

Derwent Community School

St Mark's Road, Derby, DE21 6AL

Inspection dates

5–6 March 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

- Although improving rapidly, achievement has been below national expectations for some years.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good or outstanding.
- Marking is not consistent in moving pupils on to the next level quickly.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to practise and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the subjects they study.
- The school does not celebrate the different faiths and cultures, within its own community, well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, and other leaders, work effectively as a team and are the major driving force behind the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and the rising standards throughout the school.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school.
- The school's new system for checking pupils' progress, combined with high-quality training for staff, are resulting in pupils receiving well timed, appropriate support. This enables them to make progress more quickly than previously.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, one of which was observed with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils read and observed a number of groups receiving support from teachers and teaching assistants. They also analysed the work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and a range of staff, including middle and senior leaders.
- There were insufficient responses on the online questionnaire (Parent View) to analyse. The inspectors looked at the school's own questionnaire for parents and carers and also met with some parents informally.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, records relating to attendance, behaviour and bullying, safeguarding documents and children's learning journals.

Inspection team

Elaine Long, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Roary Pownall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Derwent Community school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. A very small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for which the school receives additional income from the government (the pupil premium), is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. An average proportion is supported through school action plus or by 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 was appointed in September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching, ensuring this is happening in all Key Stage 2 classes, by:
 - ensuring that learning moves at a demanding pace and pupils are always challenged
 - planning activities which are well matched to pupils' different abilities
 - providing pupils with clear guidance, when marking their work, on what they need to do to improve, and giving them the time to follow up their teacher's comments.
- Raise achievement by ensuring that progress is at least good and attainment continues to rise, particularly in English and mathematics across Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that the activities pupils experience consistently enable their good or better learning
 - ensuring that additional support is specific and consistently meets the needs and aspirations of pupils
 - regularly evaluating the effectiveness of additional support in terms of the progress made by the pupils receiving it
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the subjects they study.
- Enhance and extend the pupils' learning by making sure that they have a broad range of opportunities to celebrate the faiths and cultures within their own community as well as those whose lives and backgrounds are different to their own.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children start in Nursery with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. They make good progress because they are well taught and benefit from exciting learning experiences. Nevertheless, by the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is below the level expected, especially in writing and creative development.
- In the 2012 Year 1 national screening of pupils' knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics), the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level was below average.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment has shown some improvement but not enough. Pupils' progress in recent years has not been as fast as it should be. The headteacher has acted swiftly to change this, and the impact of her actions is evident in the current progress of pupils, which shows considerable improvement.
- Current pupils are making good progress in Key Stage 1 due to good teaching and highly effective work with small groups and individuals. Attainment is broadly average in reading and writing and mathematics. Pupils in receipt of support paid for by the pupil premium in Key Stage 1 achieve similar standards to their classmates in reading and writing and are one term behind in mathematics.
- Currently, pupils make uneven progress across Key Stage 2. However, progress is accelerating and the previous gaps in achievement are closing. In Year 6, pupils are making good progress in writing and mathematics and outstanding progress in reading due to the very effective teaching of comprehension skills. They are on track to achieve broadly average standards in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils on track to achieve the higher levels has increased substantially on that seen last year. In 2012, pupils in Year 6 known to be eligible for free school meals were almost a year ahead of their classmates in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn successfully because of the close checking on progress and exceptionally well-targeted packages of support, which both meet their needs and set next step challenges. This groups' progress is improving in all years, especially in mathematics. However, progress in writing in Years 4 and 5 is not as fast as it is in other year groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, although there is none that is inadequate, the proportion of good or better teaching is insufficient to enable consistently good or better learning across Key Stage 2.
- Teachers are involved regularly in checking the progress of pupils but not all teachers are using this information consistently to ensure that activities match the needs of individual pupils. This sometimes results in work which is either too easy or too difficult, and, as a result, progress is slower.
- The quality of marking varies, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5 where teachers' comments are too general and do not focus on the improvement required. Occasionally, pupils are told that their work is 'fantastic' but when questioned they are unable to say why. There are examples of effective marking, for example in Year 6, and this involves good dialogue between the teacher

and pupil, with clear pointers for improvement and strong evidence that the pupils have responded to them.

- In the Nursery and Reception classes, the staff encourage children to be independent and to take part in a wide variety of activities. Lessons move at a brisk pace and help children develop as successful learners. The promotion of speaking and listening is at the heart of learning. As a consequence, children's communication skills build well, for example remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Warm relationships between adults and children, and also amongst the children themselves, help children to grow in confidence.
- In the best lessons, pupils are excited about their learning and there is a real 'buzz' as they extend their knowledge and skills due to the probing questioning and good-quality discussions. This was very evident in a Year 6 science lesson about bacteria in which pupils' assumptions about how easy it is to destroy bacteria were challenged by the teacher's questioning. Pupils reversed their original view as their knowledge and understanding moved on a pace during the lesson.
- Teaching assistants work very well with the pupils they support, particularly in guided reading sessions, and this is reflected in these pupils' good progress. The records that staff meticulously keep on the progress made by individual pupils ensure that the pupils receive appropriate and well-timed support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. They treat others with respect, are polite, friendly and courteous and very proud of their school.
- Staff know their pupils and manage their behaviour well. Pupils have confidence in their teachers to sort out any problems that may arise. Parents identify that the school works well with them and that home-school links are strong. 'Teachers always make time to listen to you', was one of many positive comments shared with inspectors.
- There are few exclusions and the school manages these fairly and in a very supportive manner. Incidents of bullying and racist comments are low and when they do happen they are dealt with sensitively and in a very measured way. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions and consider ways in which they could have behaved differently and not cause hurt to others.
- Pupils' abilities to work well with one another, to know the difference between right and wrong and to understand the feelings of others are very strong features of school life. Pupils clearly understand the rules and appreciate their rewards.
- Throughout lessons and assemblies, pupils are given the skills they need to manage everyday risks for themselves; for example, safe use of the internet, road and fire safety, and not talking to strangers.
- The school has a wide range of strategies to support pupils and families who experience difficulties. Parents like the 'open door' approach and are very grateful for the high levels of support care and guidance they are given.
- Attendance is average and rising and pupils are increasingly punctual. The school works very hard to ensure that parents know the importance of their children attending school regularly and

on time.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not done enough to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement, although the headteacher has started to drive the necessary improvements.
 - Inaccuracies in assessment have been pinpointed and new systems established that accurately chart pupils' progress. In addition, support has been targeted more precisely so that pupils in danger of falling behind are helped to catch up quickly with others.
 - Current information on pupils' progress shows that the school's actions are beginning to have a positive impact on the achievement of pupils, predominantly in Years 2 and 6. This demonstrates the school's capacity to improve. There is still some unevenness, however, especially in Years 3, 4 and 5, because support for pupils to make up previous gaps in their learning is not yet having full effect. Marking in Years 3, 4 and 5 does not always provide specific guidance for pupils in order to improve, and this slows their progress.
 - Staff support the headteacher fully in making improvement and morale is high. There is a common sense of purpose, school self-evaluation is accurate and informs well-focused action planning.
 - Lessons are visited regularly by leaders and detailed feedback provided to teachers so that they can improve. Where teaching is not yet enabling consistently good learning, the school acts to remedy this. The management of teachers' performance is detailed and rigorous and they are held fully to account for pupils' progress and achievement.
 - The pupil premium has enabled substantial investment in new resources and training to improve reading throughout the school and there are clear signs of impact in the raised confidence and achievement of pupils, especially in Year 2. The teacher leading the drive to raise the pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds is successfully improving phonics teaching and, consequently, progress, throughout the school. Similarly, new programmes to support pupils in mathematics are leading to faster progress being made in Year 3.
 - The school has a wealth of external partnerships within the local community. Pupils regularly go on trips. These complement the topics they study; for example, a trip to the Leicester Space Centre or a visit to their local museum and library. While the school celebrates cultures across the world, for example, the Chinese New Year, not enough is done to celebrate the diverse cultures in the United Kingdom and around the world.
 - The local authority has provided invaluable and timely support throughout the past eighteen months.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has been strengthened and extended, and is beginning to become more actively involved in all areas of the school's work. They are undertaking a wide range of appropriate training so that they can challenge the school more effectively and hold them to account. They have a good understanding of what the data on pupils' progress is telling them and have made sure that the funds available through the pupil premium have been used well to improve achievement. They have a clear understanding of performance management and that teachers' pay will only be increased if pupils make good progress. They know the
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strengths and weaknesses of the school and participate in the development of the school action plan. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding pupils.

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	112782
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	405424

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	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Futers
Headteacher	Julie Housden
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2010
Telephone number	01332 346222
Fax number	01332 342701
Email address	admin@derwent.derby.sch.uk

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