

# Castleton CofE Primary School

Back Street, Castleton, Hope Valley, S33 8WE

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils do well. They reach standards in English and mathematics which are above those expected for their age and develop good personal skills.
- Teaching is good. Staff make interesting links between subjects so pupils enjoy their learning.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe. They get on well together and thrive in this small school.
- The school makes the most of every opportunity to widen the range of experiences it offers to pupils.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving because leaders are good at linking staff training to the needs of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not do as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- There are not enough ways to help pupils get their spelling right or a consistent approach to handwriting.
- The teaching is not always demanding enough to push pupils to do their very best.
- Teachers do not always make sure that writing targets for English are used and applied to writing in other subjects.
- Pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to think about their own learning and how to improve.
- Teachers do not get enough chance to share outstanding teaching or receive sufficient guidance on how to make their teaching outstanding.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or parts of lessons and one assembly. Four members of staff, including the headteacher, were seen teaching.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, members of the governing body, school leaders and staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to pupils during lessons about their work, looked at their books and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed responses from 4 questionnaires completed by school staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work, looked at progress and attendance data, improvement plans, evidence of the monitoring of teaching, and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Vivienne McTiffen, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is below average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- The school uses the village hall as a permanent classroom. The hall is also used for lunches and physical education lessons.
- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced some staffing changes.
- There is a privately run breakfast club. This is subject to separate inspection as it is not managed by the governing body.

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

- Raise achievement in writing to match that in reading and mathematics by:
  - giving pupils in each lesson more precise aims that match their ability levels and pushing them to do better
  - making sure pupils use their writing targets when they write in any subject
  - establishing a whole-school approach to handwriting and a wider range of ways to help pupils spell correctly.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - sharing the outstanding practice already in the school so that more teaching matches the quality of the very best
  - making the most of pupils' enthusiasm for learning by giving them more chance to think for themselves about how well they are doing and how to improve
  - giving better guidance to teachers so they know how to improve their teaching to be outstanding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with varying levels of ability but, overall, their skills are in line with those expected for their age. They settle quickly and make good progress with early basic skills. They benefit from working alongside older pupils and become confident learners.
- Pupils do well throughout the school so that, by the end of Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Standards by the end of Year 2 are rising. The most recent performance information shows they are now above average.
- Pupils do well in reading. Pupils make good progress in learning about the sounds that letters make. They read regularly and say they enjoy the books on offer. They like reading for enjoyment and using books and computers to find out information.
- In mathematics, pupils often do practical tasks and work out real-life problems. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 talked about using catalogues to work out prices while pupils in Years 1 and 2 made graphs to show favourite snacks. These tasks help pupils to see how mathematics is used in the real world.
- The school's data and work in books show that standards in writing are catching up with those in reading and mathematics. Pupils write often in English lessons and in other subjects. Targets help them to they know what to include in their writing but there is not enough emphasis on these targets when pupils write in other subjects.
- Handwriting is variable and, sometimes, pupils do not spell simple words correctly. The school does not have a consistent approach to teaching handwriting or a wide enough range of ways to promote correct spelling.
- Pupils acquire well-rounded personal skills and approach tasks with confidence and maturity. They all have a go at singing or playing an instrument and perform frequently. They work together well in groups and with partners to develop good communication and reasoning skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. They receive extra support, often working closely with an adult, so they gain confidence in their abilities and make positive steps towards their own learning goals.
- Additional funding received by the school for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals provides extra adult help and resources. Spending is well matched to what individual pupils need, with positive effect on achievement and well-being. As a result, these pupils do at least as well as their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics and better than similar pupils nationally.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers teach the range of ages and abilities in their classes well. They let pupils know what they should achieve by the end of the lesson. Outstanding teaching seen during the inspection made sure that these aims matched pupils' abilities and pushed them to try harder. This approach is not consistent in all classes and is stronger in mathematics than it is in writing.

- Teachers provide interesting and meaningful tasks which pupils enjoy. There is plenty of chance to talk about ideas before writing. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were enthused to write a factual article about a lorry fire. Highly skilful teaching developed vocabulary and helped pupils to improve their writing.
- Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection to create a mix of tasks that Reception-aged children choose for themselves and those that are led by adults. The classroom is carefully organised to provide a range of interesting activities. Well-planned sessions and good use of adults extend children's learning through regular access to the outdoors.
- Teachers make sure pupils understand their learning and help them to sort out any misconceptions. They mark pupils' work regularly and offer helpful tips on how to improve. There is little chance, however, for pupils to respond to teachers' comments and think for themselves about how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Books are well organised and pupils have access to a wide range of reading material. Regular reading sessions are often well supported by volunteers. Children in the Reception and pupils in Key Stage 1 learn daily about linking letters and sounds, and older pupils receive extra help if they need it.
- Teaching assistants are fully involved in lessons and play a valuable role in working with groups and individuals. They help less-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to understand their work and build confidence in their own abilities.

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

- Pupils say they are happy and feel safe at school, a view that is strongly supported by parents and carers. Pupils value their small school community and say, 'We know everyone really well and it feels like a family.'
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are attentive in lessons and are keen to learn. They happily accept any restrictions that limited space may present. They share the small playing areas well and routinely move between the school and other locations in the village for lessons and at lunchtimes.
- Pupils confidently report, 'There is no bullying here. Everyone is really nice.' They talk sensibly about the different types of bullying. They say they know who to talk to if they have a problem. Incidents are very rare but any that do arise are dealt with well and recorded thoroughly. Discussions in assemblies and lessons help pupils to understand how to deal with any concerns.
- The school's logs show improvement over time for those pupils who find it difficult to behave well. Staff manage behaviour consistently well and help individuals to improve their attitudes to learning. Pupils know the school's rules and the difference between right and wrong because the school promotes moral development well.
- Pupils accept responsibilities to help others and the school. They fund-raise and become eco-councillors and buddies. They relish new experiences and take an interest in those from different backgrounds and cultures. They meet pupils from other schools and do well in inter-school competitions and sports activities.
- Attendance is above average. Very few pupils are late or away from school for long periods. The school does its best to impress upon parents and carers the importance of regular attendance, but term-time holidays occasionally affect the school's overall attendance figures.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully raised the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The headteacher is clear about what she wants to achieve. She heads a close-knit and dedicated staff who share ideas and constantly seek to improve.
- Training and targets for staff to improve their work match the needs of the school well. Staff learn from each other but there is not enough opportunity to share outstanding teaching within the school. Systems used by leaders to check the quality of teaching do not give enough guidance on how teachers can make their teaching outstanding.
- Well-targeted support from the local authority aids improvement. As a result, leadership skills, including those of governors, have strengthened, and effective links with other schools enable staff to share expertise. The school's view of itself is realistic and development plans are achievable.
- Leaders make sure all pupils have the chance to do equally well and everyone is valued. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The progress of all pupils is checked regularly. Any who are found to be falling behind are given extra help to catch up.
- In the Reception class, staff carefully collect information to show how well children are doing. This is compiled into 'Learning Journeys' which provide a good record of children's progress across all areas of learning and help to identify any gaps.
- The school provides a good range of subjects for pupils of all ages. Interesting topics link subjects well so pupils apply their skills. Regular themed weeks often focus on different parts of the world, events, cultures and religions aiding pupils' cultural understanding well.
- Good partnerships, including those with local churches, schools and the immediate community provide opportunities which the school alone could not. Very good use is made of the surrounding environment and places further afield to broaden pupils' experiences and prepare them for life in the wider world.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are united in their drive to improve the school. They know how well the school is doing and have good systems to check the work of the school. The governing body makes good use of expertise within its ranks and recognises what needs to be done to hone skills further. Governors are well informed about pupils' progress, including the progress of those for whom the school receives the pupil premium. They have a clear understanding of the link between good teaching and good achievement. Governors are involved in making decisions about staff development and arrangements for managing teachers' performance. They know about how good teachers are rewarded and how any underperformance is tackled. Governors frequently seek the views of parents and carers and use them effectively to inform any decisions that are made about the school. They carry out their responsibilities well and ensure safeguarding arrangements 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112807
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401309

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	38
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Montgomery
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01433 620630
<b>Fax number</b>	01433 620630
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@castleton.derbyshire.sch.uk



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