

Ankermoor Primary School

Rene Road, Bolehall, Tamworth, B77 3NW

Inspection dates 24–25 October 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

- Not enough pupils are working above the expectations for their age in mathematics and standards in mathematics are lower than in reading and writing.
- Teaching requires improvement. Although it has improved significantly, it has not been good enough for long enough to enable all pupils to achieve well in all subjects.
- Teachers do not always provide suitably challenging work for more able pupils and at times the pace of learning is too slow.
- Leadership requires improving because the roles of subject leaders in checking and analysing the work in their areas of responsibility are not fully developed.
- Governors lack the skills needed to analyse school data properly and this hinders their ability to question school leaders about whether all pupils are making enough progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Despite frequent turnover of staff, the school has succeeded in improving the quality of teaching and accelerating progress.
- Previous areas of weakness, such as progress in writing, attendance and the school's assessment and tracking systems, have been tackled successfully.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good and they say they feel safe.
- Children throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The school looks after its pupils exceptionally well
- Attendance is above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meeting and discussions were held with the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, members of staff with responsibility for individual subjects, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- There were three responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Clive Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most other primary schools. Most pupils attending the school come from the immediate locality.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and only a very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and who are supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average and particularly high in some year groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the overall quality and consistency of teaching in the school by ensuring:
 - all lessons proceed at a brisk pace
 - there is an appropriate level of challenge for all age and ability groups within each mixed-age class.
- Improve pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics by ensuring pupils are provided with opportunities to employ these skills in other subject areas.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders by ensuring they systematically tackle key areas of weakness in order to ensure measurable improvements in their subjects.
- Improve governors' skills in the analysis of data so that they may more effectively hold the school to account and help direct its key decisions and choice of priorities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress requires improvement. Although improvements have been made in English, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in mathematics remains below average. The problem-solving skills of more able pupils in particular are weaker than their other skills in mathematics, and other pupils' calculation and number skills are not always strong enough for them to solve more complicated problems.
- Pupils' overall progress is in line with national average. By the time they leave, pupils improve at much the same rate as other pupils nationally.
- Many children enter the school's Nursery and Reception class with skills that are well-below those expected for their age. Although they make good progress in all areas of learning, attainment remains below average when they enter Year 1, particularly in communication and language and number skills.
- In recent years the school's results in the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests have fluctuated due to considerable changes in teaching staff over a long period, but have been broadly average overall. Nonetheless, standards are not yet as high as they need to be. As with progress, the standard of work of current Year 6 pupils, whilst in line with expectations, was seldom above them, and standards in mathematics are still not as high as in reading and writing.
- Regular, daily phonics activities (the links between letters and sounds) and guided reading activities help pupils to make good progress in reading for their starting points when they enter the school. Attainment in reading is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and at least average by Year 6.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The teaching seen during the inspection was good across the school. However this has not always been the case in the past. Despite the recent improvements, there has not been enough time for pupils, who might have achieved more lower down the school, to make the kind of accelerated progress that would allow them to exceed expectations.
- Where teaching has improved, for example, in writing, this is because teachers have received good training and support. For example, the school has focused on improving writing skills, with regular phonics lessons and guided reading activities, and this has helped improve pupils' writing considerably.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics still requires improvement. The school has not provided enough opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across other subjects in order to improve their problem-solving skills, particularly in the case of the more able pupils.
- In the best lessons, teaching is well-paced throughout the lesson and teachers demonstrate

good subject knowledge. They use a wide range of teaching methods and resources to engage and maintain pupils' interest.

- In a Year 1/2 literacy lesson, pupils made good progress and enjoyed learning as they described their feelings whilst engaged in a drama exercise. The teacher made good use of computer technology, dimmed lights and atmospheric music to develop a high level of anticipation and provided regular opportunities for pupils to work together and discuss their ideas. As a result, pupils made good progress.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils in the mixed-age classes can do are not high enough and the work set does not always fully challenge the more able to think hard and achieve their best.
- Pupils' books are regularly marked and, in the best cases, marking gives pupils good guidance on what they can do to improve their work.
- The school uses pupil premium funding appropriately by providing specific individualised support to help improve the attainment of those pupils who receive it.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make good progress due to good quality individual and small group support from class teachers and other adults.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to learn and do their best and answer questions readily. Their generally good attitudes mean the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils in lessons is good. They display high levels of concentration and, when working in pairs or groups, organise themselves swiftly and without fuss. However, there is sometimes some minor off-task behaviour when the lesson moves at a slow pace or the level of challenge is not right.
- Pupils mix well with each other in the playground and in the hall at lunchtimes. They are courteous and polite to visitors. They work well together in class and treat each other with respect and courtesy.
- All pupils feel safe at school and say they are confident that any issue they raise with the school will be dealt with promptly. They have a good awareness of different forms of bullying and say that bullying doesn't happen at their school.
- The school's efforts to improve attendance have been very successful and attendance is now above average. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and Year 6 pupils stated they will be really sorry to leave in the summer.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are curious about the world around them and readily embrace new experiences, such as a recent 'Faith Day' visit to Derby and working with Staffordshire Rangers to develop a wildlife area, which broaden their understanding.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership, including that by governors, requires improvement. Leaders and managers have identified some key strengths and areas for improvement, with the full support of the local authority. The school has ensured progression through the pay scales and teachers' performance are directly linked and this has led to improvements in the quality of teaching across the school. However, leaders have not yet secured the same level of improvement in teaching and achievement in mathematics or provided subject leaders with the skills needed to undertake sharply focussed observations of teaching in their subjects.
- Attendance has improved significantly and a rigorous and more accurate assessment and tracking system, linked to termly pupil progress meetings, has been introduced. This is leading to improvements in pupil progress, particularly in English.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage Nursery and Reception classes is good. The classrooms have a spacious and secure, directly-accessible outdoor area which is used to provide children with a good variety of 'free-choice' activities indoors and out which develop their independent learning skills well.
- Teaching programmes are appropriately broad and balanced and there have been improvements in planning for the use of skills across subjects, particularly in providing opportunities for extended writing in history, geography and science lessons. There are not enough of these opportunities in mathematics, however.
- Fully supported by governors, the leadership has used the funding for those pupils in receipt of the pupil premium effectively to improve the staffing and other support for those pupils who receive it to help them achieve better results.
- Safeguarding systems are secure and discrimination is not tolerated. The school is increasingly ensuring all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school and has helped it to improve the accuracy of assessment and the moderation of pupils' work and to raise attainment in writing.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body is supportive of the school but does not have a precise enough understanding of the school's work to be able to offer well-informed challenge, particularly in relation to pupils' achievement and the school's self-evaluation. It ensures that safeguarding is secure and has overseen the arrangements for the use of the pupil premium funding and the arrangements for relating teachers' performance to pay effectively.

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	124160
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	402233

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Thorneley-Carless
Headteacher	Norah Rowley
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2011
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