

# Thornton Primary School

Thornton Road, Thornton, Bradford, BD13 3NN

## Inspection dates

26–27 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		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:

- There is too much teaching that requires improvement. As a result there are too many lessons, in particular in mathematics, in which pupils do not make good enough progress, so their achievement requires improvement.
- Standards in mathematics are below average for all groups of pupils.
- Standards in writing are below average because the progress made by boys is slow.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the progress made by some children in developing the ability to link sounds and letters is too slow.
- Teachers do not give pupils the chance to respond to the comments they write on their written work when it is being marked. This slows down pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not always plan their lessons to make sure that all pupils are given work that gets the best out of them. There is often not enough challenge for the more-able pupils.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet improved teaching so that it is consistently good.
- Some subject leaders do not yet rigorously check the quality of teaching in their subject.

### The school has the following strengths

- The wide range of additional support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs helps them to make good progress.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school, are keen to learn and they concentrate well in lessons. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities around the school.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of exciting opportunities which appeal to pupils' interests and contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders, managers and governors have a good understanding of what needs to be improved.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made short visits to small groups being supported by adults and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed responses to the school’s own parent survey. They also analysed the feedback from 27 staff questionnaires and spoke informally to parents at the start of the school day.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a representative from the local authority, three members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and key staff.
- Inspectors observed a range of documents including information on pupils’ progress, the school’s self-evaluation and action plans, records of the quality of teaching, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, school policies, pupils’ work and documents relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Machell

Additional Inspector

Pamela Hemphill

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This primary school is much larger than average.
- The proportion of girls is in line with the national average.
- There is a lower-than-average proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- Most pupils are White British. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school part way through their primary education is lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- In order to raise standards of achievement in all subjects, in particular in mathematics and writing, ensure that all teaching is at least good and some is outstanding by:
  - making sure that all pupils are clear about their learning, know how to improve their work and are given the time to act on that advice
  - ensuring that teachers plan work and learning activities that are closely matched to pupils' abilities and there is sufficient challenge for the more able
  - ensuring that there are appropriate tasks in lessons to motivate all pupils in mathematics, and boys in writing, to apply and extend their skills
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects
  - creating more opportunities for writing, and using letters and the sounds they make, to increase the progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in Reception.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
  - developing a clear understanding by all teachers of what good progress looks like, both in lessons and in pupils' work
  - setting challenging targets for all pupils and making sure that they are achieved
  - ensuring that all subject leaders rigorously check the quality of teaching in their subjects in order to raise pupils' achievement more rapidly
  - ensuring that governors become increasingly rigorous in holding the school to account for improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement overall requires improvement, because while the majority of pupils make expected progress a significant minority do not, including boys and pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6.
- Most children start school with skills that are typically as expected for their age, although their communication skills and their ability to link sounds and letters are below those expected. There are not enough opportunities for them to develop these skills, in particular in Reception, so the good progress they have made in Nursery is not maintained. By the time they start Year 1, their skills are in line with the average for children of their age.
- Some pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium do less well than other pupils. However, their progress in Key Stage 1, and in English in all years, has started to accelerate because they have received skilled, individual tuition and extra support to help them to catch up. In mathematics, the attainment gap between these pupils and others has not closed and they are, on average, about two terms behind in their learning at the end of Year 6.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is carefully checked by the special educational needs leader and is beginning to accelerate as a result of the well-targeted support they receive, which is matched to their individual needs. These pupils make good progress.
- The more-able pupils do not reach high enough standards because the work planned by teachers is too easy and does not allow them to deepen their understanding. In Key Stage 2, boys make slow progress in writing because there are not enough opportunities for them to write about topics that motivate and engage them.
- Careful attention is given to help develop reading skills. Pupils receive additional small group and one-to-one support to enable them to become confident readers. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to read in school.
- In mathematics, pupils are not making rapid enough progress because their recollection of number facts is weak and they do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills to solving problems either in mathematics or in other subjects.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Inspection evidence and the school's records show that while there is some good teaching, there is too much that requires improvement and there is none that is outstanding. Teaching over time has not enabled pupils to make better than expected progress or to reach higher standards of attainment. Occasionally, some groups of pupils do not make enough progress.
- Teaching is better in literacy than in mathematics. In mathematics, it is better in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2 and this means that the progress being made by all groups of pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 1 is beginning to increase.
- Teaching is good in Nursery, where adults provide interesting activities, which engage children. They intervene at appropriate points to enhance children's learning and regularly assess and record their progress. In Reception, activities do not always challenge children and adults do not take enough advantage of opportunities to promote language development.
- Where teaching requires improvement, expectations of progress are not high enough, especially for the more able. Teachers' questions fail to get pupils to think deeply about their learning or assess how well they are learning.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of basic numeracy skills. There are not enough opportunities to apply their skills to problem solving in mathematics lessons or in other subjects.
- Marking is done regularly throughout the school. However, time is not routinely given to pupils

to act on the advice given by their teachers and teachers do not always check whether pupils have understood the comments.

- In the best lessons, pupils are clear on how to achieve their learning goal throughout the lesson (known by the school as 'the steps to success') and they also know their longer-term targets. Teaching assistants and the teacher provide good support for individuals and small groups of pupils; teachers plan their lessons so that they build on pupils' prior learning and pupils are engaged and on task throughout. This was seen in a Year 3 lesson, where pupils wrote well about their visit to a local museum.

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

- This is a harmonious school in which pupils and adults work together according to the school's mission statement, 'to promote honesty, respect and responsibility'. Behaviour is good.
- Pupils throughout the school are polite, respectful and courteous. They work well together in small groups and in pairs in lessons to support each other's learning. Pupils have a clear understanding about what is meant by bullying and can clearly explain how to deal with it if it occurs.
- Pupils of all ages strongly express that they feel very safe in school. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They play well together at breaks and lunchtimes.
- A wide range of additional support is provided for vulnerable pupils of all ages and pupils with specific learning difficulties, including nurture groups. Pupils in these groups enjoy their learning experiences. They told inspectors that they, 'have fun' and 'like coming to school'. They develop good social skills, grow in confidence and are able to work productively in their normal lessons as a result of this additional support.
- Responsibilities are given to pupils to develop their leadership skills. In school, they work supporting younger pupils and helping the school to run smoothly. They also work more widely with members of the local community to fundraise for a wide range of charitable causes.

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

- Leadership and management require improvement because actions taken to improve the quality of teaching and to raise achievement since the previous inspection have not been fast enough.
- Not all monitoring of teaching by leaders is accurate, especially of mathematics. Teachers are not set challenging enough targets to improve, for example, with regard to expectations of pupils' rates of progress.
- Leaders are using more accurate data to track pupils' progress at regular intervals throughout the year. However, they are not always using the data to target actions precisely enough. As a result, actions to improve progress, especially for pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding in Key Stage 2, in mathematics and for boys in writing, are not having enough effect. Equal opportunities for all to succeed are not yet sufficiently well promoted.
- Teachers have targets to raise their performance but, in the past, some have lacked precision. Teachers' targets are linked with the school's priorities.
- There is a wide range of training opportunities for staff which are aimed at addressing whole-school priorities as well as individual teachers' development needs. However, feedback for teachers from lessons observed are not always sufficiently focused on the priorities that will make the biggest difference to improving the quality of teaching.
- Staff work hard and provide a high standard of care for pupils. Feedback from staff questionnaires collected during the inspection showed that the majority of staff are extremely positive about the school. However, a small minority are concerned about the relatively slow rate of improvement.
- The school works hard to engage parents and families and feedback from parents is almost

unanimously positive about the school.

- The curriculum, and the wide range of additional activities that the school makes available to all pupils, provide excellent learning opportunities which motivate and engage them. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning through outdoor play has in the past been limited, but new facilities have been designed to address this. All subjects are linked to different areas of the creative curriculum, although basic skills are not consistently well promoted for all groups of pupils.
- A wide range of visits contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority representative visits the school termly and facilitates links with other schools in the Bradford West One partnership. This provides opportunities for the sharing of good practice between schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are enthusiastic and strongly committed to the school and their particular expertise is well deployed. They have started to hold the school to account for the achievements of pupils and for the use of the pupil premium funding, which provides a wide range of extra activities and support for eligible pupils. Governors have challenged the headteacher to ensure that performance targets for teachers are consistently set and they 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107223
<b>Local authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	405087

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>	573
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Amanda Cade
<b>Headteacher</b>	Adrian Cogill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2011
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