

# Ranskill Primary School

Cherry Tree Walk, Ranskill, Retford, DN22 8LH

## Inspection dates

26–27 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	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

- Standards in writing and mathematics are broadly average, but a small minority of pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points, particularly in mathematics.
- Teaching is not consistently good and the learning that is planned is not always well carried out.
- Learning in lessons is not always suitable for each pupil's needs and, at times, able pupils are not moved on to more difficult tasks quickly enough.
- It is unclear which school leader is responsible for checking the progress of, and seeing through, particular actions aimed at improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors do not check enough for them to know how best to question leaders and help them to improve the school.
- In the last school year, fewer pupils came to school regularly than in most schools.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is getting better because leaders and managers are doing the right things to bring about improvement in teaching and achievement.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading is above average.
- There is a strong team spirit among staff. All are committed to improving the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught well.
- The new way the learning of subjects is organised gives pupils regular, interesting, first-hand learning experiences that encourage their interest and enjoyment.
- Pupils behave well and relationships among pupils and between them and the staff are good. There is a strong family atmosphere because care for pupils' safety and wellbeing is a priority.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes from Reception to Year 4 and in doing so visited nine lessons and group-teaching sessions.
- It was not possible to see Years 5 and 6 at work because these pupils were out of school on a residential educational visit during the entire inspection.
- Pupils, teachers, the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer had discussions with the inspector.
- The inspector examined information on pupils' attainment and progress and the work in books of current pupils, including those in Years 5 and 6.
- He also examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- The views of 22 parents and carers who responded to the online Parent View survey were analysed. Other parents' and carers' views were sought at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Glynn Storer, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Ranskill Primary is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional support through pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is below average.
- No pupils are supported at the level of school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- There has been a high turnover of staff in the last two years, including the appointment of the headteacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Secure a higher proportion of good and outstanding teaching and speed up the progress of pupils of all abilities by:
  - ensuring that all teachers plan, and carry out effectively, activities that make suitable demands on pupils' learning across the ability range
  - improving the checking of learning taking place in lessons, so that more able pupils, in particular, are moved on without delay to tasks that make demands on them and promote rapid progress
  - giving pupils more practical problem-solving activities in mathematics and opportunities to talk through their mathematical thinking with adults and classmates.
- Improve leadership and management by establishing clear roles and responsibilities for members of the senior leadership team, especially in relation to directing and checking on the progress of on-going measures to improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and progress.
- Make governance more effective by extending the scope of checks carried out by members of the governing body so governors are better informed about teaching and pupils' progress and more able to question leaders and call them to account for how well the school is doing.
- Re-establish above-average rates of attendance.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement.

- The progress that the youngest children make is improving because leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective. Recent changes made to the classroom and outdoor learning areas and to the teaching of early reading skills are helping children to make good progress from the start. Attainment on entry varies considerably in this small school, but most children enter Year 1 with skills that are typical of five-year-olds nationally.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average by the end of Year 2, as are overall standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils making progress at the expected rate has improved, but some pupils are still not making enough progress from their various starting points, especially in mathematics.
- The results of the Year 6 national tests in the last two years and the information that the school keeps about each pupil's progress show that rates of progress are getting better. The Year 6 results in 2012 improved on those of 2011 and information on current pupils shows that an overall trend of improvement is continuing.
- Over time, almost all pupils make the nationally expected rate of progress in English, but few pupils do better than that. In mathematics, more pupils continue to fall short of progress targets.
- In recent years, it has often been the more able pupils who have made insufficient progress in Years 4 to 6. They sometimes do not make the best possible progress because they spend too much time completing relatively easy tasks and are not moved on to more demanding applications quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who receive support through pupil premium funding, match the performance of similar pupils nationally. They do not yet do as well as all pupils, but the gap between these and other pupils is narrowing in both English and mathematics. The support for all of these pupils is closely matched to their identified needs.
- Reading is the strongest area of pupils' performance. By the time that they leave school, many pupils read well. Last year, around half attained above-average standards. Improved approaches to the teaching of letters and the sounds they make are improving the progress of younger pupils and helping those who are less confident to read unfamiliar words.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement.

- The high turnover of staff in the last two years has made it difficult for leaders to establish consistently good teaching, with consequent impact on learning and progress throughout the school. Several initiatives have yet to have their full impact on teachers' performance but the school has already made important gains. These reflect in an improving picture of pupil progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. New leadership sets a good example to other staff and has already established a good level of consistency of approach that benefits the children at this early point in their school life.

- Teachers have suitably high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response. The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour and teachers invariably use them well. As a result, lessons proceed at a good pace and are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.
- Comments in pupils' books strike a good balance between praise and constructive feedback on how to improve. There is clear evidence that pupils are regularly required to act on such feedback and, in doing so, reinforce learning.
- In the very best lessons, tasks are pitched at exactly the right level for all pupils. Success is within pupils' reach, but they have to work hard and think hard to succeed. Pupils are required to be independent learners, but the teacher is never far away, guiding, redirecting and keeping the impetus of learning high. As yet, too few lessons are of this quality.
- Some teachers are beginning to use more hands-on, problem-solving approaches to the teaching of mathematics and to enable pupils to extend their understanding by talking through their mathematical reasoning. Leaders are promoting this way of teaching throughout the school, but it is too early to see an impact in overall rates of progress.
- Teachers plan work in lessons conscientiously, but there are times when planning does not result in good learning. Occasionally, tasks are pitched at the wrong levels, often too easy for more able pupils, or there is little real difference in what is expected of pupils across the ability range. When this happens, pupils' progress is restricted.
- At other times, objectives become confused. In the enthusiasm of the moment, pupils are moved to a new area of activity before they have really consolidated what has gone before. This results in learning that is fragile or in skills that are not properly understood and practised.
- Support for pupils at risk of underperforming, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is good. The role of additional adults in the classroom is carefully planned, as is the purpose of any extra teaching or guidance that these pupils receive. As a result, the progress of these pupils is improving.

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

- Pupils behave consistently well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to school that add to the quality of their learning. Pupils' comments include: 'Ranskill is awesome! We may be little but I think we can make big things...' and 'Everything is fair, fun and always safe.'
- In class, pupils are attentive and respond well to teachers' expectations. They take part enthusiastically in all activities and make a real effort to succeed. At play, they are lively and energetic but show consideration for others. There is no evidence of behaviour that could cause harm or upset.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for in school. The school has invested heavily in additional security for the school site. Pupils know this and appreciate what has been done for them. Other safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements. Parents and carers endorse behaviour as good and praise the school's approach to ensuring their children's safety.
- A few parents and carers express concerns about bullying. Pupils understand the nature of bullying of many kinds but say that in this school it is rare. They have confidence in teachers and other adults to deal with any such incidents that occur.

- In the three years to July 2011, attendance rose steadily to a point just above the national average. In the following school year, attendance fell back to a below-average level, largely due to an unusually high number of holidays taken in term time.
- The school has responded assertively to these and to all other unauthorised absences. The school also promotes regular attendance through weekly incentives and rewards. It is too early in the new school year to evaluate these and other actions to raise attendance levels.

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

- Since her appointment two years ago, the headteacher has provided strong leadership. She has rebuilt the teaching and leadership teams. She now considers that 'all the pieces of the jigsaw are in place' but this has taken time, so much remains to be done.
- High expectations are communicated and shared by all staff and there is a very strong sense of teamwork. Effective procedures to manage teachers' performance and good-quality, on-going training have improved teaching. Inadequate teaching has been eliminated and there is an increasing incidence of teaching that is good.
- Leaders have done much to improve behaviour and remove barriers to learning. Procedures for managing behaviour are better than they were, as are systems for identifying and helping pupils at risk of underachieving. These systems have created a safe and caring environment in which pupils are nurtured but which now has a strengthening focus on achievement.
- All leaders are involved in school self-evaluation and improvement. However, the senior leadership team lacks structure. Roles and responsibilities have not been assigned, so it is unclear who is responsible for checking the progress of particular measures and seeing them through to the point where their impact is seen in improved pupil performance.
- Leaders' success in bringing about improvement, and the quality of on-going actions to further that improvement, indicate that the school's capacity to sustain the drive to create a better school is secure.
- The introduction of an improved curriculum is another area of success for the new leadership team. The curriculum is firmly based on the teaching of skills and is enriched well by a wide variety of special events, visits out of school and residential experiences.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is nurtured effectively. Their work in music, French and the arts, along with a link with a school in Nepal, visits to places of worship and frequent opportunities for self-reflection and discovery add to this dimension of pupils' development.
- Social and moral development is promoted regularly through opportunities to learn about local heritage and global issues, and through clearly defined boundaries of what is right or wrong. For example, because the staff talked in depth about the reasons behind poverty in some parts of the world, pupils responded exceptionally well to a recent charitable event aimed at raising money to buy a goat for a village in Africa, and they eventually bought a cow.
- The local authority's support for the school over recent years has been effective and proportionate to need. Although leadership and management are strengthening and, in many respects, leaders are doing all of the right things, the local authority has correctly undertaken to maintain a high level of support for the foreseeable future.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- is effective in creating a safe and secure school site and in ensuring that all other safeguarding requirements are met
- is instrumental in strengthening the school’s leadership and teaching teams
- is not sufficiently informed by checking on how well improvements are progressing and so cannot participate fully in strategic planning or hold leaders fully to account for school performance.

## 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>	122686
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402111

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	123
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Spencer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Leone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01777 818468
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