

Heath Fields Primary School

Field Avenue, Hatton, Derby, DE65 5EQ

Inspection dates 13–14 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- improvements to teaching have not yet had time to raise standards
- some teaching does not involve pupils sufficiently or demand enough of them, which slows their progress and affects their concentration and behaviour
- not enough pupils reach the higher levels in their work; they are not good at writing imaginatively or solving mathematical problems
- pupils cannot always work out how to read new words they do not know
- senior staff and subject leaders have not taken enough responsibility for checking on how well the school does, and improving it
- the governing body has not been aware enough of what happens in school to bring about rapid improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is providing strong and determined leadership which is improving teaching.
- The headteacher knows exactly how well things are working and what needs to be done.
- There is a good plan to improve things and training for staff to help.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very effective and so learning is good in these year groups.
- Children in the Reception class learn well through doing practical things as well as being taught specific skills.
- Pupils enjoy their time at school, get on well together and understand how to keep safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which nine were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of the 16 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, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, 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
Michael Onyon	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium support (money allocated to schools by the government), around 11%, is below the national average of 19%.
- Approximately 9% of pupils are identified at school action and 4% at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need. These proportions are lower than average. Their different needs include behavioural difficulties.
- A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with very few at the early stage of learning to speak English.
- Currently around 4% of pupils are from Traveller families. In the academic year 2011–12, the Year 6 cohort of pupils expanded by 25% with the intake of pupils from Traveller families.
- In 2011, the most recent year for which results are confirmed, the school met the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher took up his post two years ago.
- Five new teaching staff started in school the week before the inspection, including three newly qualified teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by:
 - checking that all staff provide work that challenges pupils of different ability, particularly the more able
 - planning and providing more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in lessons including discussing their ideas with others and finding things out for themselves
 - making sure that all adults in lessons make a full contribution.
- Improve standards and progress in English and mathematics, so at least 90% of pupils reach the expected level and 40% reach the higher level at the end of Year 6, by:
 - making sure that all pupils rapidly develop sufficient knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to work out unfamiliar words
 - providing reading and writing tasks that build pupils' skills through a systematic and challenging series of activities that motivate the pupils to try hard with their work, build their vocabulary and encourage the ability to write imaginatively
 - enabling all pupils to develop the confidence to solve demanding mathematical problems speedily and accurately
 - setting and using individual targets for improvement so that pupils know what they have to do to reach the next level in their work.
- Ensure that the leadership and management of the school is fully effective by:
 - developing a programme of regular and focussed visits by governors to give them a secure understanding of the school's provision and of areas for further improvement
 - extending the involvement of senior staff, subject leaders, and, where appropriate, governors, in monitoring and holding staff to account for aspects of school life in which they hold responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the Reception class with skills that are in line with expectations for their age. In most recent years by the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics have been in line with national averages.
- In assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2012, standards were below 2011 averages. School records indicate that this year group's attainment on entry and throughout the school was lower than usual.
- School data and the sample of pupils' recent work show that since January the progress most pupils made across the school improved and standards started to rise. However, in many cases there have been gaps in pupils' learning that affected their overall achievement.
- Lesson observations and recent work show accelerated progress for pupils in Years 5 and 6. School assessment data indicate that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage also make good progress in all areas of their learning, which is ensuring that they now enter Year 1 ready, willing and able to make even more progress.
- Across the school pupils currently make satisfactory progress, but this requires further improvement to overcome the previous pattern of some progress that was too slow. While boys and girls make similar progress, too few reach the higher levels in their work.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who need extra help is carefully monitored. Data indicate they make at least comparable progress to their classmates because effective support is quickly given. Pupils from Traveller families also make progress similar to others in the school.
- Specific funding is used effectively to identify any pupil at risk of not performing well and to meet their additional needs, especially through good quality individual help.
- Some pupils of higher abilities, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4, do not, however, make all the progress they could because work is not consistently demanding for them.
- Whilst many pupils read competently, few do so with notable enthusiasm. Some lack confidence in using a range of approaches including their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to work out unfamiliar words.
- Pupils learn the skills of writing in a range of styles but few develop an extensive vocabulary and the ability to write imaginatively, at length and in depth.
- In mathematics pupils have a sound understanding of number operations but often lack the confidence to use what they already know to speedily solve mathematical problems.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching over time is satisfactory but requires improvements because not enough is good or better.
- In Years 5 and 6, where the teaching is most effective, staff ensure there is a good balance between adults giving information and pupils working on a task. Here teachers make clear their expectations of high-quality work by providing tasks at a suitable level for those of

different abilities. For example, in a very effective literacy lesson in Year 6 skilful questioning and opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas challenged everyone to develop their thoughts and opinions further.

- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been successful in developing a stimulating curriculum and effective teaching. The outdoor learning area has recently been developed and is used well to promote pupils' communication and social skills.
- Teachers have sound subject knowledge, but their use of assessment information and their understanding of the need to challenge those of different abilities are not always well developed. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long which affects the concentration of some pupils and leads to them becoming passive learners who 'switch off' after a while.
- In most classrooms teachers provide a stimulating learning environment where displays include lots of ideas for adventurous vocabulary and tips of how to work out mathematical problems. However, tasks and activities given to develop these skills have not yet had sufficient impact.
- All staff value pupils' opinions and create happy classrooms so that most pupils enjoy their time in school.
- Some teachers give pupils targets which set out clearly the next steps in learning in English and mathematics. This is not yet consistent across the school and such targets are not always referred to subsequently. The school has adopted clear guidelines for the marking of pupils' work, and verbal feedback is used widely to indicate to pupils what they have done well and what needs to be improved.
- The support of other adults in the classroom is variable. This is because sometimes this is not well enough planned and they become an 'extra pair of hands' rather than a valuable learning resource.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- A strength of the school is the way all pupils are accepted and included, no matter what their backgrounds or abilities. Most pupils behave well in and around the school, including at break-times. They get on well together and play happily with others, with many of those spoken to during the inspection saying they like school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Class discussions and school assemblies, coupled with a focus on personal, social and health education, help pupils to develop social skills and an understanding of citizenship. Pupils also have a reasonable understanding of what constitutes bullying although some are unclear whether name-calling and teasing is anti-social. The small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported appropriately, which enables them to work alongside their classmates.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They recognise that their behaviour in the playground, for example, can impact on the safety of others. They understand concerns regarding internet safety and social networking.
- The school clearly welcomes Traveller families. A very attractive display of children's writing and artefacts illustrates how they are valued and their culture celebrated.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are variable and, therefore, behaviour requires some

improvement. While many concentrate well in lessons and try hard with their work, others are very passive and offer little to discussions. When teaching does not challenge or pupils are not sufficiently actively involved, some lose concentration and occasionally misbehave, which affects the efforts of others. The sample of pupils' recent work shows that while some try hard with the presentation of their work, this is not consistently the case.

- While only a small number of parents and carers expressed a view of behaviour in school through the online questionnaire, most believe that behaviour is good. Of those parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, the large majority thought their children are happy and well looked after.
- Attendance is average and improved last year following the school's work with specific families.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher provides very effective leadership which has enabled the school to move forward considerably during the last year. He has taken a strong lead and concerted action to address weaknesses in teaching and progress in school.
 - There are rigorous checks that look at how well teachers are doing their job. Targets are set for teachers and these are now linked well to in-service training opportunities.
 - One reason leadership and management require improvement is that other leaders are not playing a strong enough part. The senior leadership team are supportive of the headteacher and of recent changes but are not yet effective in providing a strong lead in teaching. Several subject leaders are new to their roles and have not yet had sufficient time to develop their effectiveness.
 - The local authority provides effective support to the school in its quest to raise standards. English and mathematics advisers have worked closely with staff to identify the features of good teaching. There has also been improvement in the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school. This is now entirely accurate and provides a strong base for school improvement planning. It is ensuring that the school has the capacity to improve further.
 - The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils adequately, although there is not always enough focus on ensuring that pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to improve their reading skills. A very good range of additional activities outside school hours particularly promote involvement in sport. Funding to support pupils who need extra help is used well to provide additional support.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through lessons and links with other groups and organisations.
- **The governance of the school:**
- requires improvement because governors have not taken strong enough action to hold the school to account for the standards achieved
 - does not always have a fully accurate picture of how well the school is performing because there is only a limited programme of carefully focussed visits to ensure governors are well informed at first-hand
 - is highly supportive of the school and parent governors are playing an increasingly effective role in holding the school to account.

- The safeguarding of pupils meets requirements. The school provides pupils with a suitable range of experiences that help them to understand how to keep themselves and others safe.
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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

Unique reference number	112679
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	401291

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon Thornhill
Headteacher	Mark Whyman
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2010
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