

# Ambergate Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	112786
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	378560
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Louise Oram
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Webster
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Toadmoor Lane Ambergate Belper DE56 2GN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 852204
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378560



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Eight lessons were observed over five hours and three teachers were observed teaching. The inspector also observed a school assembly and the before- and after-school clubs. He looked at pupils' work, heard them read, and analysed the school's data on their progress. The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. He took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. The inspector analysed 62 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a small primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress. Although groupings are flexible, pupils are mainly taught in three mixed-age classes. The school has received a number of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, National Healthy Schools Status and the Activemark award. The school provides before- and after-school clubs that are managed by the governing body.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. The headteacher has successfully developed a strong sense of teamwork and ambition amongst all staff. It is not yet outstanding because the achievement of boys in English does not match that of girls, and teaching is not consistently of a high enough quality to ensure that pupils make excellent progress.
- Achievement is good and all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good overall progress. Staff have successfully focused on raising attainment in mathematics over the last two years. As a result, standards have risen to be well above average. The current priority is to raise attainment in English. Good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is helping to improve reading skills, but the strategies for improving boys' writing have yet to have a full impact on attainment.
- Pupils' good progress is due to much good and some outstanding teaching. There are, however, a few inconsistencies. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to review and consolidate learning as lessons progress. While there are some examples of very effective marking of pupils' work, in some instances pupils are not provided with enough guidance on what they must do in order to improve, and boys are not always challenged enough to produce their very best work.
- Pupils behave extremely well. They know all about how to keep themselves safe, and their parents and carers agree that they are kept very safe. Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy school and their exemplary behaviour underpins successful learning. The curriculum strongly promotes pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. Rising standards, particularly in mathematics, and successful teaching and learning demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

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

- Raise boys' attainment in writing to match that of girls by:
  - making full use of assessment information to identify and tackle particular weaknesses
  - ensuring that they are consistently challenged to produce their best work.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by ensuring that:
  - all pupils are fully engaged in reviewing their learning as lessons proceed
  - oral and written feedback provides clear guidance on their next steps in learning.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children's skills on entry to Reception are generally in line with expectations for their age. They make good progress and by the end of the year, most exceed the goals expected for their age. However, progress in the development of boys' reading and mathematical skills is stronger than in writing and remains so throughout the school. Having successfully focused on raising attainment in mathematics, attention has now turned to strategies for raising attainment in writing and particularly that of boys. The strong emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening, and social skills from the start is particularly successful. The regular teaching of reading underpins above-average standards in reading at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This is mainly because younger pupils develop a secure knowledge of letters and sounds that provides them with the skills necessary to work out new or difficult words. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. This is because their needs are carefully assessed and they are sensitively supported with good challenge in class, or receive specialist individual or small group support.

Pupils typically make good progress because they quickly get down to learning at the start of the school day and enjoy their lessons. Their willingness to learn makes a significant contribution to the purposeful learning atmosphere. Pupils respond well to interesting and challenging activities and demonstrate the ability to work effectively, both independently and collaboratively. This was exemplified in an excellent lesson where Year 5 and 6 pupils explored the fundamental beliefs of Sikhism and the teachings of Guru Nanak. Pupils' discussions generated plenty of ideas and all made rapid progress in developing their research and writing skills because they were actively engaged throughout the lesson. All parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire agree that their children make good progress, and their views are endorsed by pupils and inspection evidence.

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## Quality of teaching

A particular strength of teaching is the strong teamwork between teachers and support staff. This ensures the needs of all pupils in the mixed-age classes are met well. All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between teachers and pupils. Because pupils are very willing to meet teachers' high expectations of behaviour, lessons proceed at a good pace and without disruption. This contributes significantly to pupils' good progress and the rise in attainment over the last three years. The quality of teaching has a major impact on pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their personal and academic development is also supported by a well-planned curriculum that provides pupils with a range of interesting visits and experiences. By the time they leave school, most pupils are mature individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Classrooms are lively learning environments and lessons are presented in an interesting variety of styles to capture pupils' interest. An excellent example of this was observed in a mathematics lesson with Years 3 and 4 pupils. In this lesson, pupils were developing their understanding of how data can be presented and interpreted in a pictograph. Every pupil was actively engaged because the learning tasks were practical and not confined to the classroom. All parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire feel that the overall quality of teaching is good. This view is accurate and shared by pupils. However, in some lessons, not enough use is made of ongoing assessment to probe and evaluate pupils' learning at intervals during the lesson. In most lessons teachers give immediate feedback verbally during lessons, but this is not always the case and the quality of written marking is variable. In some instances it is restricted to encouraging comments rather than detailed feedback on what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' excellent behaviour is a significant strength of the school. Exemplary standards have been maintained over time. Records, comments from pupils and responses to the questionnaires from staff, pupils, parents and carers show that similar standards of behaviour are the norm. Pupils have a clear understanding of what might be seen as bullying, including name calling, and all were adamant that no bullying of any kind takes place. As one pupil said when asked about bullying 'We don't do bullying at Ambergate!'

Pupils make very positive contributions to keeping the school safe. For example, older pupils regularly support younger pupils and act as buddies at playtime. Pupils' excellent attitudes underpin learning, particularly when working independently or collaboratively. They clearly enjoy coming to school and, as a consequence, attendance is above average and punctuality is good. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents and carers agreed that their children are kept safe in school. Pupils show good awareness of how to behave safely, particularly in practical lessons such as design and technology and science. They also demonstrate a good awareness of how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during their journeys to

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and from school. Pupils are mature, open and able to discuss and relate to sensitive issues that affect themselves or others.

## **Leadership and management**

The drive and determination of the headteacher, with the full support of staff and governors, has brought systematic improvement since the previous inspection. For example, the shared vision of all leaders, informed by accurate self-evaluation, has established a creative curriculum which enhances pupils' learning experiences and skills. This adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The critical skills programme promotes the development and application of key skills well because of the extent to which pupils are required to take responsibility for their own learning. The learning strategy also secures strong bonds of friendship between younger and older pupils. Awareness of cultural diversity is promoted well through links with pupils from very different backgrounds in schools at home and abroad.

Good quality professional development has a strong impact on all aspects of the school's work. It has had a marked effect on, for example, developing skills in the teaching of mathematics. The governing body is well structured and shows a strong level of commitment. It has good first-hand knowledge about the school's strengths and weaknesses and is not afraid to question or challenge. Safeguarding procedures are secure and meet government requirements. The school is a very inclusive community where staff have good knowledge of individual pupils and their families. This underpins the school's clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. Staff work hard to ensure that all groups of pupils make similar progress, as seen in the current focus on boys' writing, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. This is recognised by parents and carers. Virtually all who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed total satisfaction with their children's experience at the school. One, capturing the views of many, said, 'It is a lovely school with fantastic community spirit and a kind and well respected teaching staff.' Strong school leadership, the good record of raising achievement and the firm commitment to continued improvement indicate the school's good capacity to improve further.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



12 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Ambergate Primary School, Belper, DE56 2GN**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I inspected your school. Your views were very helpful and I enjoyed our discussions with those of you I spoke to in lessons, in meetings and around the school. Thank you too, to those of you who completed the questionnaire. The school provides you with a good quality of education and your attainment is above average at the end of Year 6. However, boys do not do quite as well as girls in English. I have asked your teachers to do all they can to make sure that you always try to produce your best writing, and the boys can help by always trying really hard.

You told me how much you enjoy school. I saw how you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. Your excellent behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons you are achieving well. In order to raise achievement even further I have asked your teachers to check your learning more frequently in the course of lessons. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and I have asked them, when they do this, to always give you clear guidance on what you have to do to improve it. You can all help yourselves to make more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

You told me how much you enjoy the many opportunities provided to develop and display your creative abilities and I observed how well these opportunities contribute to your excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. You also told me how adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. We think that everyone at Ambergate can work together to do these things, and that you will all want to play your part by continuing to look after each other and working really hard in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas  
Lead inspector

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