

Ecclesfield Primary School

High Street, Ecclesfield, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S35 9UD

Inspection dates

26–27 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

- Attainment in Years 1 to 6 requires improvement because there has been a legacy of weak teaching at the school and consequently pupils do not achieve well.
- Teaching requires improvement. More-able pupils are not always given work which challenges them and takes them to the higher levels.
- Not all pupils know precisely what it is they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length for a range of purposes across different subject areas.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to post, are at the early stages of developing their skills hence leadership and management require improvement. They are not fully involved in checking performance in the subjects they lead or the quality of teaching and learning in order to identify priorities and bring about improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Children enter Reception Year with skills and knowledge below those expected of four-year-olds. They make good progress and have skills that are in line with the national average by the time they enter Year 1.
- Attainment has improved and is now in line with schools nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Behaviour has improved and is good. Pupils are eager to learn and have positive attitudes. They are polite and most pupils conduct themselves well in and around school.
- Leaders, managers and governors have made significant, positive changes so that this is now an improving school. Weak teaching has been eradicated and so pupils' achievement is improving.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and visited various classrooms for shorter periods of time. Two lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, senior leaders, and teachers with responsibilities for leading and managing subjects and key stages. Meetings were also held with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Results from 31 responses to the on-line questionnaires (Parent View) were taken into consideration by inspectors.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a number of documents including: the school’s data showing pupils’ current progress; documents relating to the school’s own view of its performance; the school improvement plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Pritiben Patel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Catherine Beeks

Additional Inspector

Peter McKay

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British background. A small number come from African backgrounds. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. Pupils' needs relate mainly to speech, language, communication, behaviour, and emotional and social difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average. (This is additional funding given to schools by the government to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school club run on the school premises which is managed independently. It is inspected separately and has its own inspection report.
- The executive headteacher took responsibility for the school from February 2012.
- There has been a significant change of staff since February 2012 and two thirds of teachers are new to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by improving the quality of teaching and learning from Year 1 to Year 6 so that:
 - more-able pupils in all lessons are given work which sufficiently challenges them and takes them to the higher levels
 - all pupils know precisely what it is they need to do to improve their work
 - pupils have greater opportunities to write at length for a range of purposes in different subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of the middle leaders so that they are fully involved in checking performance in their subjects in order to identify priorities and bring about improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Attainment at the end of Year 2 was average and significantly below average in Year 6 in the most recent national tests. There were various reasons for this dip in Year 6. When these pupils were in Year 2, their attainment was also significantly below average. Some of these pupils were disabled and had special educational needs, but their needs had not been effectively addressed. Due to regular monitoring of pupils' progress and the improvement in teaching for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is improving and is now average.
- Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 is average. Fewer pupils than nationally attained the expected levels in the phonics test (the sounds that letters make) at the end of Year 1 in 2012. This was due to weak teaching and pupils having many different teachers. There was a dip in attainment in reading in 2012 at the end of Year 6. There are now regular opportunities for pupils to read, staffing is now stable and teachers have had training in teaching reading skills. These have had a positive impact on pupils' attainment which current data show is now average in Year 6.
- Although improving, too few of the more-able pupils reach the higher levels in their work because they are not consistently challenged in all lessons. Their visits to the secondary school provide them with access to more challenging teaching. Their attainment is also improving due to the specific small group support they now receive.
- The performance of boys in 2012 was weaker in comparison to that of girls in all areas. Consequently, boys' writing is given importance and celebrated, better reading materials have been purchased to engage boys and there is an improved focus on practical activities in mathematics. As a result, the gap between the performance of girls and boys is closing. Boys are the equivalent of two terms behind in their learning in English, although there are no differences in their relative attainment in mathematics.
- There were gaps between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and those who are not. Due to regular tracking of the progress of all pupils and the support provided for those not making the expected progress, including those eligible for pupil premium, there are no significant differences in the performance of groups. Gaps are closing and currently, by the end of Year 6, pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding are one term behind in their learning in both English and mathematics compared to those pupils who are not entitled to this funding. The school works effectively to promote equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Children enter Reception Year with skills typically below expectations for their age. They make good progress because teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and children are given ample opportunity to develop their own interests. Both of these aspects have a positive impact on their learning. For example, children were very proud of the cave they had planned and built outdoors for the bear from the storybook, *'We're going on a Bear Hunt'*.
- From a range of individual starting points, the proportion of pupils now making expected and more than expected progress compares favourably with schools nationally.
- Parents have confidence that their children are learning effectively.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but it is still judged to require improvement because, although teachers plan to provide activities to meet the different abilities of pupils, this is not effective in all lessons. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson, pupils were learning about measurement and angles. The more-able pupils said the activities were, 'too easy' for them and they were able to work out answers very quickly. The lack of challenge prevents these pupils

from attaining the higher levels of which they are capable.

- Teachers set pupils targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy to help them progress to the next level. However, these targets are not always precisely clear about what it is pupils need to do to improve their work. This confuses pupils.
- In the strongest lessons, pupils are given opportunities to take an active role in their learning. This was demonstrated well in an upper Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson where pupils were asked to work in pairs and take either the role of 'student' or 'teacher'. The 'teacher' explained how to calculate the area of a shape to the 'student'. This helped to reinforce the learning effectively for pupils in that lesson.
- Staff have a good grasp of their subject and, as a result, they question pupils well and enhance their learning. Staff share effectively with pupils the, 'Steps to Success' so that pupils know how to complete activities.
- Support staff work effectively with disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in the classroom and provide additional support at other times. As a result, these pupils are making the same progress as their peers.
- Teachers are developing pupils' literacy skills, particularly in reading, more effectively as a result of training and professional development.
- Improving pupils' achievement in mathematics has been a focus for the whole school. Teachers assess pupils' skills weekly so that those working below expectations can be immediately identified and supported. This has had a positive impact on pupils' progress in mathematics and more pupils than nationally made expected progress in the national tests in 2012. This trend of improvement is continuing.
- Most parents say their children are taught effectively. Teachers have done much to improve the learning environment for pupils so that it is engaging and stimulating for them. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and this has a positive effect on learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy very much the opportunities to talk about their learning and they work with a good sense of maturity in pairs and groups in lessons. Most parents agree that behaviour is good and their children are happy. However, there were a small number of concerns raised by parents about behaviour. Inspection evidence shows that behaviour over time has improved significantly due to staff consistently applying systems to manage behaviour.
- There are a number of pupils in school who require additional support for their behaviour but the staff manage this well. Racism is not tolerated and as pupils say, 'Everybody gets on'. There have been a small number of exclusions linked to the behaviour of a few pupils. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue.
- Pupils have developed a strong understanding of what is right and wrong. For example, at lunchtime a younger pupil was upset because he was not happy with his packed lunch. A group of older pupils saw him and tried to comfort him. Pupils' good social and moral development is particularly evident in the way they conduct themselves as well as in the good relationships they have with their teachers.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and they have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe in different contexts. For example, they know about e-safety as well as what to do if there is a fire.
- Pupils talk highly of the responsibilities they have in school. The school council raise money for charity, for example, by running cake stalls. Peer mediators support other pupils to solve any problems they may have at lunchtimes.
- Attendance is in line with schools nationally.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school's leadership is beginning to secure improvements but is judged still to require improvement because middle leaders, most of whom are new to this role, are still developing their skills. They are not currently fully involved in checking teaching and learning in the areas they lead. They do not yet consistently identify priorities and bring about improvement, although they carry out pupil interviews and check teachers' planning.
- The curriculum overall meets the needs of pupils. Literacy and numeracy skills are developing in all subjects. However, writing is relatively weaker because pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to write at length for a range of purposes across different subject areas.
- The executive headteacher has taken decisive action since her arrival to improve the school. She has eradicated poor teaching and improved pupils' behaviour and staff morale. She has gained the confidence of governors, the local authority and most parents. Staff, too, are highly positive about her leadership. This was demonstrated well when one teacher, representing the views of many wrote, 'I feel we are collectively encouraged and excited by the future for this school.' Together, the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher are a strong team.
- The agenda for improvement has been set. The school's self-evaluation is honest and identifies not only all that has been done but all that is yet to be developed. The school development plan identifies the correct areas for improvement and is monitored to ensure targets are met.
- The performance of teachers has been a huge focus and most teachers are new. Teaching is monitored daily. Development points are identified for teachers and they are supported via coaching, training and the sharing of best practice.
- Partnerships with parents have improved. The school website has been developed to provide essential information and numerous parents are supporting both pupils and the school by listening to readers.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements.
- The local authority supports the school with improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable and have an effective understanding of data including those relating to pupils' progress. They keep up to date with training and contribute to school self-evaluation. They challenge when needed, for example, in relation to the management of staff as well as on the quality of teaching. They have an effective understanding about how pupil premium money is being used and the impact of this on eligible pupils' achievement. Finances are managed effectively.

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	107001
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	405073

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	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Warner
Headteacher	Joanne Eagleton (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2011
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