas in more detail
 - ensuring that pupils, particularly those supported through additional funding, practise their reading regularly and receive effective targeted support to help them to address their previous underachievement
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their grammar, spelling and punctuation skills.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - setting out clear priorities for further improvement with sharp measures of success to identify the progress pupils make and how well teaching is improving
 - developing the skills of the wider leadership team to ensure that leaders support improvements to the quality of teaching more effectively, and check the rates of progress made by different groups of pupils more rigorously

- ensuring that the behaviour of a small minority of pupils does not have an adverse impact on the learning of others.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

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 management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate because there are wide variations in the rate of learning for pupils across the school. As a result, over time, the large majority of pupils of all abilities do not make enough progress.
- Children start at the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. While they often make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Year 6, in several other year groups pupils' progress is slow and, therefore, inadequate overall.
- Standards in Year 6 in the national tests in 2013 were well below average in reading and writing and only a little better in mathematics. Assessments in Year 2 indicated that standards were extremely low, with pupils well over a year behind pupils in most other schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Scrutiny of pupils' current work shows that too few pupils across the school reach the levels expected for their age. Not enough make the progress expected of them and relatively few make better than expected progress.
- Boys generally do not do as well as the girls. This is especially so in Key Stage 1, where there is a much bigger gap between boys and girls than seen nationally in all areas of their learning. There is also a gap in writing in Key Stage 2; some boys say that they do not enjoy writing.
- Pupils' speaking skills are often weak. Pupils do not speak confidently or add much detail to what they are thinking or describing. This affects their learning in most subjects.
- Pupils do not read enough to develop a love of books. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the check of pupils' knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) at the end of Year 1 was below average in 2013. Throughout the school, pupils are not confident in working out unfamiliar words.
- Many pupils make repeated errors when writing, and spelling and punctuation are poor. Pupils' handwriting is often untidy and their understanding of grammar is weak. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and in detail in order to develop higher-level skills.
- Mathematical skills are a little better than English skills but still require improvement. Pupils' lack of confidence in working out calculations and their inability to do this speedily hinder their progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress. The standards they reach are low, especially in reading. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make inadequate progress. While groups of pupils receive some additional support, this is not always effective or built on in subsequent activities.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional support to pupils and to enrich their learning through access to other activities, including school visits, but the impact of this funding is patchy. The achievement of this group of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2013 was below that of others in reading, where they were approximately a year behind their classmates. In writing, they were approximately six months behind and in mathematics about a term behind.
- Throughout the school, the most-able pupils do not progress quickly enough because tasks do not challenge them sufficiently. For example, pupils in Year 3 did not make enough progress

when cutting and sticking pictures of items seen in Tudor times and those seen today because not enough was expected of them in such tasks.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is too variable and there is too much from Year 1 to Year 5 that is inadequate. There is not enough that is consistently effective.
- Too often, staff do not use the information available about what pupils already know and can do to plan work that enables them to move their learning on. Tasks are sometimes too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. This was seen in two lessons in Key Stage 1, where pupils were trying to find the difference between two numbers by counting on. While staff demonstrated how to 'jump on' when using a number line, the demonstration was not clear and the work was too hard for many pupils who then struggled to find out the answers.
- Work in pupils' books also shows that teachers do not always pitch the work at an appropriate level. Pupils produce very few pieces of extended writing that enable them to use their imagination and develop higher-level skills. This means that few pupils, including the most able, make good progress. Discussions with pupils indicate that boys, in particular, are not motivated to write at length and in depth because the tasks set do not particularly interest them. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their accurate use of grammar, spelling and punctuation. This is evident in their written work.
- The organisation and management of activities are too variable. For example, in a mathematics session in Year 1, adults took too long organising activities and pupils were unsure about what they were supposed to do. This led to several becoming restless and noisy, which slowed their learning. Similarly, in a shared reading activity in Year 5, several boys who were not working with staff were unsure what they were expected to do and little learning took place.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. The school has clear procedures for marking, but samples of work show that these are not followed. Marking is not always done regularly. In addition, what is done does not always identify to pupils what they need to do to improve and makes little impact on accelerating their learning.
- The support of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, those who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is variable in quality. In too many activities, teaching assistants are static; they do not move around groups of pupils to identify who needs help to make better progress. Where support is provided, this is not always at the right level, and is often not targeted accurately enough to meet pupils' needs.
- Where teaching is most successful, especially in Year 6, staff make clear to pupils what is expected of them and work is challenging for those of different abilities. Similarly, in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes, staff have relatively high expectations of what the children can achieve. Phonics activities are well organised so that, for example, children enjoy searching for letter cards in the outdoor area and then learning what sounds the letters make.
- Staff display pupils' work well around the classrooms and extensive accommodation. This celebrates pupils' efforts and helps to raise their self-esteem. It provides an attractive working environment for all and encourages pupils to care for their school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In lessons where teaching is less effective, behaviour deteriorates and there is a lot of off-task chat, minor misbehaviour and squabbles. Where teaching is good, children engage fully in learning and most behave well.
- Lesson observations and pupils' books show that some pupils do not make sufficient effort with their work. This is untidily presented, with little care taken to write grammatically or use correct spelling.
- Pupils are usually friendly and polite to each other and adults and most think they get on well together. The large majority behave well in the public areas of the school and are praised for their behaviour on outings and when visiting places of local interest. They respect their school and look after displays and equipment well.
- A small minority of pupils have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties which have an adverse impact on their learning and, at times, on the learning of those around them. Because the school has often worked successfully to maintain these pupils in mainstream education, more pupils with such difficulties join from out of the area. The school employs additional staff to work with these pupils and often with their families. Some staff have high-level skills, but there are not enough checks on the impact these pupils have on the learning of others.
- The proportion of pupils excluded temporarily from school because of poor behaviour or bullying is higher than in most schools. This is because staff make clear to everyone when behaviour is not acceptable.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Safeguarding requirements are met.
- Most pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They know that bullying is a repeated action. They identify and explain the different types that could occur, including cyber-bullying and racism. Several pupils believe there is some bullying in school, but are confident that staff deal with this well.
- The attendance of pupils has been low. The school is working effectively to address this. Staff follow up absences speedily and work with families of persistent absentees. Attendance has improved during the current year and is now closer to the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Despite the weaknesses still evident in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since amalgamation, provision has started to improve. The stated 'no excuses' culture is starting to permeate the school. Senior staff accurately recognise both the strengths and weaknesses in provision. Joint lesson observations indicate, for example, that senior leaders are particularly clear about what makes teaching inadequate.
- Leaders are taking effective action to improve pupils' attendance; expectations of pupils' attendance have been raised, and absences are followed up rigorously. Appropriate support has also been provided to families to encourage them to send their children to school more frequently.

- Senior leaders are taking effective action to identify and address weak teaching and there is evidence that the quality of teaching is beginning to improve. The school has a regular cycle of activities, including lesson observations and the sampling of pupils' work, to check the performance of teachers. Several staff have been involved in programmes to improve their teaching, and additional training activities are available to support those requiring further development. Some of the work undertaken has already been successful and moved teaching forward. Difficult messages have been given to staff about their performance. There have also been several staff changes. There is still, however, not enough good teaching evident.
- Subject leaders understand their roles but do not make enough contribution to supporting improvements in the quality of teaching. Senior leaders have recognised this and have begun to develop the skills of middle leaders to enable them to support staff more effectively.
- The analysis of data on pupils' progress, particularly by middle leaders, is not used well enough to pinpoint underachievement and to drive further improvements. As a consequence, school planning to address weaknesses lacks precision. Actions identified in the school's improvement plans have not been revisited regularly or pursued persistently enough to check whether plans are on track to drive rapid improvement.
- There is a suitable emphasis on numeracy and literacy in the subjects taught, although there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length and in depth in topic work. Classroom activities, assemblies and religious education help pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and an understanding of the lives and experiences of others.
- Additional funding for the pupil premium has been spent on extra staffing and to enrich eligible pupils' learning, including in the arts. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and acts to prevent disadvantage. However, the impact of additional expenditure has been variable and has not closed the gaps in pupils' learning.
- The school has used the additional funding for sports to employ a sports apprentice to support the work of the existing sports coach. This has enabled the school to provide a greater range of lunchtime sports activities, and to increase the participation in out-of-school competitions. This work is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' health and well-being.
- Very few parents and carers responded to the online questionnaire. The school acknowledges that it has had limited success in engaging with many parents and getting them to be involved in their children's learning. There are firm plans in place to address this.
- The local authority has links with the school. Over time, the support provided has not been effective enough in moving provision forward. Recently a range of more appropriate support has been provided but it is too early to judge the full impact of this. The school has also been working with a national leader of education (NLE) since January 2014. Again, it is too early to judge the impact this support is making on improving the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - In the past, the governing body has not required leaders and managers to explain and account for pupils' performance and the quality of teaching well enough. Governors have been too accepting of the status quo and made too many allowances for low standards. Governors have recognised this for themselves and have begun to take effective action to improve. For example, governors have started to focus on standards more successfully through the standards committee that all governors are required to attend. Some governors visit the

school regularly to see the school in action and to gather evidence about the school's performance against key priorities for improvement. Leaders have been active in seeking new governors with a range of relevant skills so that the governing body can develop its role in holding the school to account for pupils' progress. The evaluation of the impact of additional pupil premium funding and of the support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has not been rigorous enough, with the result that the achievement of these pupils has not improved quickly enough. There are links between performance and pay, but some roles are historic and not linked well enough to current performance and the progress made by pupils.

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	137862
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	430646

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	555
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Munro
Headteacher	Heather Tarrant
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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