

New Road Primary School

New Road, Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1SZ

Inspection dates 12–13 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

- Teaching is not consistently good throughout the school. In Years 1 to 4, teachers do not always ensure that work is pitched at the right level for all pupils. They do not always make clear to pupils what they are learning and why.
- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because their progress is not consistently strong across the school.
- Teaching assistants are not always used to good effect to ensure that all pupils benefit from their support. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs become over reliant on adult help to complete their work.
- While pupils are happy at school, activities do not always inspire them so that they develop a love of learning.
- The school is improving steadily, but leaders do not make enough use of information about pupils' progress to check that initiatives are working well enough.
- Guidance to improve teaching has not been strong enough to ensure sufficient improvement in all classes. Some of the targets that are given to teachers lack challenge.
- The governing body, whilst supporting and strengthening its role in challenging leaders, does not yet do enough to hold the school to account.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are taught well and make good progress.
- Good teaching in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to learn at a faster rate and helps to compensate for less effective teaching elsewhere.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good and they are polite and courteous.
- Pupils feel safe and look after each other well at lunchtimes and playtimes.
- New leaders have quickly identified the most important priorities and are already doing the right things to improve provision more quickly.
- Through the good work of the interim headteacher the school is benefitting from working closely with other schools in the town.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for results to be published but the inspector spoke to some parents and carers individually to seek their views on the school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector analysed 13 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White-British backgrounds. A few are from a range of other ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much lower than the national average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a single-age Reception class.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for children known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is typical of most schools. There are currently no children who are looked after by local authorities or children of service families at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has had an interim headteacher since January 2013. She divides her time between New Road Primary School and Park Lane Primary and Nursery School where she is the substantive headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning in Years 1 to 4 by:
 - ensuring that work builds more closely on pupils' starting points so that it is not too hard or too easy for some
 - making clear to pupils what they are learning and why
 - deploying teaching assistants more effectively so that they have a greater effect on the learning of all pupils and none become over reliant on adult help to complete their work.
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that it takes greater account of pupils' learning and does more to inspire pupils at all times.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that sharper use is made of information about pupils' progress to check that all initiatives are working well enough
 - giving teachers clearer guidance and setting them challenging targets for improvement
 - providing training for governors to help them develop their role in challenging other school leaders and holding them to account.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they have not made consistently good progress throughout the school. The school does not promote equality well enough because there are too many variations in the rates of progress between classes. Consequently, while there have been some improvements in pupils' attainment, it remains broadly average from the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6. Not all pupils are learning quickly enough in Years 1 to 4 where teaching more often requires improvement.
- Pupils develop sound literacy and numeracy skills, but the school is over reliant on them learning at a faster rate in Years 5 and 6 to compensate for slower progress elsewhere. By Year 6 pupils read confidently and enjoy writing especially when it is linked to their topic on 'The Antarctic'. However, in Years 1 to 4, handwriting and spelling is not always accurate enough.
- In mathematics, older pupils enjoy solving problems and are becoming more confident explaining the strategies they are using to solve problems. However, the skills of some younger pupils are too weak. For example, in Year 2, many pupils struggle to solve simple calculations that involve remembering their times-tables and skills are not introduced systematically enough as insufficient account is taken of prior learning when planning work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same uneven progress as others in lessons because work is sometimes too hard for them. When this happens, they become reliant on adult help. These pupils make the best progress when skills are introduced systematically in small groups outside lessons.
- Pupils make the best progress in the Reception class and in Years 5 and 6. When children start school few are working at the expected levels for their age. They quickly improve skills in the Reception class where they benefit from good quality teaching and an interesting curriculum. Progress is especially strong in writing because there are many opportunities to practise.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' overall attainment is generally in line with the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. In the Year 1 phonics (the sounds linked to letters) screening, the majority of pupils met the expected standard.
- In Years 5 and 6 pupils also improve their skills quickly. Pupils' workbooks show that spelling and handwriting improve rapidly and, in mathematics, pupils are becoming more confident about using their mathematical knowledge to solve problems.
- In most years, the very small number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium attain as well as others in both English and in mathematics, as measured by the average points scores in national testing at the end of Year 6. Over the last year the pupil premium has funded individual and group tuition for eligible pupils as well as giving them access to activities such as the homework and fitness clubs.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there are occasions in lessons when pupils do not learn quickly enough. In Years 1 to 4 work is sometimes too hard or too easy for some pupils and they are not always clear about what they are learning and why. In these year groups, work does not always inspire pupils. At these times, pupils 'get-on' with their work, but the pace of learning is

too slow.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs too often work with teaching assistants rather than the teacher. While teaching assistants are enthusiastic and hard-working, pupils rely too much on adult support to complete their work and skills are not always securely embedded before they move on.
- Teachers manage behaviour well. Positive relationships and high expectations for personal development successfully encourage the pupils to cooperate sensibly and behave well.
- Teaching is consistently good in the Reception class and in Years 5 and 6. In the Reception class there is a good balance between activities taken by the teacher and those where children choose for themselves where they are going to work. Children quickly improve their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make because skills are taught systematically.
- In Years 5 and 6, teaching provides good challenge. Good questioning encourages pupils to work independently and the work is well matched to need.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. They like being the 'Star of the Month' and are keen to do well. Pupils are kind to each other and play together happily. One Year 6 pupil commented that 'It is our job to make sure that everyone is happy.'
- In lessons pupils sensibly listen to each other and share their ideas. They show the best attitudes towards learning when work encourages them to think for themselves. This was seen to good effect in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6 where pupils explored the properties of angles. Where teaching is mundane, pupils sometimes lose concentration and become quietly inattentive.
- Pupils are given good support to help them improve their behaviour and self-esteem. For example, the 'Sensory Circuit' group which runs each morning, is very beneficial for pupils who participate. These well-managed sessions where pupils take part in physical activities help them to learn to interact with others and have a good effect on their confidence and independence.
- Leaders successfully foster good relationships and ensure that pupils feel safe at school. Pupils talk confidently about possible dangers that they may encounter in later life, for example, explaining how to avoid danger when playing near water. They report that there is no bullying in school and they say that if pupils do 'fall out' it is tackled quickly.
- Rates of attendance have been improving and are broadly average. The school works closely with outside agencies to support the small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new leadership team is identifying the right priorities. They know how well the school is doing and have made a start to tackling the most important weaknesses in teaching. However, it is too soon to see a sustained impact on pupils' learning. Until recently, teachers have not been given enough guidance to help them improve. They are set targets but these are comfortable rather than challenging. Consequently, there is not yet enough good teaching.

- The school has a wealth of data but leaders do not use it sharply enough to check that all initiatives are working. For example, the school has not yet analysed school data about the progress made by pupils benefitting from the additional support funded by the pupil premium so that they can say with confidence which initiatives have been most helpful.
 - The local authority has supported the school extensively over the past 18 months. Its effort in securing interim leadership is already reaping benefits. For example, staff from both of the interim headteacher's schools are working together to share good practice and expertise. This is helping to raise aspirations at New Road.
 - Although there have been some recent improvements, with 'The Antarctic' project in particular proving highly stimulating to pupils, the curriculum does not do enough to inspire pupils. As a result, not all pupils develop a love of learning. The interim headteacher has rightly identified that too much work is dull and it does not take enough account of the pupils' interests and aptitudes by, for example, making greater use of the local community to bring subjects alive.
 - The school successfully supports pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Pupils receive a good grounding in social and moral skills. Discrimination is tackled firmly and pupils learn to respect the beliefs and customs of others.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governance requires improvement. The effectiveness of the governing body has been hindered by difficulties in recruiting members. This has made it difficult to share responsibilities widely. Governors are involved in checking the work of the school for themselves but they do not sufficiently hold leaders to account to ensure more rapid improvement. Governors have not been well enough trained in this aspect of their responsibilities. Nevertheless, through their visits to school and discussions with leaders, governors know where teaching is stronger or weaker, as well as how the new leadership team is working to improve it. They check carefully that the pupil premium helps to improve the attainment of eligible pupils and that there are clear links between the performance of teachers and the awarding of pay rises. Governors ensure that 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

Unique reference number	110647
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	405295

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Maxwell
Headteacher	Margaret Leverett
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2011
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