

Burford Primary and Nursery School

Oxclose Lane, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 6FX

Inspection dates 25–26 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		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 teaching, particularly of reading, writing and mathematics, is not promoting pupils' skills quickly enough throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Teaching, although good throughout Key Stage 2, is variable in the rest of the school.
- Work is sometimes too hard or too easy.
- Writing is not taught in a consistent way throughout the school.
- Marking does not always tell pupils what they have done well and the next steps to take in their work.
- Not all teaching assistants have the training to support pupils' individual needs fully in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Checking of the quality of teaching has not been regular or detailed enough to identify promptly where weaknesses are found.
- Assessments of reading and writing in Nursery and Reception are not always daily or do not ensure that planning for the next activities takes account of previous learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Good teaching throughout Key Stage 2 has resulted in a three-year rise in standards in reading, writing and mathematics and demonstrates pupils' good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep safe.
- The school promotes well pupils' personal development and their respect for others.
- The headteacher has ensured good improvements over time in the achievement of older pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. They listened to pupils reading and observed several support groups.
- They held meetings with a group of pupils, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- Although there were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the inspectors took into consideration the school's analysis of its own questionnaire to parents and carers.
- The inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information about the progress of different groups of pupils throughout the school, its development planning and samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Laura Kearney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average school, although the number on roll is increasing steadily.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and only a few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. Many needs relate to behavioural, emotional and social issues.
- A higher proportion of pupils than is the case nationally 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 attainment and progress.
- It is part of a family of schools which works together to share training and ideas.
- A breakfast and after-school club, managed by the governing body, are provided each day.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the rate of progress, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 1, by making sure that:
 - activities are accurately matched to the levels at which pupils of all abilities are working
 - the teaching of writing is consistent throughout the school and there is continuity of practice by teachers and teaching assistants
 - marking tells pupils regularly what they have achieved and the next steps to take
 - day-to-day assessments of reading, writing and mathematics inform teachers' planning for future learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Strengthen the impact of leaders and managers at all levels by ensuring that:
 - those responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics check very regularly and in detail the rate of pupils' progress and act promptly on their findings
 - teaching and support staff have the necessary training and skills in the new initiatives to strengthen pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Attainment has risen for the last three years and is average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2012, the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics rose significantly to well above the national average. This demonstrates pupils' good progress throughout Key Stage 2.
- Progress is variable throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 from pupils' generally below-average levels of knowledge and skills on entry. This is because teaching practices, particularly in reading and writing, are inconsistent. As a result, achievement, overall, is not as good as it should be.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception in their personal, social and emotional development. This continues throughout the school. Children's reading, writing and mathematical skills develop at a slower pace because activities throughout the day do not focus regularly enough on reading, writing or numeracy.
- At the end of Year 1, reading levels are below average. However, pupils working at higher levels achieve well in checks on their understanding of letters and sounds. A few pupils read fluently and can explain their thoughts about the characters in a story. The new, very popular library is promoting much more regular reading and enjoyment of books.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average at the end of Year 2, particularly in writing. However, in some lessons, progress is good. In Reception, children made good gains in enunciating letters and groups of letters accurately and in joining letters together to make simple words. By Year 6, many pupils are writing complex sentences, using powerful vocabulary and showing they can present a balanced argument.
- There are no significant differences in the rate of progress of the different groups represented in the school. For all groups, progress accelerates throughout Key Stage 2, where support is usually more specific for those who need extra help with their learning. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with other groups of pupils.
- Those supported by additional funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, benefit in a range of ways, such as in their improved standards by the end of Year 6 and their good personal development.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- While teaching is usually good in Years 3 to 6 and leads to good achievement by the end of Key Stage 2, too much requires improvement throughout Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1 to accelerate pupils' progress and to lead to good achievement across all key stages.
- A lot of lessons have interesting beginnings, which gain pupils' interest. Pupils are very keen to learn and they settle quickly in lessons. However, sometimes, their progress slows because activities are too hard or too easy. This is particularly the case with writing tasks, in which there is also less consistency and continuity of practice between key stages. However, in a lesson in Year 3, pupils made good progress in writing in a sequence, due to challenging images, high expectations and a brisk pace.

- In some lessons, teachers assess pupils' learning as lessons proceed. In Nursery and Reception, day-to-day assessments of the quality of learning in reading, writing and mathematics are not always thorough enough to ensure activities for all children are at just the right level.
- Daily teaching of the sounds that letters and groups of letters make is good from Nursery onwards. Pupils' rate of progress is sometimes hampered because the reading books that they are given are too easy or too hard.
- Very effective questioning in some lessons encourages pupils to think more widely and in greater depth about their work. In a good literacy lesson in Year 2, focused questioning enabled the teacher to accurately evaluate pupils' understanding of how to write the start of a story using descriptive sentences. Pupils have ample time to practise what they have learnt.
- Marking of pupils' work is usually very helpful throughout Key Stage 2 in telling pupils what they have achieved and the next steps they need to take. It is less so throughout the rest of the school. Pupils' assessment of their own and others' learning is a developing aspect in some lessons.
- The help for pupils who need extra support enables them to make similar progress to other pupils, particularly when it is in short, very regular sessions and is focused on specific individual needs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is incorporated into the school day in a variety of ways. Opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural understanding are increasing through texts used in literacy lessons and topics about life in other countries.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils behave well in lessons, at play and around the site because the school has high expectations of good behaviour and the behaviour policy is applied consistently from Nursery onwards.
- The school understands and manages effectively the behavioural and emotional issues of pupils who need help managing their behaviour. As a result, the school is orderly, and learning and playing are happy experiences throughout the day.
- The importance of caring for each other, being respectful and working together is reinforced in assemblies and other regular routines from the time that children join the school.
- All of the pupils spoken to said that they feel safe. Parents and carers agree that the school provides a secure environment. Pupils say that they trust the staff and know they will help them.
- Pupils and their parents and carers agree that there is very little bullying. Pupils can speak about different types of discrimination, relative to their age, and they are knowledgeable about personal and internet safety. They can speak about a range of possible dangers and how to avoid or manage them.
- Attendance is average, continues to rise, and demonstrates the school's continuing tenacity in promoting pupils' improved attendance habits.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because not all pupils are able to manage their own behaviour and occasionally need 'time-out'

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher understands the needs of the school through regular monitoring of many aspects of its work. School improvement planning and staff training reflect the school's priorities.
- Leadership's focus on raising attainment through Key Stage 2 and carefully planned strategies to promote good reading, writing and mathematics skills have resulted in consistently good-quality teaching and pupils' good progress by the end of Year 6.
- A far greater emphasis is now being placed on improving provision through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The school has introduced new reading and writing initiatives to provide a more secure base for pupils' literacy development from Nursery onwards. As with numeracy initiatives, this is work in progress.
- Systems for formally observing the quality of teaching are established, and the headteacher knows that teaching is stronger in Key Stage 2 than throughout the rest of the school. However, senior and middle leaders, some of whom are new to post, do not have a full picture of the inconsistencies in teaching practices. Staff evaluate the quality of learning in their lessons regularly but, in Nursery and Reception, this is not always done on a daily basis to inform activities and, therefore, promote children's accelerated progress.
- The progress that teachers and leaders make towards their individual yearly targets is discussed regularly with the headteacher. Relevant opportunities are given to staff to develop their professional skills through training, including through partnerships with local schools. Any underperformance is addressed promptly.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to help ensure the well-being of pupils and to accelerate their learning. However, not all teaching assistants have the training in the new initiatives on reading and writing to be fully effective in helping pupils to improve their skills.
- The curriculum focuses primarily on literacy and numeracy and regularly incorporates literacy skills into other subjects. Spanish and creative and technological learning are examples of a suitably balanced curriculum. In all subjects, pupils are developing the personal and inter-personal skills necessary for secondary school.
- The local authority is providing effective support, such as training in literacy strategies, which are promoting improving teaching in both reading and writing. Other partnerships help to broaden pupils' learning and ensure their well-being.
- The school keeps parents and carers well informed, including through the website, and welcomes them into the school to support their children's learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - also requires improvement because, although the governing body knows a lot about the performance of the school, achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has not been addressed sufficiently promptly
 - manages the budget carefully and oversees spending
 - makes sure that safeguarding systems and procedures meet the current statutory requirements, including in the breakfast and after-school club.

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	122429
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	402094

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Elliott
Headteacher	Shaun Farrington
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2009
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