

Hallam Primary School

Hallam Grange Crescent, Sheffield, S10 4BD

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics is above average, their rate of progress over time in these areas is variable.
- Pupils' progress is not yet consistently strong as they move through the school.
- The quality of teaching varies too much to be good overall. Consequently, while they make good progress in some lessons, pupils of all abilities do not always make as much progress as they could.
- While there is recent indication of some improvement, the lower-attaining pupils, including those supported through pupil premium, have made least progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and the team of leaders she has developed are improving teaching and pupils' progress, especially in reading.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in reading and their attainment in this area is high.
- Teachers' expectations of their pupils are being raised and there are instances of good and outstanding teaching that engages and enthuses pupils and allows them to show their considerable capacity to learn and make progress.
- Pupils are safe and their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Good provision in the Reception Year ensures that the youngest children make good progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.
- Nineteen lessons were seen involving most teachers.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff and pupils, representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and examined a wide range of documents relating to keeping pupils safe, attendance and attainment and progress. They also scrutinised a sample of pupils’ workbooks.
- Correspondence from parents and 86 Parent View responses were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Geoffrey Lawrence	Additional Inspector
David Woodhouse	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The number of children entering Reception Year this year has increased from 60 to 90 children.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is broadly average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the expected minimum standards, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has after-school provision for pupils which is managed independently of the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' learning and progress in writing and mathematics by eliminating inadequate teaching and increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching. Do this by ensuring that:
 - all teachers are skilled in assessment and are effective in applying what they know of each pupils' capabilities to plan appropriately challenging work
 - the additional support for the lower-attaining pupils, those known to be eligible for pupil premium and those supported through school action plus, is always planned thoroughly and that they are given purposeful, challenging work, so that there is a sustained narrowing of the gap between their performance and that of other pupils in the school
 - more pupils make rapid progress, and that this pattern of improvement is sustained.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Throughout the school the attainment of the great majority of pupils, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, is above average. However, their rate of progress is uneven, both in lessons and overtime. There has been some improvement, but while some pupils progress well, others make more modest progress. Lower-attaining pupils, in particular, achieve less well compared to pupils nationally.
- Achievement in reading is better and many pupils make good progress. Leaders have successfully implemented initiatives to improve all pupils' reading skills and enjoyment, including encouraging families to promote regular reading at home.
- Children in the Reception Year make good progress and are ready to start Year 1 with knowledge and skills above the level expected. Although by the end of Year 2 they are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, some inconsistency in the quality of teaching prevents pupils from reaching higher standards and making the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Similarly, in Key Stage 2, inconsistencies in teaching prevent pupils sustaining a good rate of progress and achieving even higher standards. Appropriate measures are being taken to tackle weaknesses in teaching and to improve pupils' outcomes but there is still more to be done.
- Evidence of improvement is reflected in the better results gained last year. Progress is increasing, with a greater proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing and mathematics as well as reading.
- In 2012 there was a significant narrowing of the gap between the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals, or being supported through school action plus, and that of their contemporaries. Rigorous monitoring of these pupils is now leading to their learning and progress being given closer attention and is helping to ensure pupil premium funds are used to provide effective support. There is still further work to be done but the developments to date are contributing towards strengthening the school's capacity to promote equality for all pupils.
- Some weaknesses persist in teaching the lower-attaining pupils, those eligible for pupil premium and others supported through school action plus. The planning of their work occasionally lacks careful consideration and challenge. For example, in one class some pupils were given a colouring-in exercise, rather than work that would have furthered their understanding of doubling numbers. Meanwhile, their more-able peers were given challenging work which enabled them to make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In the best instances, good and outstanding teaching promotes rapid progress and high achievement. However, a substantial amount of teaching still requires improvement. Some inadequate teaching causes the inconsistency in pupils' learning and progress over time.
- Although there is not enough good teaching overall, the increasing proportion that is good and outstanding demonstrates the positive impact of leaders' drive to improve teaching.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers had high expectations of their pupils and gave them work and activities that were thoroughly planned and challenging. Teachers knew pupils' needs well and understood their different capabilities. The pace was fast, which pupils enjoyed and took in their stride. Teachers stimulated their pupils' enthusiasm for learning by providing them with good opportunities to work independently and cooperatively, to share their knowledge, develop their ideas and solve problems.
- In the best lessons, teachers questioned pupils closely and kept a close check on what they had learnt, providing them with good opportunities to evaluate their own progress.
- Teachers in the Reception Year are effective in planning a multitude of activities and choices, to enable children to explore and improve their knowledge and skills. Good use of children's

well developed communication and social skills provided a positive lead in learning independently and together. Literacy and numeracy are well taught ensuring all children make good progress from their starting points.

- Nearly half the lessons in Key Stage 1 and 2 did not enable pupils to learn well because assessment was not used well in understanding what pupils already knew and could do. Therefore, the work planned for them did not always match their different capabilities and set appropriate levels of challenge for the range of pupils in classes. Some should have been given harder work and others, particularly lower-attaining pupils, occasionally needed more precise planning to ensure they grasped fully what they needed to learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils understand and adhere closely to the school's clearly articulated values and expectations with regard to behaviour and attitudes to learning. Good behaviour throughout the school and high attendance are well established. There has been no need to exclude a pupil, temporarily or otherwise, for poor behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe and this is enhanced by the school's robust arrangements to keep them safe in school and on educational trips. Pupils are clear that behaviour is good and express positive views about their school experience. While the majority of parents using Parent View agree, a significant minority of the 86 who responded to the on-line questionnaire indicate concerns about behaviour and bullying. The wide range of evidence gathered by inspectors gave no indications to support these concerns about behaviour and bullying.
- A wide range of evidence shows that the good behaviour of almost all pupils ensures there is little threat from any form of bullying. Pupils' understanding of bullying and how to combat it, is developed effectively through the curriculum and anti-bullying week activities in particular. They know how to get help from staff and the school's arrangements for supporting pupils are embedded.
- Pupils have good regard for each other and accept others for who they are. They are friendly, helpful and polite. A strong sense of fair play is developed in the school's outstanding provision for physical education, games and sports. This contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- From the Reception Year through to Year 6, the attitudes to learning of all pupils are good. They are quickly enthused when work is challenging and enjoyable. Behaviour is not outstanding because, at times, when lessons fail to engage and challenge pupils, they lose interest, even though they are never less than compliant, cooperative and polite.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a comprehensive grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She uses her understanding with unswerving dedication to build leadership strength and drive improvement. She has given clarity to what pupils can be expected to achieve and the standards teaching needs to attain to realise this. Her high expectations set the school firmly in the right direction and she gives it good capacity for improvement.
- The members of her cohesive leadership team have developed skills to keep a close check on the school's performance. They are sharply focused on improving teaching and pupils' achievement. They have made headway towards achieving these aims, which is seen in better outcomes for all pupils in 2012. The major initiative to improve reading standards has had significant impact. More is still required before teaching is at least good and leadership can be considered to be outstanding.
- Monitoring and evaluation have improved rigour, leading to the accurate evaluation of the school's work and ensuring leaders are pursuing the essential improvement priorities. These are set out in clearly articulated plans which are shared by the whole school. Staff work

alongside the headteacher with a common sense of purpose and morale is high.

- The quality of teaching is kept under close scrutiny and leadership is relentless in seeking to remedy weaknesses. Teachers are becoming increasingly clear on where improvement is required and their professional development is directed towards this. The focus in the management of teachers' performance has been sharpened with the use of measurable targets linked to pupils' performance, although impact is yet to be assessed.
- A few parents expressed concern about poor communication between home and school. This is reflected also in Parent View. Inspectors found that the school, while taking parents' concerns seriously and acting upon them, has not always communicated well with parents about the success of actions the school has taken.
- The local authority has provided light touch support for the school and has contributed to the recruitment of an independent consultant who gives an expert external assessment of the school's work and its progress on improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Benefits from the accurate evaluations of the school's work reported by leaders and the effective support and challenge provided by governors, based on their good expertise, experience and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
 - Is strengthened by the decisive part the governing body has played in ensuring that school funds are focused on the successful implementation of improvement priorities.

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	107099
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	403030

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	458
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martyn Birch
Headteacher	Samantha Fearnehough
Date of previous school inspection	April 2008
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