

# Arboretum Primary School

Corden Street, , Derby, DE23 8GP

**Inspection dates** 19–20 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher and senior staff are relentless in their drive to improve standards.
- The school is very successful in providing extra help for pupils who need it.
- The progress made by all groups of pupils throughout the school is good.
- Pupils like school, behave well and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching, which is consistently good.
- The governing body is effective in helping raise everyone's expectations of what can be achieved.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The standards achieved by many pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are improving but often below average.
- Pupils do not always confidently use a wide range of interesting words when talking in a range of subjects.
- The school has not yet been successful in involving a large number of families in supporting their children's learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher or senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and had brief discussions with several parents at the start of the second day.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on recent and current progress, planning and monitoring information, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and minutes of recent meetings of the governing body.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Roary Pownall	Additional inspector
Edgar Hastings	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- An average proportion of pupils are identified at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational need. Their different needs include speech, language and communication difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.
- The school has specially resourced provision for up to ten pupils (with five currently on role) with moderate or severe learning difficulties. These pupils work within the classes in the morning and as a discrete group in the afternoon.
- Approximately 98% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Twenty-two languages are spoken at home and many pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- In 2011, the most recent year for which results are confirmed, the school met the governments' floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by:
  - developing pupils' speaking skills to a higher level by giving them more opportunities to discuss their ideas, particularly in preparation for writing
  - extending pupils' reading skills to enable them to read fluently, with expression and confidence
  - enabling pupils to develop the self-assurance to discuss and solve mathematical problems speedily.
- Help parents and carers develop the confidence to support their children's learning out of school by encouraging families to take up the range of family learning activities available and developing new ideas to inform and involve them further.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Children join the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are well below those expected for their ages. Many are new to speaking English; because staff welcome them warmly, they settle happily. While relatively few reach the targets for their age, they make good overall progress.
- As pupils move through the school, they become much more confident in what they can do. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below national averages but show a steady and consistent year-on-year improvement. The gaps between what pupils achieve at Arboretum and nationally are narrowing.
- Most pupils make the progress expected for their age and a growing proportion makes more than expected progress. A few make huge gains in their learning because pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide very well considered help. Lesson observations and the sample of pupils' work show that overall achievement is good.
- Boys and girls achieve equally well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive high quality, well-targeted support and make good progress. This includes those with speech and language difficulties and pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- The specific needs of pupils in the specially resourced provision are carefully considered, and individual and group activities successfully support key areas of their learning and social development. The achievement of these pupils is also good.
- Pupils of many different nationalities who arrive at various ages with little or no English receive very effective support and most make rapid progress.
- Pupils develop their skills and confidence in speaking English in different subjects and activities. However, the range of words they use is not always wide and imaginative. This affects their learning in many areas. Pupils develop the skills to work out words they do not know by identifying letters and the sounds they make (phonics), but they do not always understand what these words mean and so do not use them when talking to others. This limited vocabulary also affects their writing, which is often accurate and neatly presented but lacks depth and detail.
- Pupils usually enjoy mathematics, but their lack of confidence in speaking and explaining what they are doing sometimes hinders how quickly they can work out the answers to problems.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. All pupils, including disabled pupils and those who need extra help, are provided with work that is well matched to their abilities. This ensures there is a good level of challenge that motivates many pupils to try hard.
- Staff have strong working relationships with the pupils. They offer lots of praise for everyone's efforts, which builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem well. Adults give careful feedback to pupils, so that they know what they have done well and what they need to improve.
- Where teaching is most effective, particularly in the Nursery and in Year 6, questions are used very effectively to encourage pupils to describe what they are doing and thinking. Follow-up

questions are then used to promote even more depth of thought. There are occasions, however, when some staff do not take every opportunity to encourage pupils to share their idea with a partner and extend their speaking skills.

- Support staff are a very effective and enthusiastic team, who work hard to provide well-tailored support to pupils of all abilities. The school has used additional funding very effectively to develop an increasingly skilled workforce keen to develop their effectiveness further through gaining additional qualifications. School tracking information indicates this is having a positive impact on the achievement of individuals and groups of pupils.
- Pupils who are part of the enhanced resource group are well supported, both within the class and when working as part of a discrete group. Well considered help is provided that helps build pupils specific skills and self-confidence across a range of subjects
- There is a good pace to most lessons and interactive whiteboards are used effectively to provide information. In the small number of lessons that require improvement, too much time is spent focussing on pupils' behaviour, hindering the flow of the lesson.
- The teaching of reading is generally effective in developing pupils' basic skills. Reading records show that there are relatively few opportunities for some older pupils to read to a trained adult. This does not ensure that they always continue to develop their skills or understand what they are reading. Staff try to encourage parents to become involved in supporting their child's reading at home, but with limited success.
- The marking of pupils' work is thorough and identifies to pupils what they need to do to improve. Pupils also help check their friends' work, which gives them ideas of how to improve their own.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- A strength of the school is the way in which all children are welcomed and valued for who they are. Pupils from all ethnic groups get on well together and enjoy being part of a diverse learning community. The school promotes an understanding of cultural differences and is committed to promoting tolerance of others.
- The large majority of pupils behave well in and around the school. For example, the playground and dining hall are calm and welcoming places to be for those new to the school. Many of the pupils spoken to during the inspection say they like coming to school and feel happy and safe there.
- Pupils readily identify several ways that they can keep themselves and their friends safe. The school has recently focussed on the use of social media amongst children of this age. Pupils understand the potential risks and their responsibilities to ensure that social media are not used to bully others. Most recognise what bullying is and know that it is not tolerated in school. They feel confident that staff take any concerns they have seriously.
- The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. However, while many develop their self-confidence considerably, others remain very quiet because they lack the confidence to speak in group discussions. Some staff plan a good range of activities that promote speaking skills, but others miss opportunities to develop more than one- or two-word answers to questions.
- Attendance has been a key focus since the last inspection. This has risen so that it is now in line

with the national average. Effective procedures are followed to promote good attendance and sanctions applied where necessary. The school takes a firm stance on extended holidays in term time.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides strong and very well-focussed leadership that has ensured the school has improved since the previous inspection. Her quiet determination to raise standards and a zero tolerance of what may be deemed as excuses for underperformance are at the heart of school improvement.
  - The headteacher is ably supported by a keen and experienced senior leadership team. They demonstrate high-level teaching skills which have supported the drive to improve teaching and learning. As special educational needs coordinator, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and literacy leader, they are pivotal influences on school effectiveness and are leading improvements well.
  - The school has very effective ways to check the progress being made. School self-evaluation is accurate. Joint lesson observations show that senior staff recognise what works well and where improvement is needed. Targets are set for teachers and these are well linked to in-service training. This has led to considerable improvements in teaching.
  - The local authority provides effective support to the school, especially in helping to focus on successful teaching. Training for subject leaders has helped develop their skills in identifying areas for improvement and ensured that the school has good capacity to improve further.
  - The school curriculum is well planned and appropriate. Additional funds are used well to support pupils who need extra help including those new to learning English. Community concerns, including, for example, the personal, social and health education programme for girls, are taken into account alongside the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse society. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a high priority and, through developing pupils' awareness of others, successfully underpins much of the work of the school.
  - The school tries to inform and involve parents and carers in family learning activities but with limited success. Many parents and carers lack the confidence to support their children's learning at home. Most of the families spoken to during the inspection are very pleased with the quality of education and care provided.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - is good because those who lead the governing body are passionate in their determination that the school will continue to improve
    - has a good programme of meetings, exchange of information and a focus upon standards that ensures governors are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses
    - provides challenge to school leaders and has good links to the local community.
  - The safeguarding of pupils meets requirements. The school takes very seriously its responsibility to ensure pupils' safety. This includes securing the school site promptly to ensure pupils are kept safe at all times.
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## 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>	112792
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	405425

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>	392
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tahira Waseem
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Cruickshank
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 291140
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