

Sherwood Junior School

Sherwood Street, Warsop, Mansfield, NG20 0JT

Inspection dates 16–17 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

- Over time achievement has varied. Although, in the relatively short time since the last inspection, it is improving it is not yet consistently good for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional funding and those with special educational needs have not always learned to read well enough. Some pupils do not read often to others. Leaders have not worked with parents closely enough to show them how they can help to develop their children's reading skills. Reading is not always promoted well through other subjects.
- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers do not always set work regularly at the right level of difficulty for pupils.
- Pupils do not always know what their work requires them to do or how they can improve.
- Improvements which leaders have introduced are relatively new. Some of these are at early stages and have not yet had full impact on improving teaching or achievement.
- Occasionally, leaders introduce too many, or complicated measures at once. They do not always check that staff carry them out effectively.
- Governors do not always have sufficient up-to-date knowledge about their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, they do not always provide sufficient challenge to the school on matters such as the use of extra government funding and how pupils' performance is linked to teachers' pay rises.

The school has the following strengths

- Some measures taken by leaders are improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average.
- Parents are becoming more involved in some aspects of the school's work and in their children's learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully promoted. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, help with various tasks around the school and support each other well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons and small support groups, taught by nine teachers and four teaching assistants. Four of these observations were joint visits with the acting headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work from each class with the acting deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, a representative from the local authority, senior and middle managers, as well as parents and carers.
- Inspectors received the views of parents and carers through six online responses to the Parent View questionnaire and informal discussions.
- Inspectors received the views of staff through 21 responses to the inspection questionnaire and discussions, as well as the views of pupils, through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports on lesson observations, the school's development plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Mallone

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sherwood Junior School is slightly smaller than most other primary schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium which provides extra funding for certain groups of pupils, including those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- At nearly a quarter, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is much higher than the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly lower than the national average. The needs of these pupils are varied, several have autistic spectrum conditions.
- The school does not use alternative provision. (Lessons that take place regularly away from the school site).
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been many changes of leadership and staff since the previous inspection. These are largely due to the reorganisation of senior leadership in September 2011, retirement and the maternity leave of three teachers.
- At the time of the inspection the headteacher was on maternity leave. Her role was being covered by the school's deputy headteacher. With the agreement of governors and the local authority, the substantive headteacher was present for some of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
 - all teachers plan activities at the right level of difficulty for all groups of pupils
 - all teachers show pupils what they are expected to learn and check carefully how well pupils carry out tasks
 - all teachers ensure that marking clearly shows pupils how they can improve their work.
- Raise attainment in reading by:
 - ensuring that all pupils read frequently to others
 - working more closely with parents to show them how they can help their children to read well
 - promoting reading in other subjects more effectively.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - prioritising and simplifying the actions leaders take and ensuring that these are carried out well
 - ensuring that governors have secure and up-to-date knowledge of all their roles and responsibilities, especially about how teachers' pay rises should link with pupils' performance and the use of extra government funding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement varies over time. Although this is improving it is not yet consistently good for all groups.
- Attainment is rising, especially in writing, but is not yet quite in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics has risen considerable
- More-able pupils achieve well in mathematics. In 2012 the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and higher Level 5 in national tests at the end of Year 6 in mathematics was above average. Grouping pupils of similar ability together for mathematics lessons in Year 6 has contributed to this success.
- However, pupils, including the more-able, do not always make as much progress as they could because they do not always know what to do, how to do it or how to develop their learning further.
- Achievement in reading has fluctuated. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher Level 5 in reading increased in 2012, but, due to some weaker elements of teaching, pupils with special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding, did not achieve sufficiently well in this skill. Leaders are aware of, and are addressing these weaknesses. For example, in reviewing and improving the impact of intervention programmes.
- Assessments of current achievement throughout the school indicate that many pupils are now achieving well. However, this varies between classes according to the quality of teaching so that not all pupils have the chance to succeed. In some classes, the progress of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, and some who are disabled or have other special educational needs remains slow.
- Small support and intervention groups have not always helped pupils with disabilities and those pupils with special educational needs sufficiently. For example, some of these pupils made good progress when following a reading programme but they were not able to sustain their skills or to apply them accurately in their wider reading. Leaders have now tackled this weakness and most of these pupils are now progressing well in reading.
- Some of these pupils, especially some with autistic spectrum conditions, are achieving well because their specific learning needs are met in imaginative ways. For example, staff have helped some pupils concentrate better through using safe, economical, free-standing individual learning bays made from the cardboard of very large boxes.
- Pupils are positive about learning and try hard in all that they do. The few parents who responded to the Parent View survey were also positive about pupils' achievements, and, in discussion, several commented that, 'teachers work extremely hard for all children'.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time the quality of teaching, seen in pupils' work and lesson observations, has not been good enough to ensure that all groups achieve well. Although this is improving, its impact on pupils' learning is not yet consistently or securely effective.

- Teachers do not always set work regularly at the right level of difficulty for pupils. Pupils do not always know what they are expected to learn and do not always complete the tasks they are set successfully. For example, in a younger class a group of more-able pupils worked hard creating four-digit numerals by arranging single numbers in different ways. However, they did not spend sufficient time ordering these as the teacher did not look carefully enough at what they were doing or provide sufficient guidance to help them carry out the task well.
- The teaching of reading varies. Tasks and activities in guided reading lessons and explanations for reading in other subjects are not always clear. Teachers are successfully encouraging more pupils to read to others at home through the introduction of stickers and rewards. However, too many pupils do not do this frequently enough.
- In some lessons teaching is successful because teachers check what pupils understand, know and can do and adapt their approach accordingly. For example, pupils made good progress in a Year 6 mathematics lesson because the teacher identified that weak knowledge of multiplication tables was holding pupils back from solving mathematical problems. The teacher used an imaginary game of tennis well to strengthen this knowledge as she batted numbers to pupils and they batted multiples back to her.
- Marking is detailed but varies in its effectiveness. Some teachers successfully encourage pupils' efforts through praise and clearly show them how they can improve. Other teachers focus too much on praise and do not show pupils how to develop their learning. Occasionally, teachers' use too many or too few aspects of the school's very detailed marking policy and it is difficult for some pupils to see exactly what they need to do next.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well, are respectful and caring.
- They are enthusiastic about learning and continue to try hard even when they do not understand tasks or know what to do next.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through assemblies, special events, clubs and interesting activities. Year 6 pupils greatly enjoyed creating characters and making computer animations. They were rightly proud of their accomplishments and in awe of how they could use information and communications technology to create animated clips for others to watch and games for them to play.
- Older pupils develop responsibility and leadership skills through being 'buddies', teaching younger pupils games and helping to support them at break-times.
- Pupils feel safe because they know about different forms of bullying and what to do in the rare instances that this happens. They are confident that their teachers and friends will help them whenever they need it. Policies and procedures to keep pupils safe are effective.
- Most pupils enjoy school. Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those pupils with special educational needs develop independence and choice as they are cared for and supported well. For example, some pupils choose a 'safe' place to go to if they feel anxious and others learn skills and techniques to 'switch their brains on' and to be ready to learn.

- Pupils, parents and staff all know that some pupils have particularly challenging behaviour. This is managed well. Rewards and sanctions, such as detentions and prevention of attendance at special events such as discos, help to improve the behaviour of most of these pupils.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders know the school well and have many ideas for how it can be developed. Sometimes they introduce too many new measures too quickly and do not always ensure that teachers are carrying them out effectively in order to raise pupils' achievement.
- Sometimes these measures are complicated and time-consuming and are not always implemented effectively. For example, frequent monitoring of a relatively small sample of pupils' work does not always ensure that the achievement of all pupils is improving.
- Most leaders have only been in their current roles for a short time. The senior leadership team was formed in September 2011. Several measures are at early stages and are not yet having their full impact. For example, the school's coaching and mentoring programme, whereby teachers observe each others' practice and make helpful suggestions for improvement, is working well even though the quality of teaching is not yet good.
- Leaders' use of pupil premium funding has not yet had sufficient impact on tackling discrimination and disadvantage and on raising the achievement of all the pupils that this money is allocated for. Leaders are tracking the progress of these pupils and carefully targeting effective support where it is needed. This is now having a positive impact for many of these pupils.
- Some measures are already working well. Consistent approaches, rewards and sanctions have led to improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Leaders have also developed the detail and use of assessments throughout the school. They are using these to make all teachers more accountable for their performance and the achievement of all pupils in their classes. This is contributing to good gains in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Leaders' introduction of family workshops, for example for cooking and for supporting mathematics at home, has increased parents' involvement in some areas of their children's learning. They have increased parental involvement in reading through new reading diaries, frequent reminders in newsletters and inviting parents to hear reading at school. Whilst this is slowly raising parents' involvement leaders have not yet held workshops on parents' role in the development of reading or specifically shown them how they can help their children to read well.
- Leaders have recently reviewed the impact of specific programmes for disabled pupils and those pupils with special educational needs. Some of the programmes, including those to improve pupils' progress in reading, were not sufficiently effective in raising their achievement. Leaders have reviewed the programmes they use carefully, have identified weaknesses and tackled them well.
- Guidance and support provided by the local authority have helped drive improvements in the school. Training, which leaders have sought and financed has successfully increased the skills and understanding of newer leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Requires improvement. Governors are keen and well-organised. They know the school well

through links with individual class teachers and visits to lessons and special events. They give high priority to the safety and well-being of all pupils and meet statutory duties for safeguarding. They challenge information they are given, including information on the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and developments in the school, well. However, they have not always kept abreast of all the changes in their roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to the use of pupil premium funding and how pupils' achievement relates to rises in teachers' pay. As a result, governors do not hold leaders fully to account for all aspects they are charged with.

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	122501
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	406095

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ralph Tongue
Headteacher	Helen Duffy
Date of previous school inspection	07 April 2011
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