

Spinney Hill Primary School and Community Centre

Ventnor Street, Leicester, LE5 5EZ

Inspection dates 19-20 September 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		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

- Although pupils reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6, teaching in Key Stage 2 is not good enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress, especially in writing.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do and fail to ensure that work is at the right level to move learning on at a good pace.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils in Key Stage 2 at the early stages of learning English make good enough progress to catch up with others.
- The marking of pupils' work is variable. It does not consistently help pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve.
- Teachers' performance management targets do not always have a sharp enough focus on the progress pupils make.
- Information on pupils' achievement is not used well enough by teachers to plan for future learning.
- Leaders, including governors, have not addressed weaknesses in teaching quickly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 make good progress and achieve increasingly well.
- The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is good and is helping pupils to improve their reading and writing.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils behave well and say they feel safe at school. They have good attitudes to learning and enjoy their lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The leaders and managers are developing plans to improve both teaching and learning. Actions taken so far demonstrate that they can improve further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and saw 40 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 23 teachers. Three of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Shorter visits were also made to other lessons.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, reports from the local authority, records from meetings held by the governing body, and policies about keeping children safe.
- The inspection team members also examined the work in pupils' current and previous books and on display around the school and a range of data about their progress.
- The inspectors heard groups of pupils read.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, senior leaders and a group of governors. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- There were not enough responses to the on-line Parent View survey to be viewed. The inspectors took account of comments made by parents and carers they spoke to at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in questionnaires by 51 members of staff.

Inspection team

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Graham Marshall	Additional Inspector
Susan Hickerton	Additional Inspector
Steve Nelson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils leaving the school at the end of Key Stage 1 and joining at the start of Key Stage 2 is higher than found in other schools.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well above average. The school is admitting increasing numbers of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, who are at the very early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus, or a statement of special educational needs are all below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The headteacher joined the school at the beginning of this term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and increase rates of progress in Key Stage 2 by:
 - using the pupil premium funding more effectively to support pupils' progress in writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils who are in the early stages of learning English build on their early success and make the best possible progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - developing pupils' competency in punctuation, grammar and sentence construction and then planning opportunities to apply this in their writing.
- Make sure that all teaching is at least good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers make good use of assessment information to plan tasks that are set at the right level of difficulty for pupils of different abilities so that learning moves at a rapid pace
 - pupils' work is marked so that they understand and can talk about what they need to do next to improve.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school development plan sets out clearly how the school will know whether it is being successful and how it will check on progress
 - teachers' targets have a sharp focus on the impact of their teaching on the progress pupils make.

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 do not achieve as well as they should in English and mathematics. Recent test results show that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has fallen to below average. Too few pupils reach the higher levels compared to pupils nationally. Progress slows as pupils enter Key Stage 2 and, as a result, not enough pupils are making the progress over time of which they are capable, including the most able.
- During Key Stage 2, an increasing number of pupils at an early stage of learning English are joining the school. At first they make rapid progress from their often low starting points because of the support they receive. However, teachers do not build on this good start. As a result, these pupils do not make as much progress as they should and their attainment lags behind that of the others.
- Children enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and experiences below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and language development. They make good progress and reach a good level of development across all areas of learning. In particular, they develop good early literacy skills, ensuring they are ready for Year 1.
- The school is particularly effective in teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) and results in the 2012 national phonic screening show that Year 1 pupils achieved much higher than national figures. This performance has been maintained in 2013.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and attainment is improving in all areas, particularly in reading. By the end of Year 2 pupils read fluently and with expression and are writing at length.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in writing are inconsistent. Handwriting and presentation are generally good but there are weaknesses in pupils' grammar and punctuation and these prevent them expressing themselves fluently and clearly. This is because teaching to address these weaknesses has not been systematically planned and checked over time. Pupils have some well-planned opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects and this is contributing to their progress.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional support from teaching assistants to develop pupils' reading skills. The overall attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium in 2012 was the equivalent of one term behind their classmates in English and two terms behind in mathematics. The school's current information shows that the gaps between their performance and that of other pupils are closing.
- Lesson observations, school information and samples of pupils' work show that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress over time to other pupils.
- The school is using the primary school sports grant to fund a specialist teacher to develop staff expertise and skills. It is too early to judge the impact of this on pupils' skills achievement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been good enough to ensure all pupils make good progress, particularly early on in Key Stage 2. Expectations have not been high enough.

- Teachers do not always use information on pupils' progress well to ensure that planned activities build on and extend what pupils already know and are able to do. As a result, work is sometimes too easy or does not meet pupils' needs, and there are gaps in pupils' learning, particularly in writing and mathematics, as they move through the school. This is particularly the case for pupils who have joined the school in Key Stage 2 at the early stages of learning English.
- In the most effective practice, teachers plan engaging tasks which build rapidly on what pupils already know. They question effectively to check pupils understanding and challenge them further. Imaginative activities are used to capture pupils' interest, such as in a Year 2 art lesson when pupils listened to classical music to stimulate them to paint in the style of a particular artist. The good teaching which exists provides the school with the opportunity to share this practice to the benefit of all pupils.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They also make an important contribution to the often rapid progress made by pupils who are new to learning English when they join the school.
- There are some examples of very effective marking, but this is not consistent across the school or between subjects. Too often teachers do not provide precise guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are good. This inspires pupils to behave well and enjoy learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all pupils, particularly disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are new to learning English are included and this helps them to develop confidence.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss their learning and share ideas with a partner. This makes a good contribution to the development of their social and communication skills. In a Year 6 lesson, skilful questioning by the teacher supported pupils in developing a good understanding of the characters in their class reading book. They then enjoyed discussing the characters' thoughts and feelings.
- Reading is generally taught well, building on the skills pupils have gained in matching letters and sounds. Older pupils show a good understanding and enjoyment of what they read, saying, 'When I read I feel like I'm in a movie.' The extra help for pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding has begun to make an impact on their reading attainment.
- In the calm and purposeful environment of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children respond very well to the range of interesting and challenging activities planned for them. They play and explore with involvement and enthusiasm. They can sustain their concentration for extended periods, such as when they listen to the story of The Three Bears or count as they fill their watering cans. Adults work very well together, focusing on developing pupils' language and social skills at every opportunity. This good practice extends into Key Stage 1.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school provides a caring and supportive environment where pupils behave well and show respect for themselves and others. Pupils respond well to the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural support and guidance they receive. They develop positive attitudes to learning, cooperating well together in lessons and around school. They say that bullying is rare but when it does happen, it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of keeping themselves safe, whether that be moving around

the two-storey building or when using the internet. They say, 'We feel safe here.'

- Routines are well established from the start and staff have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. On a few occasions, when work is not matched carefully enough to pupils' needs, they lose concentration, limiting their progress.
- Pupils joining the school in Key Stage 2 at the early stages of learning English benefit from a warm welcome, good support for their social and emotional development, and many opportunities to become familiar with their new language.
- Almost all parents, carers and staff think that behaviour is good at the school.
- Attendance is just below the national average. It has improved over time and the school works closely with parents to ensure they understand the importance of regular attendance. Pupils are punctual to school.
- The school follows up concerns about pupils' wellbeing with vigour. It works closely with a range of different agencies to effectively support individual pupils and their families.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and has quickly gained the confidence of senior leaders and other staff. Although there have been numerous changes to the leadership of the school over the past year, staff with leadership responsibilities are focused on improvement and demonstrate that the school has capacity to improve further.
- The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has led to continued improvements in children's achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The school's analysis of its own performance has identified that it requires further improvement. Priorities are accurate but actions in the school improvement plan are not precise or measurable enough. As a result, senior leaders and the governing body are not able to ensure that all aspects of teaching and learning improve as quickly as they should.
- The school collects a range of data about pupils' performance; but this information is not yet shared effectively enough with teachers so that they understand the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress.
- The quality of teaching is checked by school leaders and guidance and support are given to improve teachers' skills. As a result teaching is improving and none is inadequate. However, until recently this improvement has been too slow.
- Although all teachers have targets, these have not been linked closely enough to the progress pupils make and progression on the salary scale has not been sufficiently linked to performance.
- High quality displays and work in pupils' books reflect a broad and balanced range of subjects and activities and provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons, particularly French. Occasionally, the curriculum is not well planned enough in Key Stage 2 to ensure that pupils systematically develop basic skills in writing. The inclusion of topics, such as the sinking of the Titanic, engages

pupils' interest and they work with enthusiasm.

- The pupil premium funding has been used to support eligible pupils improve their reading skills. While this has been successful in the closing the gap in achievement, it has been at the expense of supporting pupils' better progress in writing and mathematics.
- The school ensures that pupils are offered a balanced and healthy lunchtime menu. This has been a particular focus for the work of governors over the past year.
- The local authority has provided additional support. This has helped the school through a period of transition and led to a clearer focus on areas to improve. Work with other local schools has also provided access to training and a sharing of good practice.
- Safeguarding meets all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a range of expertise to their role and some governors visit the school on a regular basis, providing useful reports. However, these are not always linked to the school's identified priorities for improvement and so do not provide opportunities to check on how well the school is progressing towards achieving them. The Chair has a good knowledge of the school based on many years of experience. Governors are aware of how the school is performing in comparison to other schools and gather information on how the school is improving the quality of teaching. They know that teachers' progression on the salary scale is linked to their performance management targets; but have not reviewed the level of challenge of targets set. They know that pupil premium funding has been spent on additional adults to support pupils' progress in reading; but are less aware of the detail of its impact. They undertake regular training to ensure that they meet statutory responsibilities, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

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	120084
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	429563

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	663
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Billy Bhamra
Headteacher	Andrew Moore-Stow
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2009
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