

Pottery Primary School

Kilbourne Road, Belper, DE56 1HA

Inspection dates 26–27 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

- Teaching is not consistently effective because not enough is demanded of some pupils who are not always actively involved in lessons.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in their work.
- Pupils cannot always work out well enough how to read words that they do not know.
- Some pupils do not have the confidence and skills to write imaginatively and in detail or to solve mathematical problems speedily.
- Senior staff and governors are not rigorous enough in checking what happens in school to find out what needs improving.
- Senior leaders do not always have clearly defined responsibilities to develop teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy their time at school because staff warmly welcome and include everyone.
- Pupils show a clear understanding of how to keep safe.
- Senior leaders and governors are passionate in their support of the school and their commitment to further improvement.
- The staff work well together as a team and share a vision for the future.
- There are examples of good teaching, particularly in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6, which enables pupils in these classes to make good progress.
- There is a suitable plan for improvement which is linked to further training for staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons taken by teachers and teaching assistants, including some guided reading activities. Groups of pupils also read individually to inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 41 parents and carers through 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, representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, a member of the Early Years Foundation Stage team and the special educational needs coordinators.
- 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.
- During most of the inspection, the headteacher’s role was covered by an acting headteacher and an assistant headteacher.

Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
John Taylor	Additional inspector
Gillian Broughton	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average sized primary school.
- A below-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those 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 behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and moderate learning difficulties.
- Approximately 97% of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- 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.
- There is on-site provision for nursery-aged children and an after-school group. These are not managed by the school and are inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by:
 - ensuring that all staff use information from assessments to provide work that fully challenges pupils of different abilities
 - checking that pupils are actively involved in all parts of lessons, especially by providing more opportunities for them to discuss their ideas with other pupils and adults.
- Raise standards and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - making sure that all pupils develop a secure knowledge of letters and the sounds they make so that they can work out unfamiliar words
 - checking that all pupils throughout the school read to an adult on a regular basis so that they continue to develop the skills appropriate to their age and ability
 - providing tasks that systematically build pupils' writing skills through a series of activities that interest and motivate everyone to try hard with their work
 - ensuring that pupils develop the confidence to solve mathematical problems speedily.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that teaching activities are rigorously monitored and clear feedback is given to all staff to identify what needs to be improved
 - checking that the areas of responsibility of senior staff are clearly defined and specifically identify how to drive improvements in teaching
 - ensuring that governors develop rigorous procedures to check areas for which they hold responsibility, including the impact of initiatives such as the use of the pupil premium and risk assessments of the classrooms and corridors.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the Reception classes with skills that vary from year to year. School data indicate that overall skills, knowledge and understanding are in line with the expectations for their age. The recent intake of children, however, has a lively interest in what goes on around them and currently makes good overall progress.
- In recent years, standards by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics have been in line with national averages. Samples of recent work and lesson observations show that progress for all groups of pupils requires improvement. Achievement is sometimes good but is not consistently so across the school.
- Boys and girls make similar progress, but too few reach levels above the average in their work. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive additional support funded by the pupil premium, the local authority and the school. The quality of support is, however, mixed, and so is the progress pupils make. The very small number of pupils speaking English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates.
- Some higher ability pupils across the school do not make all the progress they could because work is not consistently demanding for them.
- Many pupils read competently, but relatively few do so fluently and with notable enthusiasm. Several lack the confidence to use different approaches to working out unfamiliar words, and their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make is variable. Discussions indicate some older pupils rarely read to a trained adult, and this limits their further progress in developing a range of reading strategies.
- Pupils acquire the skills of writing in different styles but do not consistently develop an extensive vocabulary and the ability to write imaginatively, at length and in depth.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of number operations but often lack the confidence to use what they already know to solve mathematical problems confidently and speedily.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching over time requires improvement because not enough of the teaching is good or better.
- In Reception, Year 2 and Year 6, where teaching is most effective, there is a good balance between adults giving information and pupils working on a task. For example, in the Reception class, activities related to learning the letter and sound 'h' were short and snappy and with an element of fun that engaged the children. In Year 6, mathematical tasks were explained clearly but succinctly, and contained a good level of challenge.
- All staff have warm and supportive working relationships with pupils. They use praise well to build pupils' self-esteem, so that many become confident learners. Older pupils know the levels at which they are working and the targets they have for improving, for example, the quality of their writing.

- Teachers have sound subject knowledge but do not make effective enough use of their checks on pupils' progress to ensure that work is demanding for those of different abilities. During information and communication technology lessons, for example, staff sometimes demonstrate skills that some pupils have already mastered.
- Occasionally, adults talk for too long, which limits the pace of learning and opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas with others. This affects the concentration of some pupils and leads to them becoming passive learners who simply 'drift off' after a while.
- The effectiveness of support for pupils with additional needs is variable. This is sometimes because the deployment of support staff is not well enough planned, or because the level of challenge that they provide is not high enough to move learning forward.

The behaviour and safety of pupils **requires improvement**

- A strength of the school is how all pupils are welcomed, accepted and included. Most get on well together, with many of those spoken to during the inspection saying they like school.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. Most behave well, for example when moving around the school and at break-times, even in the very crowded school yard. Staff are very aware of safety issues on a limited school site. They discuss with the pupils their expectation of good behaviour, which many are keen to live up to.
- Pupils are able to explain clearly what constitutes bullying. They recognise concerns regarding internet safety and the issues connected with social networking. They identify society's concern about racism and know that this is not tolerated in school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are variable and, therefore, overall behaviour requires some improvement. Many pupils concentrate well in lessons and try hard with their work, but others are very passive and uninvolved. Several offer little to discussions and sometimes appear to 'switch off'. In some guided reading activities, for example, several pupils not working with the teacher say comprehension tasks are boring and simply chat about things that are not related to their work. During other activities that do not hold their interest, some pupils misbehave.
- The sample of pupils' recent work shows that while several try hard with their presentation, this is not consistently the case. Attendance is average and the school is working hard with families to stress the importance of not taking holidays in term-time.
- A few parents expressed a view of behaviour in school through the online questionnaire. Most believe that behaviour is good. Those parents spoken to during the inspection consider their children are kept safe and are well looked after.

The leadership and management **requires improvement**

- The headteacher and assistant headteachers, staff and governors, share a passion for the school. There are very clearly expressed aims and a vision for further improvement that is shared by everyone. This ensures there is the capacity for further improvement.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the quality of care and education provided for their

children. The school actively promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relations and tackles discrimination.

- The local authority provides effective support to the school in its focus on raising standards and has an accurate awareness of the quality of what is provided for the pupils.
- At times, the school's senior leaders struggle to stand back and be critically and rigorously evaluative. They have not always drawn a line under past events and developed a clear enough focus on the future.
- School self-evaluation documentation stresses the many good aspects of school life, improvements in teaching and where progress is good. School data and the sample of pupils' work, though, suggest this occasionally appears generous. While the school recognises that it requires improvement, discussions indicate senior staff are occasionally unclear about who and what will drive further improvements in teaching.
- There are checks that look at how well teachers are doing their job. These are linked to in-service training opportunities, although support staff are not included in these checks.
- Procedures to safeguard the pupils meet requirements.
- The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils adequately, although there is not always enough focus on ensuring that older pupils continue to improve their reading skills. Funding to support pupils who need extra help is used satisfactorily to provide this.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through assemblies, lessons and a focus on personal, social and health education. There are many opportunities for pupils to work together and a clear valuing of everyone's efforts.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - requires improvement because governors, while hugely supportive of the school, have not always been able to critically evaluate the range of information available and hold the school to account for the limited overall progress made since previous inspections
 - conducts a series of checks, including day-to-day health and safety procedures, but has not always identified or addressed concerns regarding storage of equipment in classrooms and corridors.

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	112787
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	401307

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	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Hawkins
Headteacher	Gillian Hutton
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2010
Telephone number	01773 823383
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