

# John Blow Primary School

Snowdon Road, Collingham, Newark, NG23 7PT

**Inspection dates** 22–23 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 good leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders and governing body has secured good teaching and pupil achievement.
- The area for development linked to checking the quality of pupils' work that was highlighted at the last inspection has been successfully addressed.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is typically good and some is outstanding.
- The support provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good and makes sure that they make good progress and achieve as well as other pupils.
- Attendance is above average.
- Staff performance is managed well. Weaknesses in teaching are tackled and improvements secured. Teachers at different stages of their careers are given appropriate training and support to enable them to carry out their roles well.
- Relationships throughout the school are very positive and support pupils' learning and personal development.
- Opportunities to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are woven through the planning of subjects and reinforced through the day-to-day activities in school.
- Pupils feel safe in school and behave well in lessons, at playtime and during other activities they take part in.
- Pupils take pride in their school and their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking in mathematics does not always give pupils clear information about what they have done well and what they need to learn next.
- Pupils in different classes are not all given good opportunities to use and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Although pupils frequently work in pairs, they have too few opportunities to support each other in their learning by working together in small groups.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 18 lessons, of which two were joint observations undertaken with the headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke to a group of pupils who have specific roles and responsibilities in the school. Pupils were observed during playtime and lunchtime. Pupils' work was scrutinised and inspectors listened to pupils from Years 1 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with staff, including senior leaders, and members of the governing body. A discussion was held by telephone with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of the 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), a number of school based parent surveys, and the views of parents spoken to at the school during the inspection.
- The views of staff, including those expressed in 21 responses to the staff questionnaire, were considered.
- Other aspects of the school's work were scrutinised. A range of documentation was examined, including a summary of the school's monitoring information, data on pupils' current progress, the school's central record of checks on staff and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Alison Cogher, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Faheem Chishti

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of the pupils are of White British heritage and very few are learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school is receiving additional funding (the pupil premium) is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well below average. As is the proportion supported at school action plus. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher provides support in aspects of leadership to other schools in the area.
- No pupils attend alternative provision.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so pupils' achieve even better by ensuring that:
  - the marking of pupils' work in mathematics gives them clear guidance about what they need to do next to improve
  - pupils in every class are given the opportunity to use and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills in subjects other than English and mathematics
  - pupils are given more opportunities to work collaboratively in small groups during lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good because pupils from all backgrounds and abilities are doing well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The pace of pupils' learning is good so the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress compares well to that found nationally. The school makes sure that all pupils have the same chance to do well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well to do their best. This includes personalised work programmes for pupils who need extra help that enable them to succeed in their learning.
- Pupils' good achievement is secured as a result of good teaching that includes the frequent checking of pupils' progress and understanding. Typically, lessons allow pupils to build on what they already know and can do so and so their learning moves forwards at a good rate.
- Children start in the Reception class below the level expected for their age. They are keen to learn and settle quickly into well-established routines. They make good progress in all areas due to the skill and high expectations of staff. Their enthusiasm for learning is evident in the way they respond to adults and play cooperatively together in the well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning environment.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to do well and reach broadly average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Changes made this year to the way the sounds that letters make is taught has been successful so pupils are confident when using their knowledge of letters sounds to help them read and write unfamiliar words.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 build successfully on their previous learning to reach levels of attainment that are the equivalent to an average of nearly six months ahead of the national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding also make good progress to reach very similar levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics to that of other pupils.
- In the lessons observed, pupils made exceptional progress when given the opportunity to work together in small groups. For example, pupils in Year 5 worked in groups to solve clues to work out the decimal values allocated to a sequence of letters. Pupils had to listen carefully to each other, tackle the challenge in a systematic way and make use of their own knowledge and the information they had been given to support their answers. Pupils in other classes are given too few opportunities to work in this way.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching is the norm in the school and some is outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers are constantly checking the learning of pupils so that any gaps in their knowledge and understanding are addressed quickly. For example, as pupils in Year 3 ordered words to reflect just how angry a character in a story might be, the teacher explored words that were less familiar to them. Through this, the pupils were able to understand that the word 'outraged' was a much stronger word than 'miffed' when used to describe the level of anger being experienced.
- Planning for the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is thorough and takes good account of pupils' previous learning. Lessons one day are often changed as a result of teachers'

checking of pupils' learning from the previous day. This ensures that pupils' learning moves forwards at a good pace.

- Opportunities for pupils to use and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills in subjects other than English and mathematics are not identified consistently well in all classes. As a result, pupils are not fully supported to see the relevance of their learning, for example that being able to read allows them to gather information from different sources including books and electronic media.
- Teachers actively seek to plan activities that pupils will find interesting and engaging. In many lessons, the fun element of learning is strong. In the Reception classes, for example, when retelling the story of the Gingerbread Man, children's enthusiasm was tangible as they used actions and a variety of props to help them correctly sequence events in the story.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are trusting and respectful. Pupils often work in pairs and this helps them to build their confidence for learning. They are not anxious about asking for help when they need it and are willing to 'have a go', knowing that their response will be valued.
- The marking of pupils' written work helps pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve. Although work in mathematics is marked regularly, the marking in this subject is not consistent across the school and typically provides too little information for pupils on how to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning through their work with small groups and individual pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful. They take care of each other, have pride in their school and behave well in lessons and during playtimes. Disruption in lessons is rare and pupils' behaviour when collected together as a whole school, and when they are required to be reflective, such as in assemblies, is exemplary.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average and reflects their enjoyment of school.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and well cared for at all times. This view is also held by the parents who spoke to inspectors and those who responded to the questionnaire.
- Pupils have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying and discrimination, which they consider to be extremely rare events at the school. They are confident that adults at the school would help them if they had a problem and that they tackle any form of unacceptable behaviour quickly and well.
- Pupils enjoy each other's company. They listen to each other, respect each other's views and opinions and are keen to share ideas.
- As pupils move through the school, they are encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities. Older pupils look after younger pupils and particular groups, such as the sports leaders and school councillors, work to make sure that pupils throughout the school are able to contribute to school improvement. For example, they are active in ensuring the school maintains its Green School status. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and carry out their duties in a

mature manner.

- Pupils talked enthusiastically to inspectors about their work and how their teachers try to make learning enjoyable. They particularly enjoy lessons where they are able to make some decisions about what they want to learn, are challenged to make choices and are able to work together in groups.
- Pupils value the range of activities that are planned outside lesson times. They take pride in representing their school in musical and sporting activities and enjoy the variety of clubs they can attend.
- Pupils have a good understanding of their local community and are developing an understanding of global diversity through links established through the local community twinning arrangements and their work to achieve the International School Intermediate Award.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has a clear vision for school improvement that is shared by staff and governors. She leads by example and supports staff to improve, whatever their role in school. As a result, leadership and management at all levels are good and there is a shared understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be better.
- The quality of teaching is improving because senior leaders check the individual performance of staff and also look out for inconsistencies across the school. Teachers are supported to improve through professional development training and by using the best teaching in the school to promote what works well. This has, for example, improved both the quality and consistency of the teaching of the sounds that letters make.
- The frequent checking of school data on pupils' progress identifies those who need additional help to do as well as they can. The difference that additional support makes to pupils' learning is checked often. By doing this, the school makes sure that the support is correctly matched to pupils' needs and is helping them to learn as well as they can.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for the school in its day-to-day work. Staff new to leadership roles or at the start of their teaching careers access additional training and support from the local authority. The skills of the headteacher and other staff are used by the local authority to support other schools in the area.
- The range of subjects taught makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement and to their enjoyment of learning. Visits to places of interest, as well as visitors invited into school, stimulate pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Residential visits for pupils in Years 3 to 6 provide valuable and memorable experiences that support pupils' personal development well.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent on ensuring that the pupils in receipt of it have access to all activities, or receive additional support with their learning if they need it. This has ensured that they achieve as well and have the same opportunity to access enrichment activities as their classmates.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good because governors are well-informed, directly involved in checking the quality of the school's work and able to challenge and support leaders to secure school improvement. Governors make regular visits and look at the progress being made towards the

school's priorities for improvement. They are knowledgeable about pupils' progress and achievements and regularly check that pupils are doing as well as they can. They work closely with the headteacher to check the quality of teaching. Pay awards for good teachers are linked closely to their performance. Any weaknesses in teaching, as well as support for advancement and promotion, are addressed through training and assistance that is appropriate to teachers' individual needs and for the stage in their career.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122631
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403491

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	176
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Abbie Turner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Richardson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01636 892485
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