

Plover Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131265
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	360242
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Marianne Young HMI

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	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Keith Burbanks
Acting Headteacher	Mr Andrew Wright
Date of previous school inspection	06 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 17 lessons taught by 16 teachers in addition to observing pupils working in small groups and one assembly. Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, external consultants and a representative from the local authority. Discussions were held with pupils both formally and at social times. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including evidence presented by leaders relating to developments since the previous inspection. Inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires completed by 22 members of staff, 100 responses from pupils and 78 from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well pupils achieve in English particularly, and the extent to which standards and progress in both English and mathematics affects the quality of pupils' work in other subjects.
- Whether teachers are using information about pupils' capabilities in order to plan and teach lessons which meet their individual needs.
- Using their knowledge of the school together with the support provided by the local authority, how are leaders ensuring that issues identified at the previous inspection improve so that the school can move forward?

Information about the school

Plover is a larger than the average size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above that normally seen. There is a broadly average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, however an above average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. This is due in part to the number of pupils presently in the school's specialist unit for those who are hearing impaired, many of whom travel long distances in order to attend the school. The majority of pupils are White British, but other ethnicities are represented. The acting headteacher took over his role, unexpectedly, in May 2011. The local authority has arranged, until 31 December 2011 initially, for external consultants to support all staff.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Insufficient progress has been made in relation to the key issues identified at the previous inspection. During that time, pupils' attainment in Year 6 has fallen, most notably in English and their overall attainment is low. The good progress made as a result of good quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not built upon as pupils move through the school. Consequently, pupils make inadequate progress and the school does not provide value for money.

Weaknesses in planning lessons that provide appropriate challenge for all ability groups combined with teachers' low expectations and missed opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their own learning, are the key factors that restrict the progress made by pupils. Inspectors saw evidence of incomplete work in pupil's books and too few demonstrated pride in presentation. Some teachers and support staff, especially those working with hearing impaired pupils, skilfully enable pupils to solve problems for themselves, others provide the answers too readily.

School leaders and the governing body have not ensured that their monitoring of the school's work and subsequent evaluation is appropriate and impacts successfully on improving pupils' progress. Staff report that they welcome the structured support they are receiving from the local authority consultants, for example, devising a rigorous programme of professional development and prioritising where improvements need to be made. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this work.

The school is a happy place where pupils are friendly and generally work well together. Ensuring that both staff and pupils emerged successfully from a difficult time last term has been achieved mainly due to the strong pastoral work done by the acting headteacher. Although attendance remains low, pupils welcome the recent class competitions now in place which are encouraging them to come to school regularly. Pupils' understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain is underdeveloped. This

is due, in part, to the lack of attention given to promoting community cohesion and the governing body recognises that this needs their urgent attention.

Although inspectors noted a willingness to accept support and some strengths within the school, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, some fragility and lack of direction, indicates that at present the school has insufficient capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attainment and progress pupils make in English by:
 - ensuring a common approach throughout the school to the teaching of handwriting and presentation of work
 - enabling pupils to produce quality written work in all subjects
 - building on the good habits of speaking and listening that pupils develop when in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Eradicate inadequate teaching and ensure that all lessons are at least good so that pupils make better progress and reach higher standards in all year groups by:
 - using available information about pupils' capabilities and previous progress in order to plan lessons that move at a good pace and keep pupils engaged
 - ensuring that teachers' marking is thorough and tells pupils how to improve
 - making sure that all pupils learn how to work independently and do not rely entirely on adult support.
- Ensure that all leaders adopt and develop the requisite skills so that they can provide a suitable system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision so that they can measure and demonstrate improvements in pupils' progress.
- Ensure that attendance improves in all year groups and that all pupils understand the importance of coming to school regularly.
- Ensure that the governing body takes a stronger role in promoting and planning community cohesion so that it is a common element throughout the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Since the previous inspection, pupils' attainment, especially in English has fallen and is significantly below that expected nationally for pupils at the end of Year 6. Weaknesses in attainment, particularly in writing, are having a significant impact on the quality of pupils' work in all subjects. Inspectors noted, both in lessons and when they looked at pupils' books that much work is poorly presented, incomplete and lacking the detail expected, especially from the older pupils. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 are also significantly below national expectations in both English and mathematics. Most pupils receive a secure start to their education and

acquire the skills and knowledge expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1. However, due to weaknesses in tracking pupils' learning, rates of progress and inconsistencies in the way lessons are planned, by the time pupils leave school at the age of 11, their progress and achievement are inadequate. Inspectors observed lessons in which pupils were making satisfactory progress. This is where lessons are planned to meet individuals' needs, although across the school this is rare. The skilled support received by hearing impaired pupils, either during lessons in the specialist unit or in the mainstream classes often enables them to make good progress. Nevertheless, weaknesses in pace and challenge that are apparent in some lessons, mean, that despite the good support hearing impaired pupils receive, progress for other groups of pupils is adversely affected.

Pupils report that they feel safe and have someone to whom they can turn if they have issues that need to be resolved. The before- and after-school club is popular with a number of different activities taking place. Here, and throughout the day, pupils socialise well together, responding sensibly and helpfully when some pupils find joining in during social times, difficult. Despite this community spirit shown by most pupils, their knowledge of different faiths and cultures is limited. Taking part in sporting activities is popular and most pupils know how to keep themselves fit and well. Although some pupils and a very few parents and carers having concerns about behaviour, inspection evidence indicated this to be satisfactory as pupils are friendly, polite to visitors and understand the consequences if they misbehave. Pupils have limited opportunities to take responsibilities, but those that do, for example, school councillors and playground leaders, take their roles seriously. Recently, school leaders have begun to promote regular attendance through class competitions and well publicised posters. Attendance rates are too low compared with the national average and this, together with pupils' weakness in English and mathematics, limits their development of workplace skills and preparation for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Inspectors observed too many lessons that did not meet the needs of all pupils. Since the previous inspection, teachers have not developed sufficiently their use of information about pupils' capabilities in order to provide appropriate challenge for all abilities in lessons. Inspectors observed lessons during which pupils finished their work quickly, with scant regard to its quality and then were allowed to do colouring or other unrelated activities until the end of the lesson. Marking in books is generally poor, although inspectors did note a few occasions where pupils were informed how to improve their work and comment on the work of others. Pupils have some opportunities to write at length in English, however, this is not apparent in other subjects. Although pupils have a coherent understanding of the sounds made by letters, a skill learned during the Early Years Foundation Stage, this is not being built on or developed further through the school. As a result, pupils rely on adults in the classroom to help them spell words and thus pupils' independence and research skills are underdeveloped.

Additional activities, such as residential opportunities and extra-curricular clubs, including working with pupils from other schools broadens pupils' interests, experiences and social skills. Pupils are taught about personal safety, how to access the internet appropriately and to understand about substance misuse, for example. An inconsistent approach during lessons to developing pupils' creative, literacy and numeracy skills impedes their progress in these areas.

The pastoral care afforded to all pupils is strong. The hearing impaired unit has good links with specialist clinics and support services which benefits their pupils significantly. Those pupils who have particular learning needs, including those who are hearing impaired, are looked after and well supported. Leaders recognise that some of the individual education plans for particular pupils identify their pastoral needs, but identifying their academic targets is less well represented. Consequently, these pupils are often encouraged to participate but with too much adult help and direction and insufficient regard to ensuring they understand and make progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher managed the school well during a difficult time following the untimely death of the previous headteacher. Staff report that they valued the acting headteacher's support and concern so that the school could continue to run smoothly from day-to-day. Together with the assistant headteacher, he is beginning to identify the key priorities for the school in order to improve pupils' progress and life-chances. All leaders welcome the additional support and guidance provided by the local authority as they recognise that there is insufficient rigour and focus to their work. Although the staff monitor lessons and review pupils' learning during progress

meetings, the evaluation of these activities is not effective. School leaders are not doing enough to ensure that pupils make enough progress to raise attainment and ensure that they all have equal opportunities to achieve as well as they can. The issues identified during the previous inspection aimed at raising attainment in English have not been tackled and pupils' achievement has declined. Members of the governing body review procedures and administrative matters regularly, but are unsure how to challenge leaders and effectively interrogate information presented to them. Members of the governing body are also aware that they have not given sufficient regard to promoting community cohesion. However, they do ensure that safeguarding meets current government requirements and that parents and carers are informed about school life.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with key skills and aptitudes that are generally below those expected of three-year-olds. Some children who have specific learning difficulties join the school with skills and abilities that are well below those expected for their age. The children make good progress and leave the Reception year having reached standards in most areas of learning that are close to, with some in line with, the expectations for their age. Adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage set consistently good examples to children through their modelling of language. This work encourages children to be linguistically expressive. Consequently, children are confident to participate in role play and imaginatively adapt traditional tales retelling the stories to adults and other children. There are well-planned opportunities for children to use both indoor and outdoor facilities. Children enjoy telling their friends what they have learnt at the end of the day during 'plan, do and review' sessions and often use the classroom interactive whiteboards to supplement this feedback. Assessment and tracking of children's progress are regular and thorough. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute key events and experiences that happen at home and add these to their children's 'learning journey' books. This affords a comprehensive record of children's achievements and helps staff to identify any gaps in the acquisition of key skills.

Children's enjoyment of learning owes a great deal to the good relationships in the Early Years Foundation Stage established by well-organised induction arrangements and home visits. Establishing strong partnerships with families has underpinned and secures a positive impact on children's personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. It assures a strong team ethos with a determination to provide children with good quality learning in a stimulating, safe and welcoming environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage		2
Taking into account:		
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage		2

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received a smaller than average number of completed questionnaires from parents and carers. Although a very few had individual concerns about their children, in the main, the responses indicated a generally positive picture. From the small number of parents and carers who responded, the main general concerns from some parents and carers related to the progress being made by their children and the information they receive. Inspection evidence endorses parents' and carers' concerns about the progress that pupils make. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers are accessible to discuss individual pupils' progress, however leaders recognise that informing parents and carers about how their children's progress could be improved.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Plover Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 78 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 362 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	47	37	47	2	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	54	36	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	38	41	53	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	35	45	58	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	30	38	46	59	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	33	47	60	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	36	45	58	1	1	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	37	44	56	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	33	46	59	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	29	46	59	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	27	51	65	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	36	43	55	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	59	29	37	1	1	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



18 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Plover Primary School, Doncaster, DN2 6JL

You will remember that I came with two other inspectors to inspect your school a little while ago. Thank you for being friendly and helpful, we enjoyed seeing your work and hearing your views. You enjoy the competition between classes to see who can have the best weekly attendance. This is making sure that more of you come regularly to school, please go on doing so because you miss so much when you are away. Those children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are doing well and making good progress because they are taught carefully and given many opportunities to talk regularly and to find things out for themselves.

After this good start, we have judged that you do not continue to make enough progress and this is especially true in English. Not doing well in this subject affects your work in other lessons and we noticed that many of you are not writing at length, spelling words correctly nor using punctuation properly. Sometimes you told us that lessons are too easy and we noticed that you can become restless when you are sitting on the carpet for too long. Your acting headteacher is working hard to make sure you are happy in school and that you all get on with each other. Occasionally, you fall out with each other, but generally you socialise well, especially including those pupils who struggle to hear as well as others.

We have agreed with Mr Wright that Plover Primary needs extra help, so we have placed the school into special measures. You will have noticed that extra people are already in the school and inspectors will visit regularly to check on the progress that has been made. You will all need to help your teachers, I have already mentioned how you can all work hard in lessons and come to school regularly. Extra help will also be provided so that you can learn about other cultures and communities, not only within school, but also in Britain and other parts of the world.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

