

# Stirling Primary School

Prospect Place, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN1 3QP

**Inspection dates** 13–14 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	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		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

- Not enough pupils across the school reach the expected levels in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics.
- Overall, boys do not make as much progress as girls. Some groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, do not make sufficient progress towards their individual targets.
- Across the school, pupils' progress is not yet consistently good because there is still some inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- Some staff do not challenge pupils well enough nor check work in lessons sufficiently to identify if it is too easy or too hard.
- Attendance is below average and affects the progress pupils make.
- Governors are too dependent upon staff for information and do not have a full programme of focused visits to enable them to have first-hand understanding of what is provided.
- Subject leaders are developing their role in monitoring standards but this is not yet making a consistent impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of education is continuing to improve, because the headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a whole-school determination and drive towards becoming a good school.
- There is a growing proportion of teaching that is good or better, including consistently outstanding teaching in Year 6 and some excellent teaching in the Reception class.
- Pupils eligible for the additional support provided by pupil premium funding and those who remain in school for most of their primary education, often make good progress.
- The large majority of pupils behave well, try hard with their work and like coming to school.
- Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. The school has good systems to support those new to this country.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 17 lessons, taught by nine teachers. Several of these were joint lesson observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at a sample of pupils' recent work and heard several pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with pupils and representatives of the governing body and the local authority. Discussions were held with staff, including those in senior roles, the literacy and numeracy leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. They also took account of 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to be analysed. However, inspectors looked at responses to the very recent parental survey conducted by the school and spoke with several parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school. They looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, and how the school sets targets for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at child protection and safeguarding information and procedures.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Machell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- More than 80% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. There are 23 languages spoken by pupils in the school. Many arrive new to the country with no English and little formal education.
- The largest minority ethnic group of pupils is those of Pakistani heritage.
- Mobility in and out of the school is very high with 50% in school for two years or less. Many of these families are from Romany or other White backgrounds, often from Eastern Europe.
- Almost 50% of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is double the national average. In this school, this provides additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- Approximately 12% of pupils are supported at school action, which is close to the average. Approximately 5% are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs, which is below average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better and increase the proportion of outstanding lessons by:
  - checking pupils' progress in lessons more carefully and where appropriate adding further challenge
  - asking more searching questions to encourage pupils to explain themselves in more depth and detail.
- Raise standards and ensure that all pupils, especially boys, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - enabling the pupils to develop the confidence to use a wider range of words when speaking to others
  - ensuring that all pupils read confidently and understand the words they read
  - checking that pupils use what they know about letters and the sounds they make to improve their spelling
  - enabling pupils to develop both a secure understanding of calculations and the confidence to solve mathematical problems speedily and accurately
  - ensuring the school meets the government's current floor standards.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - helping the governing body to be better informed, through first-hand experience, about the school's performance and provision
  - ensuring that subject leaders become more effective in helping to improve the quality of teaching and in raising pupils' standards
  - improving pupils' attendance to be at least in line with the national average by working with parents to reduce the number of holidays taken in term time and encouraging parents to inform the school if they leave the area.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children start school with skills that overall are well below the expectations for their age. Achievement requires improvement, because while pupils' progress is improving it is still inconsistent, and there remains more work to be done to make up lost ground.
- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average. For example, in Year 6 in 2012, standards did not meet the government floor targets, with pupils being almost two years behind most 11 year olds, especially in reading and mathematics. Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own tracking data show that the gap is reducing.
- An unusually large proportion of pupils enters and leaves the school other than at the usual time. Many initially have little English. Records show that those who remain in school for some time, and especially those of Pakistani heritage, often make better progress than other groups. Boys generally do not do as well as the girls.
- Pupils' speaking skills are below average and many, including the White British pupils, do not use a wide range of words to express their ideas. This hinders their progress in all areas.
- Standards in reading are lower than in other subjects. The school has improved the range of reading materials, including those that appeal to boys and provides regular opportunities for pupils to read to an adult. While many older readers work out how to say new words, they have limited understanding of what they mean.
- Standards in writing are often closer to the national average than in reading and mathematics. The school has embraced to good effect initiatives to improve pupils' writing. The positive outcomes of this were evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils listened to sound effects of a strong wind and identified the impact this could have in helping them with their writing. Because the teacher set the scene enthusiastically, pupils discussed their ideas animatedly. The teacher's excellent use of questioning helped pupils draw together their ideas for writing.
- Standards in mathematics are also below average. Pupils do not always use what they already know of numbers and shapes to solve problems speedily and accurately and too often rely on an adult to explain what they have to do.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care receive additional support through the pupil premium. This is ensuring that the attainment gap between these pupils and other pupils in the school in English and mathematics is closing. These pupils generally make better progress than many others. The school provides extra teachers for small group support and for Key Stage 1 pupils' reading, including parent reading groups. Additional help for pupils from teaching assistants, including a focus on understanding letters and the sounds they make, and one-to-one tuition, all make a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make very strong progress. Those pupils who have been in the school for a short time or who attend irregularly receive targeted support. However, the standards they reach are below those of similar pupils nationally.
- Children make mixed progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is sometimes outstanding in the Reception class where teaching assistants are used very effectively to provide activities that motivate the children to want to learn. This was seen to good effect in activities where children learnt about weighing fruit and vegetables.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement, because its quality varies and not enough is consistently good. There have been some improvements since the previous inspection due to the action taken by senior leaders. There is a growing proportion of teaching that is good and none that is inadequate.

- There are times in several classes where work is not well matched to pupils' different abilities when it is too hard for some and too easy for more-able pupils. This is because staff do not always check the work pupils are doing in lessons well enough to identify what they can or cannot do. Teachers then miss opportunities to adapt an activity to meet the pupils' particular needs including for the boys.
- The school has a good range of assessment information available to inform the planning of lessons, but this is not always used to ensure a high level of challenge for different groups. Teachers mark work conscientiously and almost all of the pupils spoken to during the inspection can identify their specific targets.
- Some staff, and particularly in Year 6 and the Reception class, use questions well to encourage pupils to explain things. These staff also use additional questions to demand more detail in pupils' answers. However, in other classes teachers do not use follow-up questions as effectively to encourage pupils to use more description in their replies.
- Throughout the school staff get on well with the pupils and encourage their efforts. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils who are supported through the pupil premium funding are particularly well supported by teachers in specific, small group activities.
- Teachers help pupils to improve their basic literacy skills of speaking, reading and writing, including spelling and punctuation in a range of subjects and themes. They have mixed success, although, as illustrated in a well taught Year 2 lesson where pupils struggled to spell the words they wanted to write in their computer diary entry as a Victorian servant.
- Where teaching is most successful, particularly in Year 6, there are short, snappy activities and very well-established routines, such as pupils discussing their ideas with a partner. Some staff, as seen in a mixed Year 5/6 class, have very effective routines for pupils moving quietly from introductions to main activities, based on silent signals which promote good concentration.

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

- The large majority of pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. They are friendly and happy to be in school and say the different ethnic groups get on well together. Most behave well in the classroom, the dining hall and in the playground, meaning these are safe and pleasant places to be.
- The school makes a good job of supporting the small number of pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties and those who are very new to this country. Should any pupil or parent require additional help, there are specific staff, including the pupil support officer and the parent support officer, who work with identified families. This support is valued by the families.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe and can explain that bullying is something that is repeated. Older ones understand what cyber-bullying is and the different types of bullying that could occur. They are confident little bullying happens in school.
- Occasionally, some pupils are very passive in lessons and do not always volunteer answers in discussions. Staff are aware of those at the early stages of learning English and encourage all to join in partner and group discussions.
- The majority of pupils attend regularly and are punctual. Attendance has improved recently, but has been a major concern for the school for some years and is still below the national average. Attendance is affected by extended holidays in term-time and families leaving the area without informing the school. Staff, therefore, cannot remove pupils' names from the register, which affects the strong drive to improve attendance.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Many of the new initiatives, including to improve reading and writing, are at an early stage and not yet fully embedded across the school and, therefore, not yet making a significant impact on

standards.

- The headteacher provides good leadership. Her quiet determination to keep the school moving forward is shared by the deputy headteacher and everyone in school. This is leading to a growing number of good aspects of provision. Responses to the staff questionnaire indicate that they are very supportive of continuing improvement and appear to be working well as a team.
- The school has an appropriate programme of checking on teaching and learning. Most formal checks are carried out by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Most subject leaders are beginning to develop their role in checking on the quality of teaching and in improving pupils' achievement but as yet not to full effect. Checks on teachers' performance are linked to pay awards and the most effective classroom teachers hold additional posts of responsibility. They have a positive impact on improving teaching, for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Occasionally, senior staff evaluations of teaching are a little generous, but overall the correct strengths and areas for improvement are identified.
- The impact of staff training has generally been good, although with numerous staff changes in each of the last few years areas have to be regularly revisited. Staff have opportunities to observe good and outstanding teaching in this and a partner school.
- The school is a very inclusive place to be and welcomes pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including many who are new to the country, speak little English and have had little formal education previously. The school fosters good relationships, tackles discrimination and works with some success to remove barriers to learning so that pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed.
- The school uses additional funding well for pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium. This help is effectively targeted and these pupils make better rates of progress than many others. The school's procedures to keep pupils safe meet current requirements.
- The subjects offered provide a broad and balanced set of activities. Work in the Early Years Foundation includes a good balance of adult-led tasks and those chosen by the children. The school has worked successfully with the local authority and with other schools. This has helped identify what good teaching looks like and in-service training activities help to extend the skills of all staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school requires improvement because most of the governors, while strongly supportive of the school, are too dependent upon the staff for information. A small number of governors visit the school, have discussions with the staff and occasionally visit the classrooms to find out about what happens in school. Governors are informed about the quality of teaching and receive data on the school's performance and how this compares to other schools. They are informed of performance management procedures, including the link to pay, how good teachers are rewarded, and how underperformance is tackled. There is, however, no formal programme of focused visits and some governors do not visit the school regularly. This means that the governing body is not well placed to hold the school to account. Therefore, an external review of governance would help establish a clearer understanding of how to hold the school to account for pupils' standards and progress and identify what future training may be required to keep themselves up to date.

## 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>	106742
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	405052

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>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Hoare
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Wragg
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 363612
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