

Claremont Primary and Nursery School

Claremont Road, Off Hucknall Road, Nottingham, NG5 1BH

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- The school is not run effectively. The way that leaders deal with even the most minor incidents of misbehaviour is too harsh. This has a negative effect on the pupils' social and moral development.
- Relationships between leaders and staff are strained so that there is no shared vision for the school's improvement. Leaders do not communicate with staff in a manner that promotes confidence or generates a positive approach to working together.
- Targets and opportunities for staff training are not tailored to the needs of the school or the aspirations of individual members of staff.
- Leaders, managers and governors do not have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Plans for improvement are out of date. Pupils' learning and progress are not checked closely enough.
- The staff are unsettled. Although they teach effectively so that pupils achieve well, the high turnover of teachers puts the school's performance at risk. Some key management responsibilities are not covered.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account for the school's performance and demand its improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Most teachers are extremely committed to ensuring the pupils do well. Although there are considerable tensions in the school this does not unduly affect the quality of teaching or pupils' learning, which are good. There are examples of outstanding teaching.
- Pupils' achievement has improved since the last inspection. Attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen to broadly average and most pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Pupils read with confidence and most enjoy a wide range of books.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 parts of lessons taught by 14 staff. They also carried out a series of shorter visits to lessons across the school, observed an assembly and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, parents and the vice chair of the governing body.
- A telephone discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the online Parent View questionnaire as well as the views of a small number of parents which were communicated by letter. Questionnaires completed by 23 staff were also analysed and considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including: national published data and the school's own data, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding policies, behaviour policies and records and documents relating to setting targets for teachers to improve their work.

Inspection team

Julie Price Grimshaw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Neil Taylor	Additional Inspector
Gillian Weston	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average, as is that of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action or school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school throughout the year is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - building effective working relationships between leaders and all staff, in order to promote a shared vision for the school's future improvement and to secure greater stability in staffing
 - ensuring that unfilled jobs in management, such as the post of special educational needs coordinator and staff responsible for key stages, are filled as soon as possible
 - establishing targets for staff to improve their work that are linked to specific training for each individual.
- Ensure that the school's self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate, and informs high-quality improvement plans that include clear criteria against which success can be frequently and thoroughly checked and measured.
- Overhaul the approach to managing pupils' behaviour so that any sanctions for misbehaviour are proportionate and systems are followed by all staff.
- Ensure that the governing body not only supports school leaders and managers but also makes them accountable for how well the school performs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement has improved since the last inspection. This is because staff have worked closely together to ensure that pupils do their best, despite a lack of guidance from the headteacher and deputy headteacher. From starting points in the Nursery that are generally below what is typical for their age, pupils make good progress overall to reach standards that are broadly average.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enjoy moving between the indoor and outdoor learning areas and develop secure skills in language and numeracy by the time they start Year 1.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 has, over recent years, been significantly below average. The school's 2012 data on pupils' progress and achievement, together with evidence collected by inspectors in lessons and of pupils' current work in books, show that performance is improving, especially pupils' reading.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 has risen since 2010. The school's results from the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2012 showed improvement on previous years, with attainment in English and mathematics being broadly in line with the 2011 national average.
- Pupils make good progress overall and learn well. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported very well by bilingual staff and make good progress. Those eligible for support through the pupil premium (funding from the government) also achieve well.
- Most pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make at least the progress typically expected, although for a small minority progress is more variable.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and achievement in reading is good. Pupils are able to use their skills to read unfamiliar words and many make rapid progress. The school has a good selection of books and pupils are keen and enthusiastic readers. One pupil commented that, 'I like reading so much I read bedtime stories to my mum instead of her reading them to me.'

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Staff regularly plan together and discuss with each other what works with pupils and the progress that pupils make. Staff often meet together to do this in their own time. No inadequate teaching was observed during the inspection and there are some examples of high-quality teaching.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to plan lessons that motivate pupils to learn. Although the school adopts a uniform approach to classroom displays across all year groups, teachers' creativity is often evident in their imaginative use of resources.
- Music and French are taught very well by specialist teachers and, consequently, pupils make at least good progress in these subjects. A class of pupils were observed speaking confidently in

French and listening carefully to the instructions of their teacher, who conducted almost the entire lesson in French. Another group of pupils greatly enjoyed their creative work using a selection of percussion instruments with expert guidance from their teacher.

- A key strength of teaching is the way in which staff tailor work according to pupils' individual ability levels. This was evident in outstanding teaching and learning in literacy in Year 4 where the teacher set different tasks, all related to book reviews, depending on the particular abilities of the pupils. As a result, all made rapid progress and thoroughly enjoyed their work.
- Most support staff work well and make an important contribution to pupils' learning. In many lessons they used their initiative to move around the room, checking pupils' understanding and giving support as and when appropriate. They make a good contribution to the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, providing support while giving pupils time to work things out for themselves.
- Reading is taught well across the school. The teaching of phonics is strong and enables pupils in Key Stage 1 to make at least good progress in learning to read. Many pupils are confident readers by the end of Year 2 and enjoy a good selection of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and most give helpful guidance on how pupils can improve their work further. Where marking is most effective, teachers take particular care to check that pupils have acted on this guidance.
- Teachers often take advantage of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in their lessons. For example, a group of Year 1 pupils thoroughly enjoyed reciting a poem together as a class, declaring that: 'Colour on the outside is not what's on the inside.'
- Teachers often ask questions that involve pupils in their learning and deepen their understanding. At times, teachers rely too much on 'hands up' rather than asking individual pupils targeted questions at the right level.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Some pupils are unhappy about the way they are treated. They consider some of the punishments they are given unfair and too harsh when they do not follow rules, such as putting their hands up to ask a question. This undermines pupils' dignity and shows a lack of respect for them.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the great majority behave well in class. They enjoy working independently and develop good team-working skills. They support each other well in the classroom. Pupils are polite and courteous, welcoming visitors to their school.
- Pupils say that rare instances of bullying are dealt with by staff. They are aware of the different forms that bullying can take and know that they can approach adults if they are concerned about such behaviour. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are encouraged from their first days in school to be kind and considerate to one another. They are happy to take turns and share.

- At the last inspection, attendance was judged to be low and this was also the case in 2011. In 2012, although attendance remains just below average, there have been significant improvements. This is due in part to the successful work carried out with parents and families led by members of staff with responsibility for attendance.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The previous inspection report states that the school had difficulty in recruiting and keeping teachers in post and refers to staffing difficulties having slowed the school's improvement. This situation has not been resolved and there have been many changes of staff over recent years.
- Poor working relationships between school leaders and some staff mean that there is little sense of a team approach. Leaders have not communicated their ambition for the school clearly enough to staff. Many staff expressed concerns about low morale and the high turnover of staff. Nonetheless, teachers work well together and say that they support each other, sharing good practice.
- At the time of the inspection, one member of the management team was on sick leave and there were gaps in leadership responsibilities. For example, the roles of Early Years Foundation Stage leader, Key Stage 1 leader and special educational needs coordinator were not being adequately covered. The school has plans to recruit a teacher to the post of special educational needs coordinator but at the time of the inspection there was little evidence of the responsibilities of this important role being carried out effectively on a day-to-day basis.
- Self-evaluation lacks rigour and judgements are not clear. The process of checking the quality of the school's work and measuring its impact does not lead to the identification of key priorities for development. There is little relationship between self-evaluation and improvement planning. Plans are of poor quality, being out of date and omitting any reference to how leaders and governors will know whether actions have been successful.
- The management of teachers' performance has significant shortcomings. Targets set for teachers to improve their work are not effective enough to drive further improvements in teaching and are not made specific to each individual member of staff. All members of staff have similar targets which are set without negotiation. Links to training opportunities for staff are weak.
- The school's behaviour policy is not fit for purpose. Punishments are mainly carried out by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Pupils are sometimes punished harshly for minor misdemeanours. In addition, the behaviour policy is not applied consistently, as some staff do not feel that it is acceptable to punish pupils in the ways required. Despite all this, the pupils learn effectively because the great majority of teachers show very high levels of commitment to their pupils, care for them, and teach them in exciting ways.
- The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils. Music and French are strong and there is a good range of learning opportunities outside the classroom, for example, circus skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in most lessons and also in assembly time. However, shortcomings and differences in how pupils' behaviour is managed have a detrimental effect on the social and moral development of some pupils.

- Statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

The governance of the school

- The governing body supports the school, but does not ask the headteacher and other leaders searching questions about its performance. This was identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection and has not yet been resolved. Governors are not sufficiently involved in checking and evaluating the school's work. The governing body has not looked in detail at why there have been so many staff changes over the past two years; some governors believe that the diversity of the school population is a factor when there is little evidence to suggest that this is the reason. Governors do not systematically evaluate the effectiveness of the school's spending of the pupil premium in raising the achievement of those it was designed to support.

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	122702
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	406105

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Linford
Headteacher	Elise Tiplady
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2010
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