

Thrumpton Primary School

Off Whinney Moor Lane, Retford, DN22 7AF

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2013

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

- Teaching is not good enough in Key Stage 2 to quicken pupils' progress.
- Standards are not high enough, especially in writing and mathematics, and particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are not always clear about what they expected to learn by the end of the lesson.
- The work that pupils are given is not always at the right level to help them achieve the best that they can. This includes pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels of attainment.
- Pupils do not know the levels at which they are working and the targets to aim for.
- Subject leaders do not check the quality of teaching in their areas regularly or in enough detail so that they can deal with any weaknesses promptly.
- Chances for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy in other lessons are not consistently planned to match the skills that pupils need to practise.
- The governing body does not find out enough for itself about the achievement of pupils to be able to challenge the school fully.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides strong leadership.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good and leads to pupils' good achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards each other and to learning are good.
- Pupils feel safe in school and they all feel valued.
- Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons. Three of them were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors listened to pupils read, observed break and lunch times and attended an assembly. They also looked at samples of pupils' work
- The inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, school leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of school documents, including the school improvement plan and the progress being made towards it, and data about the achievement of all groups of pupils. They also looked at records of the checks made on teaching, minutes of the governing body and policies relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steven Cartlidge

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is below the national average.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The school does not use alternative places for pupils to learn away from the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2012.
- Wrap-around-care, including a breakfast and after-school club, is managed by an outside provider, Thrumpton Kids Clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, especially in writing and mathematics, and particularly in Key Stage 2, so that is at least consistently good throughout the school, by ensuring that:
 - pupils are very clear about what they are expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of lessons
 - their work is at just the right level for them to achieve the very best that they can, including for pupils capable of reaching higher levels
 - pupils know the levels at which they are working and what they need to do to reach their targets.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers in raising achievement by making sure that:
 - subject leaders check very regularly and thoroughly the quality of teaching in their areas and promptly tackle any weaknesses
 - regular opportunities to practise literacy and numeracy skills in other lessons are planned carefully to match the skills that pupils need to practise
 - the governing body finds out more for itself about the achievement of pupils so that it can challenge the school fully.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. Their achievement in Key Stage 2 is not high enough. Teaching does not ensure pupils make fast enough progress to raise standards throughout Key Stage 2 because it is not regularly good. Not enough pupils reach higher levels at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 because tasks are not carefully enough planned to help them to deepen their thinking and use their skills in solving a range of problems.
- Children join the Nursery with below-average levels of knowledge and skills. By the end of the Reception Year, they reach standards that are average, including in communication, because of very regularly planned opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening skills. Their reading skills develop well from the Nursery onwards and remain stronger than writing and mathematics throughout the school. In the Reception Year, children made good progress in identifying letters to match sounds (phonics) and pronounced accurately the words they had made.
- Standards have risen over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and are average. They show the gap between school and national standards is narrowing. Boys' achievement has improved in Key Stage 1 because teachers plan lessons that match more closely their interests and make them keen to learn.
- In Key Stage 2 achievement varies far too much. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, particularly boys and lower-ability pupils, do not make enough progress in writing because learning is not always interesting enough and does not offer the right level of challenge. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average, with gaps in learning from previous years. This is particularly evident in mathematics in Year 5. Gaps in pupils' learning are being addressed by regular support sessions. This means that, overall, pupils make adequate progress from joining the school to the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve adequately. Their progress quickens because support staff usually take very carefully into account pupils' learning or social needs.
- Pupils supported by extra funding through the pupil premium make better progress because they receive regular additional support in reading, writing and mathematics. The gap has narrowed overall between the standards reached by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who do not receive this support. This is more so in reading, reflecting the good systems of teaching in use. Those given help to improve their confidence and self-esteem make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 than it was at the last inspection. In Key Stage 2 it varies too much and this means that pupils are not making enough progress.
- In some lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils are not clear about what they are expected to know, understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson. This slows the pace of learning. In

contrast, pupils in Year 1 knew exactly what they needed to learn and made good progress in creating a vehicle from an assortment of shapes.

- Work is sometimes too easy for pupils, including those capable of reaching higher levels. It does not consistently provide more-able pupils with challenging enough opportunities to use their skills in unfamiliar situations, or to deepen their thinking.
- Marking has improved since the last inspection. Most pupils know what they have done well, and often what they need to do next. Pupils are beginning to judge for themselves how well they are learning. They say they have targets but these are not built into lessons and pupils do not know how to reach them.
- Teachers try to make learning interesting for both boys and girls throughout the school. In one lesson, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed discussing and coming to decisions about the clues at a crime scene. As in several other lessons, they had plenty of opportunities to discuss other pupils' views. Teachers' questioning is often good. They use questions that match pupils' levels of knowledge in order to check their understanding and progress in some lessons.
- Inspectors saw several examples of good support for pupils who needed extra help. It was effective because it helped pupils develop their knowledge and understanding in small steps. However, expectations of pupils' learning are not always high enough.
- Teaching focuses on developing a range of skills and understanding, and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural understanding are increasingly blended seamlessly into lessons and activities. Pupils in Year 4, for example, showed great interest and thought as they worked out the meaning of a picture. Music is a growing strength. Pupils make good progress in learning how to make music and in understanding the emotions it evokes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- There is a real family feel to the school because pupils play and learn together well and support each other in what they are doing. They enjoy coming to school and this is evident in their attendance which is consistently above the national average.
- They all feel valued by the staff and this helps them understand that all people should be treated the same regardless of, for example, their beliefs and appearance.
- Pupils are keen to learn and settle quickly in lessons. They know the behaviour that the staff expect of them and the behaviour policy is used in the same way throughout the school.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because a few pupils need help to manage their actions and words. However, staff give them good support, including responsibilities, which helps them to modify their behaviour.
- Pupils feel very safe and their parents agree. There is little bullying and pupils say it is dealt with quickly and well. Lessons and daily routines, such as assemblies, provide good guidance on avoiding situations that may cause them harm. Pupils show a good understanding for their ages of unsafe situations and how to avoid them. It includes crossing the road, and using scissors and the internet safely.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not brought about enough improvement in the quality of teaching and the impact of their work on raising achievement is not sufficiently good. Although subject leaders are monitoring the quality of teaching, it is not detailed or regular enough.
- However, the school is now improving rapidly. Pupils' progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good. Parents have become more involved in school life and in their children's learning, and this is supporting better achievement. The school's main focus on improving standards continues, especially in writing and mathematics. Accurate data and analyses of pupils' progress mean staff understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The headteacher, who provides strong leadership, has brought 'a breath of fresh air' and a 'can-do' culture to staff, pupils, governors and parents. The school has a secure foundation on which to build, and there are very clear roles and expectations of staff, who are starting to identify potential issues before they become problems.
- Performance targets for staff match the school's and staff's own development needs, and these also support the school's improvement. Courses and training are enabling staff to develop the necessary skills. Their impact on improving teaching and raising achievement varies, however. No staff are awarded pay rises unless their performance is effective in raising achievement.
- The curriculum requires improvement as it does not promote good learning throughout the school. The organisation of learning, which is mainly through separate subjects, is becoming more varied. Topics encourage learning across subjects, which pupils enjoy. Literacy and sometimes numeracy are incorporated into other lessons but not regularly and carefully enough to match the skills pupils most need to practise. Pupils appreciate the good choice of after-school clubs which help them to find new interests.
- The local authority is providing effective support to strengthen leadership and teaching, especially in writing and mathematics. Other partnerships with agencies and schools complement this. Parents, who are delighted with their greater involvement in school life, welcome termly opportunities to attend workshops to help them support their children's learning.
- The school makes sure that its safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is improving because governors are now fully aware of their duties and responsibilities. They know the strengths of the school and where improvements need to be made, including in the quality of teaching. Their understanding of data and how performance targets are used to improve teachers' impact is developing. They will not agree to teachers being awarded salary increases unless their performance over a period of time shows it has made a good impact on teaching and achievement. Governors do not find out enough for themselves about the achievement of pupils, and this means they are not able to challenge the school fully. However, they have started to broaden their involvement in the school through, for example, meeting with subject leaders.

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	122559
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	406099

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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alistair Murray
Headteacher	Catherine Thornton
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2010
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