

South Milford Community Primary School

Sand Lane, South Milford, Leeds, North Yorkshire, LS25 5AU

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils are not doing well enough. Not all pupils reach the standards they are capable of in English and mathematics. Pupils of higher ability could be doing better.
- The rate at which pupils make progress is too variable between different groups of pupils. It is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage but for too long, has been slow in Key Stage 1 and 2.
- Pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding have not done as well as their peers.
- Teaching is inconsistent across the school and does not match the high quality of that in the Reception class. While teachers try to make learning interesting, work is not always adjusted so that it is just right for all abilities in each class.
- Marking is regular but some teachers do not give pupils enough advice on how they can improve their work. There are few examples of pupils responding to the teacher's comments.
- Homework is not used well enough to progress pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour has not been consistently good in recent years.
- School improvement planning does not focus enough on its intended impact on pupils' progress.
- Teachers who have responsibility for leading specific subjects do not have enough time to share good practice effectively.
- Leaders do not always make it clear to parents how they can be more actively involved in improving their children's learning and behaviour.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get an excellent start to their schooling because of the outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Attendance is high. Pupils are happy and say that they feel safe in school.
- The new team of senior leaders now has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Recent improvements are helping to improve teaching and pupils' behaviour.
- Governors are determined to rapidly improve the school and now have sufficient capacity to do so.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine lessons, two of which were seen together with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and learning areas.
- Separate meetings were conducted with governors, staff, senior leaders, an adviser from the local authority and two groups of pupils. The inspectors talked to pupils during lessons, listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of their work.
- The 53 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's own survey of parents' views were taken into account. The lead inspector also spoke with a small number of parents and looked at some written responses sent in by parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A number of documents were reviewed. These included the school's development plan, its self-evaluation report, information about pupils' current progress, arrangements for safeguarding and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance. Reports from the local authority about the school's effectiveness were also examined.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Martin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school, with one mixed-age class for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is much lower than average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (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 by the local authority).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There is a privately managed breakfast and after-school club for pupils on site which was not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that teachers use the information they have to plan work that is at the right level of difficulty for pupils, particularly for the more-able pupils, in each lesson
 - tailoring support for pupils with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium, ensuring that they achieve at least as well as their peers
 - making sure that pupils take notice of the teachers' marking, make corrections and use this information in their future work.
- Raise standards and increase the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - making sure that pupils receive the same high quality teaching as those in the Reception class
 - improving the effectiveness of homework to make it more appropriate for the age of pupils.
- Strengthen leadership and management in order to continue the school's rate of improvement by:
 - sharpening school improvement planning to include measureable improvements in pupils' progress
 - sharing and replicating the most successful aspects of teaching and assessment from across the school so that there is greater consistency across all classes
 - providing sufficient time to enable teachers with responsibility for leading specific subjects to monitor teaching in their subjects and raise standards
 - finding ways to seek parents' views so that they are able to play a more active part in helping to improve their children's learning and behaviour.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children start school with skills and experience that are below those that are typical for their age. They make good progress because they are carefully guided and inspired through some outstanding teaching, to work and play imaginatively together. Children benefit from the effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) which is ensuring that they quickly develop their skills in reading and writing.
- The school has a particularly strong reading culture and pupils spoke enthusiastically of their keenness to read. The results of the 2012, Year 1 national reading check on pupils' knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) were above national averages, particularly for girls and the small number of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium.
- Despite this positive start, standards at the end of Year 2 have been low in recent years and although they are now improving, the most-able pupils make slower than expected progress, especially in writing. Too few pupils at each key stage reach the highest levels in English and mathematics because work is not always at the right level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities and ages.
- Teachers now track pupils' progress more closely to ensure that they make more rapid progress in Key Stage 2. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 6 and the school's new monitoring system show that, as a result of much improved teaching, almost all pupils are working at the level expected for their age and a greater proportion of pupils are likely to reach the higher Level 5 in their recent national tests.
- The progress and achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been identified by the school as in need of improvement. Changes in the organisation of support in this area are ensuring that pupils receive more timely and effective support from individual teachers in addition to that currently provided by teaching assistants.
- Although the school has a homework policy, it is not effective in progressing pupils' learning, particularly in Key Stage 1. A number of parents have expressed concern that their children are not receiving appropriate homework for their age.
- The school now has well-targeted strategies to support the pupils for whom it receives the pupil premium funding. In 2012, standards for pupils known to be eligible for this additional funding was about two terms behind their classmates in English and five terms behind in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that this gap has narrowed quickly and data demonstrate that more pupils are now achieving the standards expected.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although much of the teaching seen in the lessons observed by the inspectors was good, over time teaching has not been good enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The school has recognised this and implemented robust processes to monitor its quality. As a result, it is demonstrating some improvement, but inconsistencies remain.
- In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils. They plan interesting activities which stretch pupils and make them think. In one lesson, Year 4 pupils of all abilities were highly motivated by the opportunity to use a range of interesting resources to set themselves a challenge. They successfully investigated a combination of ways to calculate specific numbers which allowed each pupil to access the work in line with their ability and to make good progress. Their behaviour was excellent because they fully enjoyed what they were learning.
- This approach is not used or shared widely enough across the school. Teachers do not always use the information they have to plan work which is at the right level for pupils of all abilities. More-able pupils are not always given work that is hard enough and the recent strategies to improve the support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not

had time to be fully effective.

- The teaching of reading is effective and demonstrates teachers' good subject knowledge. In Reception, for example, children made outstanding progress in developing their understanding of phonics because activities captured their imagination and enabled them to apply their new learning to writing difficult sentences. They were so absorbed in their task that they failed to notice the newly hatched chick whose birth they had been awaiting with excitement!
- Although teachers discuss pupils' work with them and marking is regular, written feedback in pupils' books is not always informative and prevents pupils from always knowing how to improve. Pupils are rarely required to respond to teachers' comments to enable them to progress even further.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to enable learning support assistants to provide helpful specialist support to identified pupils. These pupils are now making good progress in lessons. This reflects the school's promotion of equality of opportunity. However, there is still more work to be done to ensure the more-able pupils have the same equal opportunity.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils are happy and they are rarely absent from school. They have good opportunities to participate in thoughtful assemblies when they sing and pray together. This effectively promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at school and know what they can do to help keep themselves safe. Most pupils have a good understanding of the nature of different types of bullying and are confident that incidents will be dealt with swiftly. Pupils say that behaviour is now consistently good in their lessons and any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by their teachers. Indeed, much good behaviour was evident in lessons and around the school during the inspection.
- The majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning and take pride in their work. On occasion, when teaching is not of the highest quality, pupils do not always show mature attitudes to their work and their books contain work which is not presented to a high standard.
- There have been some serious incidents recorded during the past few years which the school has worked hard to prevent from happening again. The recently revised behaviour policy is being applied consistently and is helping pupils to have a very clear understanding of how to behave well.
- A few parents do not believe that the school manages behaviour effectively and express some concerns about bullying. Inspectors found that these concerns related to a small number of specific incidents which overall the school has dealt with effectively.
- The senior leadership team works effectively with specialist agencies to provide high quality support for pupils who have behavioural or emotional difficulties. As a result, there have been few fixed-term exclusions.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as pupils' achievement and teaching have declined in quality since the previous inspection. Leaders in the past have not been sufficiently focused on ensuring that underperformance is tackled quickly in order to ensure good or better teaching and pupil progress.
- A new management structure has been put in place to provide more expertise in the checking of the quality of the school's work. Leaders now have a clear understanding of what is going well and what the school needs to do to improve further. Other developments include a revised system of staff performance management appraisal and improved marking and assessment procedures.
- School improvement planning, however, does not fully reflect the school's now clearly stated ambition to raise achievement. The plan has the right priorities but does not focus them sharply

enough on increasing the proportion of pupils making good progress in all subjects. Teachers who have responsibility for leading specific subjects do not always have sufficient time to review the quality of teaching and assessment in their subject areas. This prevents them from bringing about further improvement by sharing any effective practice across the school.

- The curriculum provides appropriate topics for pupils to learn new skills and knowledge and they generally enjoy what they study. Different subjects are brought together in themes that interest and motivate the pupils, promote their personal development and include opportunities for them to learn about different faiths and cultures. A range of visits, visitors and clubs enhances the experiences for pupils and additional funding is used well to make it possible for all to attend.
- Staff enjoy mainly good relationships with parents. However, the school does not always provide parents with clear information about the work of the school or how they might help with their children's learning and behaviour.
- The local authority is providing strong support to enable the new senior leadership team to improve the school and address the issues raised at the previous inspection. This shows that the school has sufficient capacity to bring about further improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Until recently, governors did not monitor the work of the school rigorously enough, relying too much on the headteacher for information about teachers' and pupils' performance. This has improved and they are now fully aware of previous achievement issues and are working to secure improvement. They are determined to rapidly improve all aspects of the school's work and have undertaken training to better understand pupil progress information. This is helping to ensure that they are aware of how effective teaching is across the school. They are involved in the new appraisal process in terms of linking classroom practice to pay awards; however, this is not yet developed into an overview of the whole process. Governors now understand how the funding provided by the pupil premium is used and realise that in the past they have not studied its impact closely enough. They monitor the school's financial resources well. They ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements and their relevant committees make sure that risk assessment and health and safety procedures are up to date and adhered to.

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	121418
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	412962

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	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Fuller
Headteacher	Sue Atkinson
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2009
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