

# Derwent Community School

St Mark's Road, Derby, DE21 6AL

**Inspection dates** 4–5 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Not enough pupils across the school, including in the early years, make consistently good progress, so standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- While progress is improving rapidly this year, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding from previous years that have not been filled.
- The attendance of pupils is below average and too many arrive late for school. This affects their readiness to learn and their progress.
- Teachers do not ensure that work is challenging enough for pupils, particularly the most able.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always identify areas for improvement or revisit these to check what progress has been made.
- Pupils do not all try their hardest in lessons. They do not always contribute to discussions or work hard to improve their work.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She has acted decisively to eradicate weak teaching and poor management.
- The staff are a united team who fully support the headteacher's drive for improvement.
- Senior staff and subject leaders have a good grasp of what the data tell them about pupils' progress and they now use this well to improve the quality of teaching.
- The work of the safeguarding manager in liaising with parents and external agencies is highly effective.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Pupils acquire a good awareness of British values, and understand the importance of balancing rights and responsibilities.
- Governance is effective and governors fulfil their role of 'critical friend' to the school well.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and a range of other school activities. Several lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked in detail at the work in pupils’ books and heard several pupils read.
- Planned and informal discussions were held with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) to offer a representative picture of parents’ opinions of the school. Inspectors spoke to several parents during the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the 35 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school’s own information about pupils’ progress and minutes of the meetings of the governing body. They also took account of records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Angela Knowles

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the Nursery group on a part-time basis and the Reception group full-time. The school has recently opened provision for two-year-olds; this is registered separately and was not inspected on this visit.
- Most pupils are White British. A below-average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. About half of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is more than double the national average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for those known previously to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- Key Stage 1 is currently led by a temporary leader. There have been several other staff changes and three newly qualified staff joined the school this year.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has been visited on two occasions by Her Majesty's Inspectors to monitor the progress being made.
- In 2014, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that:
  - all activities contain a high level of challenge for those of different abilities, and particularly the most able
  - all teachers encourage pupils to work hard and try their best at all times
  - the marking of pupils' work consistently identifies what pupils need to improve, and such areas are revisited in subsequent work
  - gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are identified and filled.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning by:
  - encouraging pupils to try out and improve their ideas by sharing them with others more readily
  - working with parents to improve the attendance and punctuality of those pupils who fail to come to school regularly or on time.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership that has been pivotal to the improvement made in the school, particularly in the last year. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other staff in the push to further improve the progress pupils make. All staff work well together and share a determination to enable the pupils to reach their full potential and develop as well-rounded individuals.
- The headteacher took decisive action to address weaknesses in leadership and teaching. Assessments at Key Stage 1, for example, were found to be far too generous and did not provide an accurate picture of pupils' prior attainment for teachers at Key Stage 2 to build upon. Leaders have ensured that these assessments are now accurate.
- Leaders have worked with considerable success to overcome the barriers to improvement, including a legacy of previously weak teaching and learning. Some staffing issues took a little while to resolve. The pace of improvement has risen, particularly in the past year, and leaders are now making a strong impact throughout the school. There are still a few gaps in pupils' learning that adversely affect pupils' progress, which is why achievement is not yet good.
- Systems for managing teachers' performance are thorough and effective. Leaders have an accurate view of what works well and what remains to be improved. The school's leaders and governors have not shied away from making difficult decisions in order to eradicate inadequate teaching. Teaching is improving rapidly across the school, but is not yet consistently good.
- Staff who have subject or key stage responsibilities coach those who are new to the school or where progress is less secure. This sharing of good practice, coupled with well-chosen training activities, ensures that teaching and learning are improving well.
- The early years leader has recently returned to the role and has a good grasp of what works well in the early years and where further development is needed. She and other staff have improved the range of activities provided, including by making more effective use of the outdoor areas.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has done much successful work to improve assessment procedures. Leaders have worked very closely with the local authority and identified that previous assessments in Key Stage 1 were inaccurate and not reflected in the quality of the pupils' work. This, in turn, had a negative impact on the rates of progress the older pupils appeared to make. This has been resolved, and teacher assessment and progress tracking are now carefully monitored by school leaders and the local authority.
- The school has worked successfully to review the curriculum and make it interesting and relevant for the pupils. Activities are broad and well balanced, with a clear focus on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Imaginative topics for the older pupils, including the current focus on 'Crime and Punishment', enable many to become more thoughtful young citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities. This helps them prepare for their next stage of education and life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given good support, as seen in the focus in assemblies and in personal, social and emotional development activities. Pupils' involvement in drawing up class and school rules helps develop their social and moral awareness. Visits to places of educational interest such as 'The Galleries of Justice' help them to understand the importance of concepts such as the law and democracy, and are much valued by the pupils. The school has worked with some success to encourage as many pupils as possible to visit different places of worship, including a local mosque. This is to help them develop tolerance and understanding of the lives and cultures of the other groups of pupils represented in the school and local community.
- The school takes good care to ensure that the safeguarding of pupils meets current requirements and is

effective. Leaders check that staff training is up to date and that procedures to keep pupils safe are known to, and followed by, all staff.

- The school uses pupil premium funding well to support the academic and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. This includes additional teaching time to boost literacy and numeracy skills and pupils' self-confidence. Funding is also used effectively to support small class sizes in key year groups and visits to places of educational interest to broaden the pupils' experiences. The impact of these initiatives is carefully monitored, which illustrates the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and countering discrimination of any kind. The impact is that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is accelerating and some now make better progress than their classmates.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used effectively to support several different activities. Staff have had training to increase their skills and confidence in teaching a range of sports. The school has developed competitive teams for netball and football, and has established additional sports clubs to include more pupils.
- The impact of the work with the local authority is good. The local authority rightly identifies the considerable and effective work of the headteacher and staff team in moving the school forwards. The strong focus on improving pupils' progress ensures that leaders continually evaluate where the school is on its journey of improvement. This ensures that the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- The majority of parents spoken to during the inspection are pleased with the quality of education and care provided for their children. Several spoke with warmth about how well the staff support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school has improved and is now effective. Governors have received training in how to develop their roles and understand what the data tell them about the progress of groups of pupils. Governors keep themselves well informed about the quality of teaching and the curriculum through a range of activities, including visits to classrooms. This enables them to work increasingly effectively as 'critical friends of the school' and to hold it to account for the standards achieved.
  - Governors ensure that they use the full range of information available when making decisions about teachers' pay awards so that a clear link is maintained between salary progression for teachers and their effectiveness. Governors have been supportive of the headteacher when taking difficult decisions over staffing.
  - Governors ensure that the school meets the requirements for safeguarding.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because several pupils lack positive attitudes to learning and do not try their hardest with their work. This is shown in some pupils' books and, for example, when pupils do not try hard enough to improve their work.
- Throughout the school, pupils do not always join in discussions but wait for others to offer their ideas. This means that they do not develop their vocabulary or the skills and confidence to explain their ideas to others.
- Most pupils behave correctly when they are well supervised and, in assemblies, behaviour is good. Here, pupils behave well with minimal intervention from staff.
- At break and lunchtimes, most pupils get on well with others, although there are a few disagreements; for example, in the queue for lunch. Most pupils know what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour, although they do not always respond quickly to the guidance of midday staff.
- Pupils' attendance has been below the national average. Nevertheless, attendance has significantly improved this year and, at 94%, is now close to the national average. However, there is still a small

number of pupils who are frequent absentees. The safeguarding manager works closely with the education welfare service, with some success, to stress to parents the importance of regular attendance and the impact that absence has on pupils' learning. Quite a number of pupils arrive late for school, which hinders their preparation for learning.

- A very small number of parents have concerns about the behaviour of a minority of pupils and do not feel that the school resolves such issues quickly enough. School records indicate staff go to great lengths to support pupils who experience difficulty in managing their behaviour.
- The strong pastoral care of the pupils and their families allows several to remain in the school when they might otherwise be at risk of exclusion.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Procedures to check the suitability of adults to work with the children are carried out conscientiously. Site security is checked carefully and staff ensure indoor and outdoor areas provide a safe and pleasant learning environment for all.
- The school works effectively with pupils to help them understand how to keep themselves and others safe. This includes helping pupils to recognise the possible dangers around them and to understand what each should do to ensure everyone is kept safe. Pupils are fully involved in drawing up school and class rules. They understand that they have a voice, and that their ideas are listened to and taken seriously.
- Much successful work is done with the pupils to understand what behaviour is appropriate and what is not acceptable. Pupils understand that bullying is a deliberate and repeated action. They know what cyber-bullying and racism are. They know that calling each other names is hurtful. Pupils believe that a very small number of pupils behave inappropriately but recognise that bullying in any form is never tolerated in school. All of those spoken to say they feel safe in school.

### The quality of teaching

#### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school requires improvement, including in reading, writing and mathematics. The level of challenge provided by the work set is not always high enough to ensure that pupils of all abilities are consistently stretched in their work. Too many tasks are the same or very similar for all groups. This has an adverse impact on the progress made by all pupils, and particularly by the most able.
- The work in pupils' books shows that it is marked regularly, but the marking is often very brief. Sometimes there is limited guidance about the quality of the work produced and little to show pupils how to improve it. Occasionally, staff make a comment on pupils' work that they respond to but this is not consistently the case across the school. Work is not always corrected or revisited in much detail to identify if mistakes have been corrected.
- Staff offer encouragement to pupils but do not ensure that all pupils are involved in discussions. Much has been done to extend the quality of pupils' contributions before they begin writing. However, some pupils do not make the most of these opportunities. For example, in a Year 6 history lesson, some pupils did not offer their ideas about what a painting showed them of life in Victorian times. As a result, they were not able to extend their speaking skills or improve the detail in their writing.
- Gaps in pupils' knowledge from previous years, when teaching was weaker, are not all identified. This means that pupils have not all made up the ground that they have lost in the past.
- Throughout the school, there are strong working relationships between staff and pupils. Several pupils say they like their teachers and want to do well to please them. Where learning is most effective, such as in Year 2 phonics (the sounds that letters make) activities, staff set tasks that interest and motivate pupils and that are well matched to their different abilities.
- Teachers' management of pupils is good and lessons are conducted in an orderly fashion. Teaching

assistants are deployed well, often to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils new to speaking English are well supported and often make rapid progress in their learning. Disadvantaged pupils are also well supported by additional teachers and support staff; this has a positive impact on the progress they make.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children start in the early years with experiences and skills that are generally below those typical for their age. Most settle well and take a keen interest in what is happening around them. However, the progress they make requires improvement overall.
- In the Year 1 national phonics checks in 2014, pupils' skills were below the national average. Nevertheless, results showed a marked improvement on the previous year.
- Pupils in Year 2 re-taking the phonics test last year did not do well because of previously ineffective teaching. There have been staff changes and the school has improved the teaching of phonics. As a result, progress has improved. During the inspection, lower attaining pupils in Year 2 and those who have special educational needs made good progress in blending sounds together by 'crashing' these into another letter to make 'ar', 'ur' and 'ow'. This helped them learn more about each of the sounds and to find words containing them.
- In 2014, standards in Key Stage 1 were well below average in reading, mathematics and writing. Pupils were the equivalent of a year behind pupils nationally.
- Standards in Key Stage 2 were similarly well below average. They were around a year behind pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and almost two terms behind in writing. The attainment of the boys was especially low. The progress these pupils made appeared to be weak. However, when new school leaders were appointed, they worked closely with the local authority, who identified that assessment in Key Stage 1 had previously been inaccurate and overestimated what these pupils' knew, understood and could do when they were in Year 2.
- Careful scrutiny of the school's own assessment information indicates that pupils across the school are making rapidly improving progress and the proportion making good progress is growing. The sample of pupils' work and observations of pupils' achievement show that there is still some variation, however, in the rate that different groups progress.
- Pupils' reading skills are rising but still require improvement overall. Most of the younger pupils have reasonable understanding of letters and the sounds they make, and they use this skill in phonics to work out unfamiliar words. However, several do not understand the meaning of some of the words they read and lack confidence in their skills. Pupils' reading records show that few pupils read at home, even though the school has done much to encourage parents to support their children's reading.
- Pupils' writing skills are also improving, although they still require further improvement. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge of correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. While they write for a range of reasons, and sometimes enthusiastically, their written work is not always in sufficient depth and detail to move them to the higher levels.
- Pupils' mathematics skills are much improved on previous years but are still not good. A lot of work has been done to improve pupils' problem-solving skills but progress is hindered by their sometimes insecure knowledge of numbers and addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Several pupils struggle to work out their calculations speedily and accurately.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is accelerating, in line with that of other pupils. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils did well in comparison to their classmates in reading and in grammar, punctuation and spelling, although there was still a gap in their writing and mathematics. In reading they were about two terms ahead of their classmates but they were almost a year behind pupils nationally. In grammar, punctuation and spelling, disadvantaged pupils were a term ahead of their classmates but two terms

behind pupils nationally. In writing, they were about one term behind their classmates and two terms behind pupils nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged pupils were over a term behind their classmates and more than a year behind pupils nationally.

- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also requires improvement because it is not yet consistently good. With well-planned support, some pupils make good gains in their levels of confidence, but not all pupils receive such effective support.
- Pupils speaking English as an additional language make similar overall progress to their classmates. Those new to speaking English often make rapid progress when working individually or in small groups with teachers or support staff.
- The progress made by the most-able pupils requires improvement. This is in part because tasks are not always challenging enough to ensure they consistently work at the higher levels. No pupils are identified as working at Level 6 in any subject.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- Children join the Nursery or Reception classes with skills that are below those typical for their ages. This is particularly the case in their personal and social development and their speaking and listening skills. Many use quite a limited range of words and speak in little detail. They also have little understanding of numbers and lack creative imagination. Overall they make progress that requires improvement. However, assessment information and observations indicate that a growing proportion make good progress. When they join Year 1, many have not reached the levels expected for their age.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement because they are very mixed. Their concentration and application to the task in hand are not always good and some do not try hard to improve what they are doing. Most happily come to school, as seen when entering Nursery at the start of the day, and they like the company of the adults they work with. They join in activities. For their age, they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including in outdoor activities.
- The quality of teaching and learning requires improvement. In some activities, planning takes little account of the different abilities of the children and 'choosing time' appears to lack a purpose and is not linked to any other task. This means that the activities do little to help children to progressively develop their skills and learning. They make the most progress when the tasks they can choose from link to what is being taught in sessions led by the teacher.
- Leadership and management in the early years is now good because the leader has a clear grasp of what works well and where improvements are still required. All staff encourage parents to stay to some morning activities and learn how to help their children, although this meets with mixed success. The effective work of the early years leader, together with that of the headteacher, ensures a strong focus on improving teaching and learning, including through supporting newly qualified staff.

## 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>	112782
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	453718

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	245
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Futers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Housden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 346222
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