

Nursery Hill Primary School

Ansley Common, Nuneaton, CV10 0PY

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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not a good school because

- Teaching is variable in quality, with the result that teachers do not always meet the full needs of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Attainment and achievement require improvement. Pupils' progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, is not rapid enough in mathematics. Some teachers are not sufficiently confident or skilled in providing practical and interesting tasks in mathematics, especially for more able pupils.
- Teachers do not have enough opportunities to observe best practice and learn from each other within the school and elsewhere, so that their expectations are not always challenging enough to enable pupils to reach their potential.

The school has the following strengths

- The quality of achievement, teaching and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, so that children make rapid progress, especially in Reception.
- Behaviour is good in lessons. Pupils feel safe in school and are keen to learn. Parents are very positive about the high level of care and support for pupils.
- The leadership has successfully tackled most issues from the previous inspection, despite being hampered by significant changes in staffing. The headteacher manages the performance of staff more effectively now and her accurate evaluation of the school and planning for the next stage has contributed to improved progress and shows the capacity of the school to improve further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, taught by seven teachers. Four of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff, pupils and three governors. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 14 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 11 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised a variety of documentation, including the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, governing body minutes, records of monitoring, the school's self-evaluation and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Laver, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium, all of them pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average, while the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and a Reception class. All other pupils are taught in single-age classes, except for Years 4 and 5, who are in one class.
- There have been significant changes in teaching staff since the previous inspection. At the time of the inspection, two members of the senior leadership team were on maternity leave.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that it becomes consistently good, by:
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations and provide more challenging tasks for pupils of all abilities
 - providing more opportunities for teachers to observe and learn best practice from each other.
- Raise attainment and improve achievement in mathematics by:
 - further developing teachers' expertise and confidence in the subject
 - encouraging teachers to give more practical and interesting mathematical tasks to more-able pupils earlier in the lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly the latter, achievement requires improvement, because it is too variable. Progress in writing and reading has improved since the previous inspection, but in mathematics less so. Performance in the most recent Year 1 phonics check was below average, although pupils are currently on track to perform much better.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 has usually been close to average. Attainment has been more variable higher up the school where, until recently, too many pupils have left school with below average attainment. This has been partly due to lack of continuity in the teaching following several staff changes.
- Learning has improved as a result of the school's strategies, for example, to develop writing skills across various subjects. However, attainment and progress in mathematics have not been high enough, as observed in lessons where pupils, including the more able, are sometimes given low-level, repetitive tasks which restrict their learning for much of the lesson.
- Some pupils who attract pupil premium funding demonstrate higher standards and make faster progress than other pupils, both in English and mathematics, and particularly now in Years 1 and 6. In 2012, pupils at the end of Year 6 who were known to be eligible for free school meals reached the same standards as other pupils in reading and mathematics. They were about two terms behind in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress when supported by additional staff, both in lessons and through intervention groups outside the classroom. Their progress is slower when not directly supported, because teachers do not always take account of their specific learning needs when planning activities.
- Until quite recently, children joined the Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities below those expected for their age, but over half of the children in the current two classes joined the school with levels of attainment at or above age-related expectations.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make outstanding and very rapid progress as a result of teachers' high expectations and skilful management of all aspects of their learning.
- This outstanding progress was observed during the inspection. Reception children rapidly learned how to link sounds and letters (phonics) together, discovering 'new' words and also developing the full range of numeracy and other skills. Children learn to cooperate, and staff skilfully extend their learning. For example, children selling each other bunches of flowers were encouraged to respond to questions such as 'How much does this cost?' and 'Why don't you write down the order?'
- Where teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 show high expectations, progress is rapid, as observed, for example, in lessons in Year 1 and Year 6 in which teachers engaged the pupils in well-paced tasks. These encouraged pupils to think and explain their answers, as when solving mathematical problems.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, although it is outstanding in Reception, it does not ensure consistently good progress higher up the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and parents believe that it is good, but teaching has not been typically good and is still not yet consistently so.
- Sometimes, teachers' expectations are not high enough, because they plan what activities pupils are going to do without focusing enough on the actual content of the learning.
- Some more-able pupils told the inspector that while they enjoyed most of their lessons, they sometimes found the work 'too easy'.
- Sometimes, teachers do not take sufficient account of what pupils learned before, so that tasks

become too repetitive. This was seen in lessons where there was too much copying from worksheets and pupils were not sufficiently encouraged to think for themselves.

- In contrast, lessons were observed in the Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 in which the teaching encouraged learners to generate new ideas and explain what they were doing, either to the teacher or each other. Pupils respond enthusiastically to these opportunities.
- The inspector saw good or outstanding teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) in the Nursery, Reception and Year 1, because the pace was brisk and challenging and activities were made to seem like an adventure to the learners.
- Learning support assistants are very effective in helping several pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons. Sometimes, these pupils were given the confidence to respond to questions put to the whole class or to contribute to discussions.
- Where pupils with particular learning needs are not directly supported by additional staff, teachers do not always ensure they have sufficient understanding of the work. Teachers ask pupils to assess their own understanding, but do not always check pupils' responses themselves, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers mark books well. Their comments are usually detailed and constructive. Pupils are made to respond to the comments, which helps their learning. Pupils say that they find their targets helpful and that they know how well they are doing, which is an improvement on the previous inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is not outstanding, because staff have to carefully manage the behaviour of a few pupils. However, pupils behave well in lessons, enjoy school and want to learn.
- Pupils acknowledge that there are sometimes 'incidents' at lunchtime, but do not see them as a threat, although they understand that bullying can take various forms. Pupils feel very safe, and parents confirm this. School records show that the few incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with effectively.
- Pupils feel very well cared for by all staff.
- Attendance, like behaviour, has improved since the previous inspection. Attendance is still average, because a few families still do not appreciate the importance of regular attendance in supporting good learning. The school is working hard, with external support, to get the message across to parents.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility, such as helping younger pupils. They appreciate their school council, although they do not directly run it themselves.
- Pupils like the range of clubs and visits, and were very enthusiastic in telling the inspector about the residential trips.

The leadership and management are good

- Achievement and teaching are not yet as good as they should be, mainly because the headteacher has had to resolve several staffing difficulties, including the temporary loss of her regular leadership team.
- Leadership has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Progress in writing and reading, the quality of teaching, feedback to pupils, governance, care and support, the curriculum and provision in the Nursery and Reception have all improved, in several cases considerably so. This demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement.
- The local authority has provided good support since the previous inspection, helping the school with the professional development of staff and school improvement planning.
- Staff were unanimous in questionnaires and discussions in showing that they share the headteacher's determination to improve the school further.

- The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate and planning focuses on the right priorities to move the school forwards.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously and systematically than at the previous inspection. Subject leaders play an increasing role in this process, produce their own plans for improvement and increasingly support colleagues and develop the curriculum. However, teachers have relatively few opportunities to observe each other and learn more effective teaching and learning strategies, and this has affected the consistency of teaching.
- The leadership manages the performance of staff soundly, despite several changes in staffing. The resulting staff restructuring means that pay and career progression are now linked to accountability for progress. Staff believe that the process is transparent and contributes to their own professional development.
- Pupil premium funding has been used to support eligible pupils, for example, through providing additional resources and staff support. The impact has been rigorously checked and shows a demonstrable link to progress, especially in writing and mathematics, for some but not all of the pupils concerned. Progress in reading has been slower for some of these pupils.
- The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils' awareness of other cultures and values has been strengthened by giving an international dimension to the curriculum: staff incorporate basic skills into topics which are each linked to a country, for example, learning food technology and geography in a topic based on Italy.
- The school gives a high priority to science, inviting parents into school for special science days.
- Links with other local schools give useful opportunities to share expertise, for example in reaching a common understanding of standards in pupils' work.
- The school involves parents in school life wherever possible. For example, the inspector attended a parent literacy session organised by the learning support advisor. The parents talked enthusiastically about learning alongside their children while helping put together learning resources to go with *The Hungry Caterpillar*.
- Safeguarding meets requirements, and staff have appropriate training in procedures and best practice.
- The school welcomes several children who have learning difficulties or come from circumstances which make them potentially very vulnerable. All children are integrated very effectively, with no discrimination. Several comments were made about the school functioning as a 'happy family', ensuring equal opportunities for all.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Governors are very active in the school and have a good understanding of its key features, although they are realistic about the rate of improvement in progress since the previous inspection. Governors understand the areas for development in teaching and check its quality. They monitor the impact of the pupil premium and safeguarding procedures. Governors check the performance of senior staff and are fully involved in ensuring the links between pay, progress and accountability. They support the headteacher well, but also now ask much more appropriately searching questions than before about issues such as achievement and the curriculum. Governors benefit from good training in areas such as safeguarding.

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	125500
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	406314

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	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Barber
Headteacher	Becky Pebody
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 December 2010
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