

Owston Park Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134538
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	381693
Inspection dates	18–19 April 2012
Lead inspector	Joan McKenna

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Williams
Headteacher	Victoria Stinson
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joan McKenna
Anthony Kingston
Joan Beale

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons taught by 17 staff. They made additional, shorter visits to classrooms, including to hear pupils read and to look at pupils' work. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a small number of parents and carers who requested a discussion. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and scrutinised documents including policies, action plans, information about pupils' learning and progress, attendance data, information from the school's monitoring and arrangements for safeguarding. Responses to questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and the 101 returned by parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

This primary school is larger than average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average and the proportion of pupils who are disabled, are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and there is acting deputy headteacher. Extensive refurbishment of the building has recently been completed. The school meets the current floor standards which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It holds Artsmark Gold, Healthy School status and the Intermediate level of the International School Award.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It cares well for its pupils and their personal outcomes are good. Its effectiveness is not good overall because teaching, pupils' achievement and some aspects of leadership and management are satisfactory. However, it is improving because of the impact of changes initiated by the new headteacher. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- While satisfactory overall, pupils' achievement varies across the school. Pupils achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in parts of Key Stage 2. They achieve less well in Key Stage 1. There is also some variability between different groups of pupils and across subjects. Achievement in mathematics is better than in English, especially reading. Some pupils whose circumstances potentially make them vulnerable do not attain as well as other pupils. Attainment is rising across the school.
- The differences in rates of progress being made by pupils reflect, in part, variability in the quality of teaching. Some is of good quality, but it is not equally effective, and it is less strong in Key Stage 1 than in other key stages. The best lessons have tasks that meet pupils' different needs well, a fast pace to learning and detailed explanations and guidance for pupils on how to do well. Some lessons lack these features.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They have positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe and are cared for well.
- The headteacher provides good leadership. She is taking the right steps to improve teaching and its impact on learning, using strategies which include professional development and specific performance management targets for staff. Action based on secure self-evaluation has resulted in a wide range of improvements. Some other leaders are new to their roles and not all carry out the full range of leadership activities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and ensure that all groups achieve consistently well across the school, especially at Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring that pupils across the age and ability range have the skills to be able to read appropriately challenging texts and that they have more opportunities to read for different purposes across the curriculum
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length for a variety of purposes and audiences
 - taking specific steps to close the gaps in attainment between pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, and other pupils.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching across the school, especially at Key Stage 1, so that all pupils learn equally well, by:
 - ensuring that all lessons proceed at a fast enough pace
 - ensuring that assessment data is used regularly and explicitly to match tasks and the strategies used in lessons to the needs of all groups and abilities of pupils
 - ensuring that explanations given in lessons are clear and precise about the intended learning and how pupils can be successful
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop independent, investigative and problem-solving skills
 - ensuring that marking provides clear guidance for pupils on how they can improve their work.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that all middle and senior leaders have the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to carry out their roles
 - ensuring that all leaders carry out all aspects of their roles effectively, especially the monitoring of pupils' outcomes.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are happy, confident learners. They are motivated by the wide range of stimulating activities available for them. They eagerly engage in conversation, volunteering that they are baking buns or are a 'chef in the cafe'. They play purposefully when choosing activities for themselves and willingly concentrate when being directed by adults. This keenness to learn continues with older pupils. They apply themselves well to their work and try hard to do what teachers ask of them. Particular commitment and enthusiasm is shown when teaching is most effective. Pupils of all abilities in Year 6, for example, were successful in writing increasingly complex sentences, because how to do so was modelled very clearly by the adults taking the lessons, expectations of all were appropriately high and the pace and level of challenge was closely matched to their different needs. There was demonstrable improvement in their understanding and capacity to apply that to their own writing. Learning is not always as effective, particularly at Key Stage 1. Pupils' independent, investigative and problem-solving skills are underdeveloped.

Children enter the school with attainment that is below expectations overall. They make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attainment is usually securely within expectations by the time they enter Year 1. Their progress dips in Key Stage 1. At Year 2, attainment is below the national average, including in reading, although it is rising. Attainment rose at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011, and it was in line with the national average in mathematics and in writing which had been a particular priority for development. Attainment was below average in reading, and, as a result, in English overall. However, this group of pupils made up some previously lost ground and made good progress overall. Currently, some good progress is continuing to be made within Key Stage 2, and attainment is rising to be more securely in line with the national average, including in reading.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, albeit with some variability. However, they do not all start from the same point or reach similar levels of attainment. Improving the attainment of all pupils in order to close the gaps, with a particular emphasis on those known to be eligible for free school meals, has been the focus of performance management targets for all teachers, and positive impact is evident. More of these pupils make equal progress to their peers and some make faster progress. Nevertheless, overall their attainment remains below that of all pupils as a whole. This is also true of pupils with disabilities, those supported at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs, and closing these gaps further is recognised as an on-going priority for the school.

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that their children are making good progress. While some good progress is made, inspection evidence shows achievement to be satisfactory overall.

Quality of teaching

Following training, more effective strategies are being adopted by teachers which are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching, including for those who are disabled, those supported at school action plus or those with a statement of special educational needs, is variable. In better lessons, teachers are very precise in their explanations, so pupils know what is expected of them and what they need to do to do well. In an effective literacy lesson, for example, the teacher modelled improving a sentence, in small steps, from 'The dog barked.' to 'The ferocious dog, who was trying to scare away the burglars, barked noisily through the hole in the fence'. Pupils were, therefore, well equipped to apply this in their own writing and, across the ability range, did so with success and great enthusiasm. Teachers check pupils' progress and adjust their input accordingly to correct any misunderstandings and to add extra challenge. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults take opportunities to promote children's literacy and numeracy skills as an integral part of other activities, such as counting out the right number of eggs when baking buns. Less effective lessons proceed at a slower pace, have unclear or superficial explanations of the concepts being covered or have work that is not well matched to pupils' different needs. Many lessons are very structured, with all pupils being taken through the same sequence of activities at the same rate. This sometimes results in effective learning, especially where pupils are grouped according to ability, but it can hold back higher attainers who are capable of moving on faster and it restricts opportunities for pupils to work with their peers to develop higher-order skills, such as how to solve problems. Sessions taught by teaching assistants are also variable, with many that are effective but others that are less so. The

marking of pupils' work usually provides supportive comments, but not all provides sufficient feedback or guidance on how to improve their work.

A new, thematic based curriculum has been introduced to develop pupils' skills and build on their interests, which pupils are enjoying. A systematic approach to developing pupils' early reading skills, through teaching the sounds that different letters make, is being implemented effectively and pupils are employing an appropriate range of strategies to read texts. However, some pupils are not reading appropriately challenging books. Reading different types of texts for different purposes across the curriculum does not have a high enough profile. Older pupils have increasing opportunities to write independently for different audiences and purposes, but younger pupils' writing tends to be limited to short pieces on worksheets. Visits and visitors are used to add relevance and stimulation with much success. For example, following work done with a visiting author, one boy said 'I love writing now'. Such activities also promote pupils' wider understanding and empathy, such as insights gained following a visit to a Second World War prisoner of war camp, reflecting the effective impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaires said their children were well taught. Inspection evidence indicates that this is the case in some lessons, but that teaching is satisfactory overall.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

A new 'behaviour for learning and life' policy has been introduced which has strengthened the school's ethos, contributing to a warm, positive and inclusive climate. Pupils are well cared for and the school goes the extra mile to provide effective pastoral care to those whose circumstances potentially make them vulnerable. Pupils are happy, feel secure and enjoy school. They have good relationships with each other and are considerate towards their peers. Steps taken to develop the confidence and self-esteem of pupils have been successful and they are developing good insights into their own, and others', feelings. This makes a positive contribution to their behaviour, which is typically good. Pupils usually give full attention in lessons, and it is only when teaching is less engaging that attention occasionally wanders. Bullying of any type and racist incidents are rare, and are firmly dealt with when they do occur. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, and of different types of bullying. They trust the adults in the school to look after them. The school has adopted a wide range of strategies to improve attendance, and as a result it is now close to the national average. Pupils say they love the chance to win prizes in the raffle for 100% attendance.

All parents and carers who returned the questionnaires indicated that their children feel safe in school and that they are well cared for. The very large majority said that behaviour is good and bullying is dealt with well. Inspectors concur with these views.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a detailed understanding of the effectiveness of the school, a clear vision of how it can be improved and is systematically and determinedly taking the steps necessary to bring this about. She has created a sense of common purpose. Clear priorities have been established, with well-targeted professional development and performance management undertaken. Improvement is evident as a result, including in teaching and pupils' achievement. Additional actions taken have not had time to have full effect. There

has been a restructuring and clarification of other leadership roles to enhance impact. Some leadership at middle and senior level is effective, but several leaders are new to aspects of their role and so do not yet have the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to be fully effective. The strategic aspects of leadership at middle and senior levels, such as evaluating and monitoring pupils' outcomes, are not as well-developed as elements of management, such as organising resources. The governing body is supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. However, its grasp of evidence about pupils' performance is not sharp enough to ensure fully rigorous challenge to the school. Overall, the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

The school values all pupils equally and is committed to preventing discrimination. It is taking effective steps to promote this, including through the curriculum and its work on pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Despite reducing gaps in attainment between some of the different groups this is an ongoing priority.

Almost all of the parents and carers who made their views known to the inspection team were very positive about the school and the recent improvements.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 2012 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).

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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



20 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Owston Park Primary, Doncaster, DN6 8PU

Thank you for being so very welcoming when my colleagues and I inspected your school. You are very friendly and pleasant, and we enjoyed talking with you and hearing what you had to say very much.

We think that there are good things about your school. You get on well with each other and you work and play well together. You also behave well in lessons and around the school. Well done! You told us that you enjoy school, and we could see that you did. We saw some of you having great fun cooking in the 'café' in nursery, and some of you older pupils really enjoying improving your writing. You are well looked after and so you feel safe.

Overall we have judged your school to be satisfactory. Some teaching is good and helps you learn well, but in some lessons, especially in Years 1 and 2, you do not learn quite as quickly. Overall, your school is making sure you make satisfactory progress and the attainment you are reaching through the school is rising.

Your school is improving in lots of ways, and your headteacher and other staff want to continue to improve it for you. There are some things we have asked them to concentrate on to help them do this. We would like them to make sure that you all achieve as well as possible, by making sure that you have more opportunities to read and write in all subjects at the right level to really stretch you and help you do as well as you can. We have asked them to make sure that all teaching is as good as the best, for example, by making sure that you always know how to do well. We also want all leaders to check how well you are doing, so they know the right steps to take to make sure each and every one of you learns as well as possible.

You can help by continuing to work hard, coming to school regularly and by being such positive pupils. I send you and your teachers my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan McKenna
Lead Inspector

