

# Owler Brook Primary School

Wensley Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S4 8HQ

## Inspection dates

6–7 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 across the school, limiting the progress made by pupils.
- Not all teachers plan their lessons well enough to ensure more-able pupils have suitably challenging work.
- Other lessons move on at such a fast pace that some pupils struggle to keep up.
- Some teachers do not keep a close eye on the progress made in lessons and some pupils can be confused by a task and achieve little in the time available.
- Teachers' marking does not always provide pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work.
- Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 has not improved since the time of the last inspection and remains below average.
- While most pupils make the progress expected of them in their writing and mathematics, too few do better than this, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The progress pupils make in their reading is not as fast as their progress in writing.
- While the school is improving and senior leaders and governors have addressed a number of difficult staffing issues recently, they have not ensured teaching is consistently good enough.
- Some middle leaders do not play a big enough part in checking the quality of lessons.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher has high ambitions for the school and development plans are focused on the right priorities.
- Support for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is well organised and enables them to make good progress.
- Attendance is improving. Pupils feel safe and get on well together.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and who join the school at various times throughout the year are helped to settle quickly and soon make good progress.
- The governing body has been strengthened by new appointments and the election of an experienced Chair of Governors.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons or small group activities, of which four were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders, school staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons about their work, looked at books, listened to pupils read and met a group of pupils from Key Stage 2.
- Inspectors took account of 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), a recent school survey and spoke to a number of parents at the start of the day.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 questionnaires returned by members of staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at progress data, performance management information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Jim Alexander, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sharon Lambert

Additional Inspector

Peter Allen

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- It is growing from a nursery and infant school into an all-through primary. It currently consists of an Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, and pupils in Year 3 and Year 4.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and who are supported by the pupil premium fund is above average. (The pupil premium fund is additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, those from armed service families, and those known to be eligible for free school meals).
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is average.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a large proportion of pupils do not speak English as their first language.
- The largest proportion of pupils has a Pakistani background; however, recently a growing number of pupils are starting school with a Slovak/Roma heritage.
- Since the time of the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed along with a new leadership team. The governing body has been reorganised, new members elected and a new Chair of Governors appointed.

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

- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching, so that it is at least good in every class, by:
  - planning work to better meet the needs and interests of the more-able pupils
  - moving lessons along at a good pace for everyone and ensure no pupil struggles to keep up
  - keeping a careful eye on pupils who may be confused and act quickly to make sure they achieve well in every lesson
  - marking pupils' work so they are provided with clear guidance about how to improve the quality of their work.
- Raise attainment across the school by:
  - increasing the proportion of pupils who make and exceed expected progress in reading
  - increasing the proportion of pupils who make better than expected progress in writing and mathematics
  - accelerating the progress pupils make in their lessons, particularly in Year 1 and Key Stage 2
- Strengthen leadership by:
  - using the same rigour, which successfully addressed inadequate teaching, to now press on and secure good or better teaching in every class
  - developing the monitoring role of middle leaders, especially in observing lessons, to increase consistency in the quality of teaching across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills that are generally low compared with those typically expected for their age, particularly so in language and communication. They are helped to settle quickly and soon make good progress developing their personal and social skills. However, while some children made good progress developing their language skills this is not the case for all and some opportunities are missed to develop reading skills quickly enough.
- Pupils in Year 1 who did not read as well as expected have been given additional support. This is helping the majority to catch up and now use what they know of letters and sounds to read tricky words. However, some pupils still struggle with their reading and a few are provided with books that are too difficult for them to read confidently.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 has not improved since the time of the last inspection and remains below average overall and low in reading. Attainment reached by the end of Key Stage 1 has been influenced by the growing number of pupils who start school partway through the year with little or no English. However, this is not the only reason. It is also due to the fact that too few pupils make good enough progress, particularly in Year 1.
- As pupils move through the two Key Stage 2 year groups, many make expected progress in writing and mathematics and a growing number are starting to make better than expected progress. However, some pupils do not make expected progress in reading, although this, too, is improving.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and are supported by the pupil premium fund are also taught in small groups or on a one-to-one basis. This enables them to make similar progress to others in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are provided with a wide range of carefully planned activities and supported by experienced staff. This helps the majority make good progress.
- The progress made by minority ethnic groups, including those with Pakistani heritage, varies from class to class and is dependent upon the quality of teaching they receive. The growing numbers of pupils with Slovak/Roma backgrounds are provided with well-tailored bilingual support and this helps them to settle quickly and make good progress from their generally low starting points.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is improving and is good in a number of lessons. However, it is not consistently good enough across the school to ensure all pupils make good progress. For example, progress in two of the three Year 4 classes was good last term, but not good enough in the Year 3 classes.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children receive a warm welcome and soon understand the routines of school life. Children are provided with a wide range of interesting activities in this well-equipped and recently opened building. Teaching requires improvement, however, because some of these activities are too tightly controlled by some adults and not all children are always encouraged to learn through their own independent choice of activity.
- Across the school, teachers are developing ways to provide pupils with practical and fun learning experiences. A number of teachers plan lessons that capture pupils' interests and work is set at just the right level for all pupils. However, some lessons are not planned so well and occasionally the more-able pupils' progress is held back as they wait for others to finish before the teacher provides them with the next challenge.
- On other occasions, some lessons move on at such a brisk pace that a number of pupils either struggle to keep up or lack confidence to ask for help, which leaves them confused. This does not help them build upon what they know and, consequently, there remain gaps in their knowledge.

- The quality of teachers' marking is also varied across the school. Where it is best, pupils speak knowledgeably about what they need to do to improve their work and appreciate the 'two stars and a wish' approach teachers take. However, in other classes marking is not good enough and pupils get little more than a tick or a 'well done'.
- The expectations that teachers have also varies across the school. For example, the presentation of pupils' written work in some classes is of a high standard, but this is not the case in all classes and some pupils are allowed to present work of a poor standard.
- The school benefits from experienced and well-trained teaching assistants. Relationships with pupils are strong and much is often achieved, particularly supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The school has recently appointed a number of bilingual teaching assistants to support the new pupils with Slovak/Roma backgrounds. This is proving very successful and helping these pupils settle quickly and they soon make good progress.

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

### **requires improvement**

- Behaviour requires improvement because not all pupils display the same positive attitudes to their learning as others.
- Inspection evidence confirms that where activities are less interesting or where teachers' explanations are too long, pupils become passive, restless or occasionally mischievous; this hinders the progress they make in their learning.
- There are well-developed systems to manage any low-level behaviour problems and a quiet word is often all it takes. The school provides a calm and well-ordered environment.
- Exclusion, bullying and racist incidents are exceptionally rare. Pupils are very knowledgeable about all forms of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe. All parents who responded to recent surveys say the school keeps their children safe and happy and pupils confirm this.
- Playtime and lunchtimes are generally happy occasions and pupils get on well together. They appreciate the trips and residential visits that are offered.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are helped to make good progress with their personal and social development.
- While attendance is improving, it is better in some classes than others. Leaders are working successfully with a small number of families who struggle to send their children to school regularly enough.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- The recently appointed headteacher has a very clear vision of how successful this school can become. This vision is communicated well and all staff have a shared determination that this becomes a good school.
- A number of difficult staffing issues have already been tackled and inadequate teaching has been addressed, although the legacy remains on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Leaders are aware that this drive for improvement now needs to continue so all teaching is consistently good or better.
- The headteacher has introduced a system to track the progress pupils make and to measure their attainment. Some fine-tuning is now required so the school can compare themselves with how well other primary schools are doing nationally, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- A new leadership team has been established this year and some middle leaders are new to post. They are getting to grips with what is required to move this school forwards, but not yet checking the quality of teaching well enough to ensure it is consistently good.
- The headteacher has allocated the pupil premium funding in a wide variety of ways, for example in paying for support for small groups and individual pupils. The effect of these is varied and some pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals are making much better progress

than others.

- The school's strong commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for all and how it tackles discrimination can be clearly seen, for example, in the way in which it supports the Slovak/Roma community to ensure their children settle quickly and make good progress in their new school.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses within school and plans for improvement are focused on the right priorities.
- Leaders speak positively about the effective support provided by the local authority, for example in supporting the pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The recently reorganised governing body brings a wide range of skills and experience. They ensure safeguarding requirements are met. Governors are supportive of the school and eager that pupils do well. They are well-trained and informed about the school's performance data and how their school compares with others nationally. They are well-informed about where strengths in teaching can be found and reward the best teachers. They have successfully supported the headteacher in tackling inadequate teaching. Governors ask searching questions to hold leaders to account and ensure money is spent wisely, particularly the pupil premium fund. Together with the headteacher, they are becoming a significant driving force for change.

## 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>	107007
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	400879

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	447
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Annis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Bridges
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 243 8611
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