

Sinfin Primary School

Sheridan Street, Sinfin, Derby, DE24 9HG

Inspection dates 13–14 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

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching because teachers' expectations are at times too low. This results in too few pupils making really good progress.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is not as high as it should be.
- In some lessons, all pupils sit and listen to the same explanations when higher-ability pupils could be getting on with more challenging work.
- Not enough attention is given to the learning needs of children in the early stages of learning English in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Some middle leaders do not have the skills needed to bring about improvements in their areas of work.
- Members of the governing body lack the skills needed to gather evidence of the school's performance so they can take action to improve it.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors have worked well with the local authority to improve school leadership and put the school back on track.
- The interim headteacher has taken firm action to improve the school. She is providing staff with clear direction and is energetically seeking further improvement.
- The school has a calm atmosphere and pupils display good attitudes and behaviour in lessons.
- Relationships with parents and carers are being strengthened. As a result, pupils' attendance rates are improving.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in nine lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. The inspector also made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff and pupils, the Chair and a member of the Governing Body, and some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- A discussion was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector heard groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector looked at the school's policies, teachers' lesson planning, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety, together with statements of special educational need and samples of pupils' work. Tracking documentation relating to individual pupils' progress, and documentation on how leaders manage teachers' performance and minutes from meetings held by the governing body were also examined.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sinfin Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for particular pupils who are in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals), is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average. The proportions supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are average.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of separate Nursery and Reception Classes.
- The interim headteacher, who took up her post in March 2012, divides her time between Sinfin Primary School and Ash Croft Primary School
- The school is in the process of negotiating a federation with Ash Croft Primary School. This is to be established in April 2013 with an executive headteacher and a single governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the progress pupils can make in lessons and ensuring that the work set is suitably challenging for pupils of all abilities
 - providing more opportunities for higher attaining pupils to engage in more demanding work and to begin to work by themselves at an earlier stage in lessons
 - making sure that the marking of pupils' work gives clear guidance on the standards already reached and what must be done to improve, and that pupils respond to the advice given.
- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - improving the consistency of the teaching of the links between letters and sounds and making sure that these skills are applied and developed in all subjects
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English and for older pupils to be given a wider range of writing tasks and more opportunities to write at greater length
 - ensuring that in the Nursery and Reception classes, appropriate attention is given to the learning needs of children in the early stages of learning English.
- Strengthen the capacity of leaders to implement change by ensuring that:
 - all staff with leadership roles have the skills needed to identify and tackle weaknesses in their areas of work
 - members of the governing body have the skills needed to find out how well the school is doing and vigorously hold its leaders to account for pupils' performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although action to tackle weaknesses has led to a recent rise in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' progress and achievement vary too much across different year groups. Consequently, achievement requires improvement.
- Many children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Although children make good progress in their personal and social development, progress in language and number skills is slow because there is not a sharp enough focus on improving these skills in teachers' planning. In particular, not enough attention is given to improving the learning needs of children in the early stages of learning English.
- Progress in Years 1 to 6 is inconsistent. Pupils make good progress in some lessons but slower progress in others. As a result, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics remains well below average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Action to improve teaching is beginning to have a positive impact on attainment. There was a rise in the Year 6 English and Mathematics test results in 2012 and inspection evidence indicates that this rise is set to continue. However, not enough pupils made above expected levels of progress and therefore are not catching up with other pupils fast enough.
- A systematic programme for the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is helping to develop pupils' reading skills. However, progress is not consistent enough because in some lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise saying the letters and sounds themselves.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is similar to that of their peers. Specialist support means pupils who have a statement of educational needs achieve successfully.
- The progress of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium is as inconsistent as that of other pupils. They make good progress in some lessons but slower progress in others.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are a number of strengths in teaching. Class management is good and teachers generally make good use of new technology to help learning. Where teachers set work that matches pupils' abilities and make clear exactly what they are expected to learn, pupils make good progress. For example, in an English lesson with Year 2 and Year 3 pupils, good progress was made in extending sentences because the work arose out of a visit to the theatre. Good gains in learning were made because they were actively engaged in work that was relevant to them.
- However, although teaching has improved and there is more that is good, more is needed for pupils to make good progress throughout the school. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of how much progress pupils can make in lessons.
- Where teaching requires improvement, the same work is given to all pupils without taking account of their different ability levels. This is because teachers do not make enough use of their knowledge of pupils' attainment levels when they plan lessons. Too often, pupils of all abilities sit

and listen to the same long explanations of learning when they, and higher-ability pupils in particular, are capable of moving on more quickly.

- Marking is not always clear or detailed enough. Where pupils are given guidance on what to do to improve their work, they are not always given enough time to follow it through and so do not learn from correcting their own mistakes.
- Where the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is most successful, teachers use teaching assistants well to support individuals and small groups. In less effective situations, teaching assistants are passive because teachers talk for too long, and this limits the time pupils have for independent work.
- The school uses pupil premium funding appropriately by providing daily support to individual pupils and small groups. This helps the school to fill gaps in their learning, for example by providing additional time and support for reading. It has also been used to strengthen links with some parents and carers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Although behaviour in lessons is mostly good and the school has a calm and purposeful atmosphere, behaviour requires improvement because there are too many instances of inappropriate behaviour at break and lunch times. Pupils think behaviour is generally good but some said a few did not behave well all of the time.
- The school diligently logs all behaviour incidents. These show that there have been a few incidents involving name-calling related to race and ethnic origin. The school makes clear that such behaviour will not be tolerated and the logs show that all such incidents are taken very seriously, with parents and carers involved where necessary.
- The appointment of an additional member of staff to work with families is having a positive impact on behaviour and attendance. Families are now more closely involved when there are any concerns about a pupils' behaviour and attendance has risen to be closer to average. Nevertheless, not all families ensure their children arrive punctually at the start of the day.
- The vast majority of pupils are polite and helpful to adults in school. They willingly take on responsibility and, through their membership of the school council or as class monitors, play a constructive role in the life of the school.
- Pupils report that they feel safe, secure and happy in school. The parents and carers spoken to agreed. Pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to stay safe and are knowledgeable about risk and danger for their age.
- Pupils have a superficial understanding of all sorts of bullying. Many mix up occasional falling out with bullying. Nevertheless, almost all pupils said that bullying is not a concern. Pupils are confident that adults will look after them well if they have any concerns.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- With the strong support of the local authority, the governing body has taken decisive action to

improve the quality of leadership and management of the school. The school currently has an interim headteacher whilst it moves towards a federation with Ash Croft Primary School.

- The interim headteacher, with the effective support of her deputy, has successfully united the staff and governors in support of her ambitious plan for further improvement. This, together with a more accurate evaluation of the school's performance, is already helping to raise attainment, and demonstrates that the school has sufficient capacity to improve.
 - More robust procedures for managing teacher's performance have been introduced. There is now a clear understanding that all decisions on pay and promotion must be fully justified by teachers' success in ensuring pupils make good progress
 - Checks on the quality of teaching through lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work are more thorough and a more rigorous system for assessing pupils' progress has been introduced. Through regular progress meetings senior leaders hold teacher's to account for the progress their pupils are making.
 - The roles and responsibilities of staff with middle leadership roles have been redefined to focus more clearly on raising achievement. However, not all have the skills necessary to check the quality of teaching in their areas with enough rigour to identify and tackle weaknesses securely.
 - The funding for those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium has been used sensibly to provide additional support to raise attainment and also to strengthen links with parents and carers, particularly those who may be hard to reach. This work is particularly beneficial for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination.
 - The teaching and learning programmes are designed to raise achievement in literacy and numeracy, and are organised around number of themes such as 'The Victorians'. These programmes are enhanced through a number of after-school clubs and visits, including residential visits. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted through the taught programmes and in assemblies where pupils sing together and have time to reflect on moral issues.
 - The partnership with Ash Croft Primary School is particularly beneficial. For example, the schools have worked closely together to confirm the assessment of pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching, and to support staff training and development.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive and fully committed to ensuring the school's future success. This is demonstrated in the action taken to improve leadership and management. However, they have, in the past, paid too little attention to exploring the reasons for variation in pupils' achievement and how this links to strengths and weaknesses in teaching. They now have a better understanding of the need to use the salary scale to recognise teachers who are successfully raising achievement. However, they have not had enough training to gain the skills needed to fully hold the school's leaders to account for the school's performance. Governors manage funding conscientiously and ensure that income through the pupil premium is spent to raise the attainment of pupils for whom it is intended. Governors ensure that statutory duties are met, including those relating to safeguarding of pupils, and that all necessary checks are carried out to ensure pupils' safety.
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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	112734
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	401299

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	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Grimshaw
Headteacher	Penny Brown (Interim Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2010
Telephone number	01332 771370
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Email address	admin@sinfinp.derby.sch.uk

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