

Oxspring Primary School

Sheffield Road, Oxspring, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S36 8YW

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. As a result, the progress pupils make from year to year is uneven.
- Despite pupils reaching above average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 too few pupils, especially those of average ability, make better than expected progress. This results in some pupils not reaching the level of attainment of which they are capable.
- In some classes teachers do not make enough use of the information about pupils' attainment and progress when planning lessons, to ensure that the work set is well matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Although leaders make regular checks on the school's performance they do not use the information sufficiently well to develop plans which are sharply focused on key actions to bring about rapid improvements in teaching and learning.
- The school's plan to bring about improvements does not clearly state how leaders will measure the success of the school's actions.
- Although governors are supportive, they have not challenged the school well enough about its performance. They are now more aware of its strengths and weaknesses and are increasingly holding leaders to account.

The school has the following strengths

- In the Reception class and Years 5 and 6 the quality of teaching is good and on occasion outstanding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is effective in developing early reading skills.
- The enjoyment of reading is promoted very effectively throughout the school and, as a result, pupils are developing a love of books.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. This is reflected in their attendance which is above average.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards one another. They are polite and courteous and willingly take on roles of responsibility.
- The excellent relationships pupils enjoy with staff and each other help to create a good working atmosphere in all classes
- Parents hold the school in high regard.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Year 1 to Year 6, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders and a representative from the local authority. Short discussions were held with pupils at break times and lunchtime. Discussions were also held with parents who brought their children to school.
- The inspector took account of 37 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and took into account the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, the school's improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oxspring is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The school does not provide any alternative provision for pupils either on a full- or part-time basis.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- The school meets the current floor standards which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and raise achievement by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving, especially those of average ability
 - ensuring that teachers use information from assessments to tailor tasks carefully to match pupils' different abilities and make sure all pupils are challenged
 - making sure teachers do not talk for too long in lessons before pupils are able to work by themselves
 - providing more well planned opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to meaningful, problem-solving activities.
- Improve leadership at all levels, including governance, so that the quality of teaching improves at a faster rate by:
 - checking the information collected about pupils' attainment and progress more effectively so that any potential underachievement is quickly identified and remedied
 - ensuring that the school's plans for improvement contain clear targets and milestones so that leaders can measure how effective their actions have been
 - improving arrangements to check the performance of teachers so that they understand precisely what they need to do to improve their teaching
 - ensuring that all governors have a thorough understanding of the school's provision and outcomes, enabling them to support and challenge the school more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The Reception classroom and outside learning area provide children with stimulating, well resourced environments. Most children start school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. They very quickly develop their understanding in all areas of learning because they experience a wide range of exciting and well planned activities which take good account of their individual needs. By the time they enter Year 1 attainment is average.
- From the time pupils enter Key Stage 1 pupils' progress is uneven. This is because the quality of teaching varies too much throughout the school. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make the expected progress resulting in average attainment by the end of Year 2. This continues throughout Years 3 and 4. However, progress accelerates rapidly in Years 5 and 6 resulting in attainment which is consistently above average by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The inconsistency in pupils' progress means that while the proportion of pupils who make expected progress is above average, the proportion who make good progress, especially those of average ability, is below average.
- The school has implemented a new approach to teaching reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. As a result, pupils are now making rapid progress in their understanding of letters and the sounds they make. This is helping them to tackle unfamiliar words confidently and start to become fluent readers.
- The school promotes the enjoyment of reading. Pupils read widely and often, gaining personal enjoyment from reading books on their own. This was exemplified by a Year 6 pupil who said, 'It excites my imagination. I can rest, close my eyes and be right there in the story.'
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points and attain standards above those of their national counterparts.
- The school has closed gaps in progress between those who are and are not eligible for funding from the pupil premium. This is because funding has been used to provide these pupils with additional support.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies across the school and is a key reason why pupils' achievement is not improving quickly enough.
- In the Reception class and Years 5 and 6 teaching is consistently good and on occasion outstanding. However, in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 there are too many lessons where the expectations of what different groups of pupils should achieve are not high enough.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' work. However, in some classes these assessments are not used sufficiently well to ensure that the work given to pupils is hard enough to increase the rate at which they make progress. Nor are they provided with enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities.
- When teaching is most effective teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and regularly check that a specific learning point has been understood. Teachers then seize opportunities to reinforce skills and strategies, often drawing in the whole class to solve a problem or enhance a piece of narrative through modelling. A good example of this was in a class of Years 5 and 6 pupils who became absorbed in their research into comparing their lives with those of others in less well developed countries.
- In less effective lessons teaching does not fully engage learners, teachers' explanations are too long and the work given to pupils is not matched sufficiently well to their abilities. This prevents them from having sufficient time to become immersed in activities on their own which demand that they think hard and make more rapid gains in their learning.

- Teaching assistants are effective. They deliver one-to-one and small-group support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This underpins the good progress these pupils make.
- Marking and feedback across the school is regular and positive. In the best practice pupils are informed of what they have done well, what they need to improve further and have opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school provides a very caring, supportive environment where pupils behave well and show respect for themselves and others. Their consistently good behaviour has a positive impact on the school's warm, family atmosphere.
- Pupils are proud of the contributions they make to the school. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'Our teachers do a lot for us and by accepting responsibilities we can help them make the school a happier place.' The opportunities offered to pupils to play a central part in the life of the school provide purposeful ways to extend their moral and social development.
- All staff demonstrate good classroom and pupil management skills. They have nurtured excellent relationships with pupils who say that their teachers are friendly, care for them and are always there if they have a problem.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the Parent View said that their children feel safe and are happy at school.
- Scrutiny of behaviour records shows that there are few incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of how to stay safe when, for example, they use the Internet. They say they feel very safe in school and were keen to say that bullying is extremely rare. They are aware of all the different forms of bullying, reflect on the impact of their actions on others and take full responsibility for their personal conduct.
- Pupils are proud of their school and love being there. This is reflected in the above average level of attendance.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher enthuses staff and promotes good team spirit. Together they share an overriding concern about improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement.
- Leaders regularly evaluate the quality of the school's provision and outcomes to gain a view of the school's strengths and remedy the weaknesses. However, the school's development plan contains neither actions which are sufficiently focused or sharp enough to bring about improvements quickly, nor does it contain clear, measurable milestones to enable leaders to gauge the success of their actions.
- Although arrangements to improve the performance of teachers are in place, teachers' targets for improvement lack clarity. This means that teachers are not clear about exactly what it is they need to do to improve their teaching and so increase the rate at which pupils make progress.
- Leaders and teachers together make checks on pupils' progress. However, the data gathered are not used well enough to identify those who are at risk of not making the progress of which they are capable. This leads to work which is not hard enough for some pupils and, as a result, they do not attain the higher levels.
- The curriculum captures pupils' interests. It is enriched by a wide range of musical and sporting activities, visits and visitors. There are many opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects but too few for them to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities.
- The curriculum places a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural

development. This was exemplified by a Year 6 pupil who said, 'If everyone understood the lives and the religions of other people then everyone would be a lot more tolerant and not say offensive things.'

- The school promotes and checks that pupils have equal opportunities. For example, additional income received by the school to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used to ensure that they achieve as well as their peers do in school. However, the school does not fully recognise that some pupils of average ability are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- The school works well with parents. Parents hold the school in high regard. The very large majority said they would recommend the school to other parents.
- Although the local authority has strong links with the school it has not recently provided an in-depth evaluation to check the accuracy of the school's view of its performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection a new Chair and Vice-Chair have been appointed to the Governing Body. Governors are supportive of the school. However, in the past they have not been challenging enough. They now recognise this weakness and have recently undertaken training to improve their skills further, enabling them now to hold school leaders increasingly to account regarding pupil performance and the quality of teaching. Governors have agreed the use of pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one help and small-group work to ensure that the attainment gap is closing between those pupils eligible for the funding compared with national average. Governors understand fully that performance management must support improvement in the quality of teaching and be related to any increases in pay. They ensure that all statutory responsibilities including budgetary and safeguarding meet requirements.

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	106584
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	403020

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Taylor
Headteacher	Kath Evans
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2007
Telephone number	01226 763020
Fax number	01226 763020
Email address	kath.evans@barnsley.org

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