

North Clifton Primary School

Church Lane, North Clifton, Newark, NG23 7AP

Inspection dates 27–28 November 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 progress pupils make in writing and mathematics is not as fast as it is in reading.
- There is not enough good teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- There is variation in the effectiveness of the approaches used by teachers in helping pupils to learn – particularly in teaching writing and in marking pupils' work.
- The oldest pupils are not making fast enough progress in mathematics.
- The headteacher and governors are keen to make improvements, but their plans are not focused sharply enough on making sure that the teaching is consistently good or better so that pupils always achieve well.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in the Foundation Unit (Nursery and Reception Years) do well. They are well taught through a range of activities led by the teacher and those that they choose for themselves.
- Pupils make good progress in their early reading, and this is built on successfully as they get older.
- Relationships are very positive. The pupils enjoy school and the range of activities provided for them.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school. They work and play together very well.
- The extra funding provided by the pupil premium is used well to accelerate the progress made by the very few pupils eligible for this support.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons taught by six teachers.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, teachers, the headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body, and he also had a telephone discussion with a local authority officer.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including policies about keeping pupils safe and the school's website. He also examined the work in pupils' books.
- The views of 11 parents were analysed through the Parent View website.
- He also considered the views expressed in seven questionnaires returned by school staff.

Inspection team

Christopher Parker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than most primary schools.
- Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children from families who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from families with parents in the armed forces, is much lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average.
- Currently there are no pupils who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school's national test results cannot be compared to the government's floor standard, because there are fewer than the minimum of 11 pupils required to make such a comparison meaningful.
- The school cooperates informally with a number of other schools in the area.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception Years are taught together in the Foundation Unit each morning. In the afternoon, children in the Reception Year join pupils in Key Stage 1. The school operates an 'Afternoon Club' for three-year-olds on three afternoons each week. The Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes are each taught by two part-time teachers.
- The headteacher took up the post in January 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and better, in order to make sure that all pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics, by:
 - establishing consistently high expectations of the levels all pupils can achieve in their work
 - setting them work that builds on what they know and are able to do, and ensure that learning is always at a good pace
 - marking pupils' work so that they know what they need to do to improve, and also giving them time to correct their errors and learn from them.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure the school's plans for improvement are:
 - sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and increasing the rate of pupils' progress
 - precise about the dates by which improvements will be made
 - clear about the cost and expected impact of each activity
 - specific about the measures against which governors can evaluate success.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most pupils are making the progress expected of them, but too few are making faster progress in writing and mathematics so that they reach the standards they should. The school is focusing on increasing the progress of every pupil, but the steps the teachers have taken are yet to result in pupils making consistently good progress.
- There is evidence that the progress pupils make in writing is beginning to improve, as a result of an increased focus on improving pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation. In addition, frequent checks of each pupil's progress, regular meetings about it, and termly reviews of achievement targets are providing a secure foundation for faster progress.
- The school's approach to teaching early reading provides pupils with the skills to read unfamiliar words. The importance of reading is promoted well throughout the school. Older pupils take responsibility for maintaining the library, which contains a good range of fiction. Interest in different types of books is encouraged through a wide range of activities.
- The oldest pupils' progress in mathematics has not kept pace with their progress in reading and writing. In Key Stage 2, the mathematics work the pupils are set is not always at the right level. Sometimes work does not stretch the more able, and at other times opportunities to develop pupils' deeper understanding are missed.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 fluctuates considerably. This is, to some degree, because year groups are very small, but also because, while some pupils make good progress, others do not make as much progress as they should. In 2011, the results of national tests were above average but, in 2012, they were below average.
- The school made good use of the pupil premium last year, to support a very small number of eligible pupils. For example, pupils made faster-than-expected progress because of the additional one-to-one teaching received. Progress accelerated considerably over the course of the year in reading and mathematics.
- The attainment of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was, last year, considerably lower than that of similar pupils nationally. Pupils who are currently receiving extra help are making progress in line with other pupils. The school has developed a detailed analysis, for example, in mathematics, so that support can be allocated where it is needed.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils make the progress expected of them, rather than consistently good progress. In Key Stage 2, for example, there is too much variation in how writing is taught, in teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation of their work, and in the detail and effectiveness of teachers' marking.
- The teachers provide the pupils with interesting opportunities to write, but their expectations of what pupils should achieve are not consistently high. In Key Stage 2, some of the pupils' best work results from a clear list of what their work must include. Where teaching does not provide the same clear guidance, pupils' writing is not as good.

- Some, but not all, of the marking of the pupils' writing helps them to improve their work. In the best examples, the teacher is very clear about how the pupil's work can be improved. In other examples, the comments that teachers make are not as useful, nor are they always followed up, and pupils are not always given time to correct their mistakes.
- The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2 is not ensuring that all pupils make fast enough progress. There are occasions where tasks are not tailored well enough to what pupils already know and are able to do. For example, in a lesson where they were reading scales, some pupils had to work through activities they found easy before being given demanding work that made them think.
- The teaching of early reading is systematic. This is the main reason that pupils are making faster progress. For example, the youngest children are taught well to recognise sounds such as 'ee' in words from effective use of the interactive whiteboard. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing a good technical vocabulary about the sounds that make up words.
- The teaching in the Foundation Unit (Nursery and Reception Years) is good. The children settle very quickly into the routines of school life. They do well and grow in confidence because of the range of interesting activities they carry out in a classroom where words and numbers feature prominently. There is a good emphasis on early reading, writing and counting.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Discussions with pupils indicate that lessons are very rarely interrupted by poor behaviour. Occasionally, younger pupils lose focus when inactive for too long. Pupils concentrate well on the tasks they are set and persevere to complete tasks although, occasionally, there are unfinished pieces of work.
- Pupils say they enjoy school. They welcome the activities that teachers plan for them, such as the 'business day' they held during the inspection to design, make and market Christmas decorations. They also enjoy a range of visits and visitors, which enhance their personal development.
- Attendance has risen to be above average. This is partly because the school has taken a firmer stance on pupils taking holidays in term time. The headteacher and governors came to the conclusion that these were having a negative impact on some pupils' progress. Last year, family holidays accounted for several lengthy absences.
- Pupils report that behaviour is good and bullying is rare. They were made very aware of the impact of unkind name-calling during an assembly. Pupils get on well together. One boy was entered into the 'Golden Book' because he had made two pupils who were new to the school very welcome, and had involved them in his games at playtimes.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Pupils of all ages work and play together very well. Older pupils are very considerate towards younger pupils. They enjoy responsibilities, whether it is helping at lunchtimes or managing the library. In lessons, most pupils speak confidently and are keen to answer their teacher's questions.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher and governors are keen to improve the school and to provide the pupils with a good education. They know where improvements are needed, and have taken some steps to bring them about. However, their self-evaluation is based too heavily on the improvements which they have made, without sufficient consideration of the impact of these improvements on pupils' progress.
 - Plans to build on recent improvements are too broad. They do not set out precisely what will improve, by how much, and by when. The headteacher has identified where improvements are needed, for example, in pupils' writing, but these plans do not focus sharply enough on how teaching will improve in order to make sure that all pupils make good progress.
 - Through the appraisal of teachers' performance, the headteacher has set each teacher a direct target that is linked to increasing pupils' progress. Any consideration of increase in salary or responsibility is made on the basis of an assessment by the headteacher and governing body of the capacity of the teacher in question to enable pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
 - The teachers provide an interesting range of topics and themes, but the work that they set the pupils are not always at the right level. Lessons are enhanced by a range of opportunities that include residential visits, theatre trips, sporting events and visitors to school. Pupils appreciate the way in which their successes are celebrated during 'Golden Assembly'.
 - Parents receive useful details of their children's progress towards the improvement targets which they are set. The parents also receive helpful information about forthcoming events. The school website is being revamped because the headteacher and governors are aware that it does not provide parents with all the information that it is needed to meet current requirements.
 - The local authority has increased its support for the school as a result of recent fluctuations in its national test results. The local authority officer provides support for checking the quality of teaching, and arranges additional help where specific weaknesses have been identified. The school also receives support and training through its relationship with other local schools.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body meets regularly with the headteacher to learn about pupils' current progress and standards. Governors visit the school so that they know about its day-to-day teaching and performance. They compare the school's performance with that of other schools, and are very aware that there is scope for improvement in the progress of pupils. The governing body is increasingly searching in the questions it asks of the headteacher as a result of a wide range of training attended by some of the governors over the last year. However, they have not ensured that the school's plans for improvement are presented in a way that enables them to hold the headteacher to account for the impact on pupils' learning and progress. The headteacher's performance targets are set by the governing body, and the governors receive reports on the implementation of the teacher-appraisal policy. Governors are acutely aware of the school's financial position and the decisions that have to be made to secure its future. Governors use additional funds from the pupil premium to provide more one-to-one teaching for those pupils eligible for it. Consequently, the progress of the individual pupils involved improved considerably last year.
-

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	122662
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	402108

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	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annabel Skelton
Headteacher	Christopher Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
Telephone number	01522 778609
Fax number	01522 778609
Email address	head10@northclifton.notts.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

