

# Spalding Primary School

Woolram Wygate, Spalding, PE11 1PB

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2012

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

- The quality of teaching varies from outstanding to inadequate and therefore the progress of pupils is not consistent throughout the school.
- In weaker lessons, teachers do not have high expectations of pupils and their questioning skills are not sharp enough.
- The marking of pupils' work is not effective in helping pupils to improve their work.
- When work is too easy or too hard, pupils lose concentration and not enough work is produced.
- Monitoring systems lack rigour because leaders do not check carefully the links between pupils' end-of-year results, the work in their books and the quality of teaching occurring in the classroom.
- Although senior leaders have a clear plan for improvement, staff have not been involved in this plan and some feel that they have not had sufficient opportunities for training and professional development.
- The actions taken by leaders including governors do not consistently promote good teaching and learning.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children have a good start to school life in the Reception, where progress is good.
- The teaching of reading is good and, as a result, pupils are confident readers who enjoy books.
- In 2012, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 rose to above average.
- Behaviour is typically good in lessons and around school.
- Pupils say they feel safe and have a good understanding of safety particularly in using the internet.
- A good range of additional activities are provided for pupils, including residential visits and learning to play a musical instrument such as the ukulele.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 33 lessons and 16 teachers were observed teaching. Three lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, two members of the governing body, parents, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, pupils' progress information, monitoring documentation, samples of pupils' work and documents relating to safeguarding. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of books.
- Account was taken of 24 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own information about parents' views of the school. In addition, 27 responses from staff were examined and analysed.

## Inspection team

Lois Furness, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Flesher	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Spalding is a much-larger-than-average primary school.
- Although the majority of pupils are White British, there is a steadily increasing proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- A broadly 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.
- The proportion of pupils at school action is below average, and well below average at school action plus and with a statement of educational needs.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school partway through their primary education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An onsite breakfast club and after-school club is managed by a private provider and is separately inspected.

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

- Ensure all teaching is good and there is an increased proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - teachers using assessment information more carefully to ensure activities meet the needs of all pupils, especially more-able pupils
  - raising expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' work in all subjects
  - developing teachers' questioning skills so they are able successfully to challenge pupils and check their understanding
  - ensuring that teachers' comments in books are more effective in directing pupils' learning.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management by:
  - senior leaders ensuring that all staff understand and share the school's goals and their roles in school improvement
  - developing monitoring procedures whereby termly progress data are checked rigorously alongside the quality of teaching and the ongoing work in pupils' books
  - setting staff targets that are relevant to their development, and providing any necessary training and support to help them to achieve these performance targets
  - using the good and outstanding teaching practice within the school to coach and improve the quality of teaching overall
  - the governing body developing its role of holding leaders to account for pupils' achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children start in Reception with skills that mainly match those expected for their age. Good subject knowledge and exciting activities ensure children make good gains in their learning. By the time children join Year 1, their attainment is above average.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 have been steadily rising from well below average in 2009 to above average in 2011. In Year 6, standards have been broadly average over the last three years, although, in 2012, an above-average proportion of pupils attained Level 5 in reading and mathematics. However, this evidence of above-average attainment is not evident in other year groups.
- Progress varies year on year and in different subjects. In 2011, although the progress of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 pupils in mathematics was similar to that found nationally, in English progress was not good enough. In 2012, this was reversed, and an improvement in English progress was accompanied by pupils' progress in mathematics being below national figures.
- In subjects such as history, geography and science, progress varies. Pupils' work shows that, although some teachers have high expectations and good achievement is seen, this is not consistent. Progression of knowledge and skills is not evident in all pupils' books and some teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of work are too low.
- In music, progress is good. A specialist music teacher teaches this subject and good subject knowledge alongside good questioning and pupils' interest in music ensure that pupils acquire knowledge and skills at a good rate.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading, and a regular and systematic programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) helps to ensure that pupils acquire essential reading skills well. By Year 6, pupils read widely and use research skills effectively in a range of topics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress similar to that of their peers. This is also the case for pupils who are learning English as an additional language, those who join school partway through their primary education and those pupils who receive additional government funding. At times, the progress of these groups of pupils accelerates to good when they receive additional one-to-one support.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is not good because there are inconsistencies across the school. Although good teaching was seen in all year groups, in the majority of lessons observed teaching was judged to require improvement and, on a very few occasions, teaching was inadequate.
- In the Reception classes, consistently good teaching was observed. In these classes, children enjoy and benefit from a wide range of activities promoting all areas of learning, indoors and outside. Staff interact well with children, which results in children responding well to classroom routines and planned activities.
- Good teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge, good questioning and the teacher adapting the lesson as a result of pupils' responses. This was seen in an outstanding lesson in Year 6, as the teacher skilfully probed pupils' understanding of the features of good diary writing.

- The teaching of reading is a strength throughout school. Standards have improved as a result of daily guided reading sessions and focused support on letters and sounds. However, some weaker readers in Years 1 and 2 have yet to develop strategies to help them break down words to help them to read and understand unfamiliar words.
- When teaching is inadequate or requiring improvement, activities lack challenge, for example, when pupils in Year 5 combined simple sentences using vocabulary such as 'and' and 'but'. Strategies for pupils' involvement are limited and, at times, pupils were observed copying out previous pieces of work. Teachers did not use questioning to effectively probe pupils' understanding.
- The use of assessment information requires improvement, particularly during lesson introductions. In Year 1, for example, all pupils regardless of ability were asked the same questions when identifying different two-dimensional shapes. Those pupils who are more able easily completed this task. Work scrutinies showed that, in some classes, all pupils are set the same activities and tasks do not challenge more-able pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils who are learning English as an additional language, often receive additional support. Some of this is good, as was seen in Year 4, when a support assistant ensured all pupils were able to access their learning. On occasions, during whole-class activities, support staff are insufficiently utilised in maximising the progress of pupils.
- Although marking is regular and positive comments are evident, especially in writing, its impact is variable. In most subjects, marking does not provide pupils with enough information to improve their progress, nor is sufficient time given for pupils to respond to the comments made.

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

- Good attitudes towards school are encouraged in the Reception Year. Although children have only attended school for a short time, they are happy, settled and eager to learn. They want to help each other, as was seen when one child patiently showed another how to hold a book correctly and how to count the number of flowers on the page.
- In good and outstanding lessons, pupils have good attitudes towards learning, enjoying the opportunities they have to share ideas and discuss their learning. However, in weaker lessons, pupils, although quiet, are uninterested and the pace of learning is slow.
- Most parents evidenced by the school's own survey responses think behaviour is good. However, a minority of those using the online questionnaire had concerns about pupils' behaviour. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour was good, and pupils confirm that the behaviour seen was typical of their everyday experience. They were polite and courteous to visitors. Attendance is broadly average and improving.
- The responses to the staff questionnaire indicated that they feel the vast majority of pupils demonstrate good behaviour. Pupils spoken to also shared this view. Both staff and pupils acknowledged that a few pupils had difficulty in managing their own behaviour but this was being dealt with appropriately through the school's behaviour management systems.
- Pupils have good knowledge of what constitutes an unsafe situation and how to protect themselves from harm, for example from cyber-bullying. They have a good understanding of internet safety. Pupils reported that bullying occasionally occurs, but this is usually dealt with effectively by the teachers.

- Pupils feel safe in school. They have confidence in staff and enjoy good relationships with them and with each other. New arrivals are helped to settle well. Pupils enjoy responsibility, including as class helpers in Reception, play leaders or as members of the school council.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The school improvement plan provides a useful tool to drive improvement. However, this plan was not drawn up in consultation with others and, consequently, staff feel their views are not fully valued by senior leaders.
- Self-evaluation is overly generous as too much reliance has been placed on yearly progress data without verifying this apparently good and outstanding progress with the work in pupils' books over time and the quality of day-by-day teaching in all classes.
- The local authority has provided good support. For example, it has worked closely with the Reception classes to ensure good teaching and learning opportunities for these young children. At the present time, the local authority officer is working closely with the governors to develop their role in challenging school leaders.
- Performance management does not influence well enough the quality of teaching as targets are not specific enough to meet the development needs of individual teachers. Responses to the staff questionnaire indicate staff would appreciate more support, including training. The examples of good and outstanding practice within the school are not utilised fully to improve teaching skills.
- This year, pupils' progress in English has improved. The implementation of a daily phonics lesson and a guided reading session have resulted in rising attainment and improving progress in this subject. This, alongside improved attainment at the end of Year 2 and an above-average number of pupils attaining Level 5 in reading and mathematics, shows there is capacity to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - ensures statutory duties are met, including those relating to safeguarding and financial management
  - has not challenged leaders enough about pupils' achievement and how this links to the strengths and weaknesses of teaching.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting, although as yet it does not promote pupils' good achievement overall. However, it does promote pupils' personal development well and pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. The curriculum is further enriched through, for example, music lessons and a variety of clubs, visits and residential trips.
- The school's own survey responses indicate a good level of satisfaction with the school and those parents spoken too also indicated they were pleased with the school's work. However, a small minority of parents, as indicated by responses on the online questionnaire do not think the school is performing as well as it should. The inspection findings also confirm that aspects of the school's work require improvement.

## 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>	120678
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401959

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	436
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Sharman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Scott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01775 769445
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