

Coppice Primary School

Roper Avenue, Marlpool, Heanor, DE75 7BZ

Inspection dates

4–5 December 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		Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, is not good enough. This is due to weaknesses in the pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and their spelling.
- Even though some teaching in the school is good or better there is too much that is not good enough, especially in Key Stage 1.
- In all key stages there are some teachers who make too little use of information about how well pupils have learned when planning work for them.
- Teachers do not always make clear to pupils what they need to do to meet their targets for improving their work, and do not always give them enough time to respond to teachers' comments about improvement.
- Teachers in charge of subjects are inconsistent in how effectively they check how well pupils are doing.
- The governing body's questioning of the headteacher about improving effectiveness has not always been searching enough because governors have relied too heavily on leaders to provide them with information.

The school has the following strengths

- The new acting headteacher and deputy headteacher have made a positive start to improving teaching and speeding up achievement.
- Pupils feel safe, they behave well and enjoy school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress because of the support they receive.
- Changes made to the teaching of reading are improving progress. Pupils read a wide range of books. Younger pupils use their good knowledge of the sounds that letters make to tackle new words.
- The school promotes pupils' well-being strongly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons of which 10 were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils (randomly chosen), senior staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoyed and why.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at development plans, records of pupils' progress, arrangements for safeguarding, and documentation resulting from the monitoring of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), in addition to views expressed in person by parents and carers during the inspection, (and one view given on the telephone), and a recent survey carried out by the school.
- Inspectors also scrutinised 17 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Buckingham

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is average in size compared with other primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, and almost all speak English as their first language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed forces.
- The proportion of pupils 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.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part way through the year, or in different year groups, is slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club.
- There have been many changes in staffing since the last inspection, including five different headteachers over three years, with the current acting headteacher appointed in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers do not spend too long introducing lessons and so reduce the pace of learning
 - teachers' questioning makes pupils give extended answers
 - teachers give clear guidance to pupils so that they know what they need to do to reach the next steps in their learning and time for them to respond consistently to teachers' comments
 - work is set at the right level for all pupils so that it is sufficiently demanding.
- Ensure achievement in writing is as good as in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - giving pupils more regular opportunities to write at length
 - allowing pupils to use and develop their writing skills well in other subjects
 - making sure that pupils improve both the content and the presentation of their work.
- Improve the school's leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - teachers in charge of subjects are suitably skilled in checking how well pupils are doing
 - members of the governing body are less reliant on staff for finding out about teaching and learning and more active in finding things out for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is inconsistent. The proportion of pupils achieving the progress they should make from their various starting points is average. This is particularly the case for the current Year 6 pupils whose progress is in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achievement in writing is variable across the school. In Year 4, progress is hampered because grammar and punctuation are relatively weak. Across Key Stage 2 pupils are not given enough time to write longer pieces of work, and to do this well across a range of subjects. This is being tackled, but it is too early to assess the overall impact of the changes.
- Currently, the skills and abilities of children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage are below those usually found and for some children well below, particularly in communication skills. Children settle very well in the Nursery and enjoy the wide range of activities that are provided for them both indoors and outdoors. They are confident and secure and have already made good progress in their personal and social skills.
- Progress in reading has improved recently because early checks by senior leaders indicated the need to strengthen pupils' use of the sounds that letters make. An effective programme has been set up that now allows pupils to be more confident in tackling unknown words. This results in them being more accurate in their reading.
- Pupils' spelling, although improving, remains weak. Achievement in reading has sped up in Key Stage 2 because a new system records pupils' progress in reading in detail. This allows teachers to direct pupils to books of increasing difficulty, and ones that capture their interest, particularly boys.
- Progress and achievement in mathematics require improvement because pupils' calculation skills are too variable. Pupils are competent in their mental and oral skills. Pupils say they enjoy the many opportunities made available for them to apply their knowledge in practical mathematics such as when they measured the amount of light travelling through different materials.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is because they benefit from well-planned programmes of individual support. Teaching assistants play an important role in these pupils' good progress due to the help they give both in the classrooms and when taking out individuals or small groups.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are also given individual support to help with literacy and numeracy skills. The school's records show that this has led to considerable improvement in these pupils' progress in both key stages in English and mathematics so that gaps in attainment are closing rapidly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been strong enough to promote good achievement. Work is not always set at the right level for pupils. In particular, the work set is sometimes too easy and they do not make enough progress. In addition, staff sometimes spend too long introducing

lessons and this reduces the time for pupils working on their own and this slows the pace of learning.

- In all classes relationships are good, staff manage the pupils' behaviour very well and learning is purposeful.
- There are signs of improvement. Some teaching is good or outstanding. The acting headteacher has set clear targets for teachers' improvement and the deputy headteacher has coached and supported staff well to make sure that these are being met.
- The new arrangements for teaching the sounds that letters make and guiding pupils in their reading are of good quality. This consistent and school-wide approach to the teaching of reading is paying dividends, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers use a good range of different approaches to interest pupils in their learning. The use of discussion to help pupils to share ideas with each other is good. Good examples observed in a science lesson included the pupils discussing heat-resistant materials and helping each other in their decisions about containers for hot liquids. Even so, teachers' questioning is not always effective because sometimes it does not make pupils think hard enough.
- Marking has strengthened and is detailed and supportive. However, next steps in learning are not always made clear to pupils particularly in their writing. This inconsistency in guidance means that sometimes pupils are not clear about what they need to do to improve and how to respond to teachers' comments.
- Teaching assistants support learning well, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is the case when they give help in the class, such as when pupils were learning about how to reflect mathematical shapes, and also when they take pupils out for specific assistance, such as when younger children were being taught the sounds that letters make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Behaviour over time has been a concern and the school saw that it was a barrier to pupils' progress until a new system was introduced. Occasionally, when the work is not set at the right level for pupils, their concentration wanders.
- Senior staff, class teachers, specialist teachers and support staff work together as a team to promote pupils' well-being and to make sure they enjoy school and get the most from their education.
- Pupils are generally keen to learn. Their enjoyment of school is also reflected in their above-average attendance. They enjoy working together in groups and during break times the youngest and oldest pupils mix happily together.
- Parents and carers are full of praise about how well their children have been helped to settle in. They are pleased with the way their children were prepared to start school.
- Pupils, parents and carers and staff expressed positive views about current behaviour. Pupils

confirmed that lately lessons are hardly ever disrupted by poor behaviour. The new system of rewards and sanctions has been welcomed by pupils and they appreciate how much it is helping them to learn more effectively.

- Pupils are well mannered and sensible. By the time they reach Year 6, they are confident and have high self-esteem. This is because staff treat the pupils well and the good personal and social programme effectively promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. They also say that they enjoy the visits of the local police and fire service for their safety talks.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with an enjoyable start to the school day. They enjoy a healthy breakfast and socialise with others in a warm and friendly atmosphere which sets them up well for the day.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, leadership and management have not done enough to lift the school's overall effectiveness to good. Teachers in charge of subjects have not been robust enough in checking how well pupils are doing and in bringing about improvement.
- However, the acting headteacher and deputy headteacher have made a positive start to improving teaching, the subjects taught, and raising standards. They have a thorough and accurate awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have written a high quality improvement plan. The changes they have made are having a positive impact, particularly on pupils' behaviour, and in reading.
- Senior leaders expect the best from staff and are holding them accountable for pupils' progress. The staff have responded very positively to this and, together with the governing body, are determined and committed to the school's improvement.
- Senior leaders are also tackling weaknesses in how well teachers in charge of subjects check them. This is beginning to pay off. For example, the teacher in charge of English has carried out an accurate review of pupils' work that is telling staff what needs improving.
- Revised systems for setting targets for teachers work alongside leaders' regular checks on the quality of teaching. These show that strengths and weaknesses are assessed and shared with staff. Salary increases are linked to teachers' good performance.
- The local authority has provided support for the school, particularly in addressing the high turnover in senior staffing. The authority has played an important role in recruiting the acting headteacher and an experienced class teacher.
- Senior staff make sure that pupil premium funding is spent effectively in helping targeted pupils to reach the same levels of attainment as their classmates. This includes the appointment of a learning mentor who supports individual children and families, and the provision of small group work and one-to-one tuition. The impact of this has been positive in speeding up these pupils' progress in learning and also in their personal and social skills.

■ There has been a good focus on building key skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils say that they enjoy the focus on linking writing to topic work, such as in the work on World War 2. This shows signs of improving writing. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to write at length across a range of subjects. Staff make sure that all pupils have equality of opportunity when they plan topics for them. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The school fosters good relations with parents and carers and outside agencies.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Members of the governing body have successfully set up the new senior leadership arrangements. Governors receive regular reports regarding the quality of the school's teaching and pupils' progress. This puts them in a good position to check the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know what is being done to get rid of any teaching that requires improvement and what is being done on salary progression and promotion issues within the school. They also know how well the school is doing compared with other schools. Governors, particularly those newly appointed, have taken advantage of the local authority's training scheme that focused on the scope of their responsibilities. They do not always ask searching enough questions because currently systems for members to find out things for themselves are inconsistent. However, there are things that the governors do well. Governors successfully ensure that requirements for safeguarding and staff vetting procedures are fully in place and are effective. They hold the school to account well over financial matters. They are also aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact this has on pupils' progress.

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	112563
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	405397

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	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Hatton
Headteacher	Alison Seaton
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2010
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