

Walkley Primary School

Burnaby Crescent, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S6 2RZ

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides clear and purposeful leadership. She is well supported by a reflective and thorough senior management team. As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved well since the last inspection.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Those with special educational needs also achieve well because of the carefully targeted support they receive.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for beginning Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. Adults skilfully question pupils to help them retain facts and deepen their understanding. They make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) and links between subjects to make learning exciting.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well. They rise to their teachers' high expectations for good behaviour and learn in a calm and friendly environment.
- There are good procedures for measuring and improving the school's effectiveness. The leadership receives good support from the governing body. Consequently, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers miss chances for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills during the lesson.
- Sometimes pupils do not start on activities which fully challenge them soon enough.
- Some opportunities are missed to make full use of marking and feedback, which is good overall, to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons including five joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff including senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also heard pupils read from both key stages.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), discussions with several parents and the outcomes from the school’s consultations with parents.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils’ current and previous progress, the school development plan, performance management documentation and records relating to pupils’ behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Melvyn Hemmings	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British families. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding allocated to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or the children of forces families.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher began working at the school after the last inspection as did several teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the already good teaching to outstanding by:
 - providing further opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and other basic skills during lessons
 - ensuring pupils are actively engaged in tasks which fully challenge them throughout their lessons
 - making full use of marking and feedback in all subjects to improve pupils' basic skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally well below those typical for their age. They progress well, especially in their personal and social development, and literacy and numeracy skills through carefully structured and enjoyable activities, establishing early reading, writing and number skills and an enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils' progress through school is much more consistent than at the last inspection and both boys and girls reach standards which are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 6. Occasionally, relative weaknesses in the quality of teaching limit pupils of all abilities from making the very best progress they could.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are reducing the gap between their achievement and that of others. Pupils respond well to programmes to quickly boost reading and spelling skills which are closely matched to their individual needs.
- Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. The pupils' individual learning needs are identified early and structured support helps them make rapid gains in their language skills.
- Pupils largely read fluently and widely. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 increasingly tackle new and unfamiliar words well because they develop a good understanding of letters and their sounds. By Year 6 pupils of all ages and abilities read with expression, enthusiasm and a good knowledge of different authors and writing styles. They are particularly inspired by regular visits from established authors and whole-day book events.
- The pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. There has been a good improvement to their mental calculation skills since the last inspection through fast-paced and very challenging games and well planned homework. More-able pupils, in particular, rise to the challenge of problem-solving activities when they independently apply the skills they have learned.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers make good use of accurate measures of pupils' individual progress to set work which provides the right level of challenge and support. They set precise expectations for pupils of different abilities to reach during the lesson and give them the opportunity to complete work at a higher level. In particular, activities for teaching basic reading and writing skills are taught to small groups of pupils of similar ability, largely regardless of age. This leads to rapid and secure progress and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Teachers ensure pupils are actively engaged in learning from the start of the lesson. Teachers make good use of ICT, games and role play to engage pupils' attention and sharpen their thinking. They ensure that these build well on pupils' earlier learning. Occasionally, however, teachers spend too long on whole-class activities, including explanations at the start of lessons, before pupils are actively involved in work which fully challenges them individually. This limits the progress they make in these lessons.
- Teachers involve pupils well in assessing their own work and identifying the steps they can take to improve it. This is reinforced well through teachers' marking and feedback and is a key factor in pupils' improving achievement. However, although marking is used well in English and mathematics work, it is less consistently applied to improve pupils' basic skills in other subjects.
- Teachers and other adults ask challenging and probing questions to explore pupils' understanding and develop their thinking skills. They enable pupils to make a full contribution to discussions through, for example, talking with their partner. This successfully reinforces their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils systematically develop their knowledge of letters and the structure of words and

sentences. This is in response to briskly paced activities which link actions, symbols and sounds and develop pupils' vocabulary and their knowledge of grammar. Pupils have good chances to develop their skills through subjects such as history and geography. Occasionally, however, teachers tell pupils what to do rather than letting them read instructions for themselves or encouraging them to practise their basic skills in other ways, such as note-taking, during the lesson.

- Pupils who have special educational needs undertake work which is well matched to their needs and builds progressively on their earlier learning. Teaching assistants and other adults provide sensitive and skilled support when needed whilst encouraging pupils to work as independently as possible.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good and has improved since the last inspection. This is the result of teachers' consistent promotion of clear and high expectations for pupils' conduct and the good relationships. As one pupil said, reflecting the views of others, 'The teachers always smile at you and it brightens up your day.'
- Pupils contribute to establishing school rules and promoting good attitudes through their roles as school councillors and through regular discussions with other groups of pupils. They have very clear ideas about how they can make the school even better and feel they are listened to and their views acted upon.
- The school works well with parents to support pupils with emotional and social difficulties and help them manage their own behaviour. Consequently, parents support and appreciate teachers' high expectations and poor behaviour is very rare.
- Pupils feel safe. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including internet-bullying, and feel that very little goes on. This view is supported by inspectors' observations and their analysis of the school's records of incidents.
- Pupils respond well to the strong moral and social guidance they receive through effective personal and social education. This prepares them well for their future education and contributes to their safety and well-being.

The leadership and management are good

- A key factor in improvements since the last inspection is the rigorous and imaginative procedures to model and share the best quality of teaching. For example, the skilled literacy coordinator works alongside different members of staff each morning to build their effectiveness in teaching the basics of reading and writing skills. This leads to a high level of consistently good teaching in this area by teachers and teaching assistants.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for improving the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and governing body who share this view. They make good use of rigorous systems to check the quality of the school's work and plan for its future development. For example, activities such as the 'Pupil Parties', when selected groups of pupils meet and discuss aspects of their learning with staff, have underpinned improvements in several areas such as girls' achievement. Systems to assess pupils' progress and plan for their future learning are now extremely rigorous and benefit from a wide range of activities with other schools to ensure they are accurate.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. This has been generally tailored to meet the priorities identified by the school. It has contributed well to securing continuity of leadership and improving the quality of teaching and assessment.
- The school's leaders are aware that teachers' pay should be linked to the effectiveness of teaching in raising standards, and leaders are successful in ensuring that this is the case. The

targets set for teachers to achieve are challenging and effective in driving improvement. Consequently, the school is aware of the few aspects of teaching and learning requiring further development and is well placed to address them and to continue to improve.

- A further strength of the leadership is that staff are reflective and base their initiatives on sound research. For example, they are involved in projects with universities and other educational establishments in research projects on 'achievement for all' and aspects of anti-bullying. The school strongly and effectively promotes good relationships and equality of opportunity through all its work.
- Policies for safeguarding pupils meet legal requirements and are supported by detailed record-keeping. The use of pupil premium funding to improve the dining room facilities and routines has had a significant effect on behaviour and safety overall.
- The school makes learning exciting and memorable through the imaginative, afternoon whole-school themes. Teachers make good use of visits, visitors and the local environment and this contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well informed about the school's work through detailed reports from the headteacher and other senior leaders and their own systematic audits. They now receive regular and thorough analysis of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching which allows them to make a good contribution to establishing the strategic direction of the school. Governors ensure that financial management is matched well to improving pupils' achievement and the impact is carefully scrutinised. For example, they know well the impact of the pupil premium funding which provides targeted teaching programmes for literacy and improvements to pupils' behaviour.

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	107094
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	399649

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Meagher
Headteacher	Val Sian
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2011
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Fax number	0114 231 0553
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