

Packmoor Primary School

Carr Street, Packmoor, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST7 4SP

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Inadequate | 4 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Inadequate | 4 |
| Quality of teaching | | Inadequate | 4 |
| 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 has serious weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Pupils start school with skills, knowledge and understanding similar to those expected for their age, but by the end of Year 6 their attainment is below average, particularly in reading and writing.
- From 2009 to 2012, attainment by the end of Year 2 was significantly below average; consequently, pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 is also inadequate.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Too much teaching requires improvement and a small minority is still inadequate. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the targets they are set for learning are low.
- Teachers do not adapt tasks in lessons well enough to provide work that is appropriately challenging, particularly for the most-able and middle-ability pupils.
- Teachers do not check carefully enough on pupils' handwriting and spelling. Too many pupils struggle with their reading because their reading books are not matched to their ability.
- Teachers do not use information on pupils' achievements well enough to plan future lessons which fully meet pupils' learning needs so that they make the progress they should.
- Teachers do not always ask the necessary questions to check on and to deepen pupils' understanding of their work.
- Not all teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to check and improve their work in response to the comments in their marking.
- The drive to improve the quality of teaching has been hampered by many staff changes. As a result, leaders have yet to ensure that the teaching is strong enough to ensure pupils make progress at a good rate.

The school has the following strengths

- Since her appointment, the headteacher, along with other senior leaders and governors, has taken decisive action to deal with weak teaching. As a result, pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching are improving.
- Governors have improved their effectiveness. They have an accurate understanding of the school's performance and tackle weaknesses in teaching with rigour.
- Pupils feel safe. They behave well and show high levels of respect for staff and for each other. They have very positive attitudes to learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 parts of lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. Five short visits to lessons were also made.
- Inspectors took account of 72 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to a questionnaire for parents recently distributed by the school.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke to pupils at break and lunchtimes as well as at the school's breakfast club.
- Discussions took place with four members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, the school's plans for improvement, its procedures for checking the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Pupils' books were checked by inspectors and they listened to some pupils read.

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Clarice Nelson-Rowe, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Patricia Cope | Additional Inspector |
| Paul Latham | Additional Inspector |

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- This primary school is much larger than average.
- An average proportion of pupils is supported by the pupil premium. (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 of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast club operates on the school site and is managed by the governing body.
- There have been changes to the staffing in the last four terms and several staff have left. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher took up post in March 2012. In September 2013, three new teachers took up permanent posts.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve teaching so that it is good or better by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and setting pupils more challenging targets
 - improving teachers' use of assessments of pupils' work to check each pupil's level of understanding and to provide future work closely matched to their needs, particularly to challenge the most able and ensure middle-ability pupils do not fall behind
 - improving the quality of teachers' questioning in order to check and develop pupils' knowledge of key words, to encourage pupils to explain their understanding of their work and to deepen their understanding of what they are learning
 - ensuring that all teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to check and improve their work in response to teachers' comments in marking.
- Raise the attainment of all pupils so they reach their potential and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, and particularly in Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring that pupils are always given reading books that are appropriate for their ability, particularly for those who struggle with reading
 - making sure that adults check carefully that pupils understand what they are reading
 - making sure teachers use evidence of all pupils' previous written work, including their handwriting and spelling, to plan future lessons and make sure that pupils learn from any mistakes
 - improving the teaching of the sounds that letter make so that pupils' understanding improves, particularly in Key Stage 1

- developing pupils’ knowledge of key mathematical vocabulary so that they are able to use it confidently when describing how to solve problems.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that the systems for checking and improving the quality of teaching are rigorously applied so as to speed up pupils’ progress
 - continuing to check that staff training is helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- In 2012, and for the previous two years, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was significantly below average. Their skills and knowledge when they join the school were broadly typical for their age. In Years 1 and 2, therefore, pupils underachieve significantly. Similarly, between Years 3 and 6, too many pupils make inadequate progress in English and mathematics.
- Standards of attainment across most of the school are starting to improve. Work seen in pupils' books and in lessons, together with the school's information on pupils' progress, confirms this improving picture. In 2013, for example, the attainment of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils improved overall in reading, writing and mathematics, but remained below the national average. However, for Year 2 pupils, writing was close to the national average, the best result since 2009.
- Previous staff changes and poor teaching in some year groups have had a negative impact on pupils' achievements over time and, as a result, pupils have not reached the standards expected nationally. In 2012, for example, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics was significantly below average overall. This means that pupils are not prepared well enough for their next stage of their education. In particular, the most-able pupils and those of middle ability make too little progress.
- Pupils' achievement in English is inadequate. In writing, in some lessons, pupils rub out their written work and move onto another activity before the teacher checks their standard of work. As a result, teachers do not have a record of what their pupils know and can do. Too many opportunities to address pupils' misconceptions, for example, of different spellings of words that sound the same, and to address weaknesses in pupils' handwriting skills, are missed. Consequently, teachers are unable to plan future lessons to target the specific gaps and weaknesses in pupils' skills and understanding.
- Pupils underachieve in reading. Pupils' reading books are not matched well enough to their varying needs and abilities. This means that some pupils find them too easy, while others, particularly those who struggle with their reading, find them too hard. Younger pupils do not develop their early reading skills well enough. In Year 1 in 2012, not enough pupils reached the expected standard in a national check of their understanding of the link between letters and the sounds they make. Although in 2013 more pupils reached the expected standard, this is not yet enough improvement given their starting points. Teachers do not question pupils well enough to check pupils understand what they are reading.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are generally stronger than their literacy skills, particularly in Key Stage 2. This is because, in mathematics lessons, pupils are grouped according to their ability and teaching meets their varying needs more precisely. However, their progress is not yet good. Some pupils do not yet have a clear enough understanding of key mathematical vocabulary to describe accurately how they solve problems. This hinders their progress.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception Years generally make the progress expected of them. They behave well and enjoy a good range of opportunities to extend their literacy and numeracy skills. However, sometimes adults miss opportunities to ask children questions and encourage them to explain what they are doing. The most-able children are not always encouraged to work on more challenging activities.
- Overall, the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is inadequate because the quality of teaching and support provided is too variable. Sometimes, their progress in reading is better because of good support from teaching assistants. The school's most recent assessment information and inspection evidence show that these pupils are starting to make better progress because of better teaching and more sharply focused intervention and support.
- The achievement of pupils supported through the pupil premium is variable. For some it is good, but overall it requires improvement. In 2012, the attainment of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in Year 6 was in line with similar pupils nationally. Even so, their

attainment in reading and writing was about one term behind their classmates. The school's current assessment data and inspection evidence indicate that these supported pupils are now making better progress than other pupils in school and the attainment gap is closing even further, particularly in reading. This indicates some success in promoting equality of opportunity. The use of the pupil-premium funding has enabled this group to benefit from extra support, including through the breakfast club and one-to-one tuition.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Although some teaching is good and the quality of teaching is improving, too much still requires improvement and a minority is inadequate. This means that it is not yet strong enough to help pupils quickly overcome their poor progress and weaker learning of previous years.
- Although teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement are increasing and the targets they set for pupils' learning are more challenging, in some cases they are still too low. This does not help pupils to catch up quickly enough to achieve the levels of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not always check each pupil's level of understanding well enough to be able to readjust work during lessons or to provide future work closely matched to their needs and challenging for all. As a result, not enough of the most-able pupils reach the levels they are capable of and middle-ability pupils sometimes fall behind.
- Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to ask questions that check and develop pupils' knowledge of key words, encourage pupils to explain their understanding of their work and to deepen their understanding of what they are learning. Marking is improving strongly but remains variable in quality. Not all teachers enable pupils to improve their work by providing good opportunities for them to respond to their marking.
- Some staff have improved greatly the way they plan lessons and as a result are now providing a much better range of activities that capture pupils' interest more effectively. This is why, for example; writing in Year 2 in 2013 improved strongly. Teaching support assistants are now providing more effective support for individuals and groups of pupils. Recent appointments of new teachers are also helping to strengthen the quality of teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Despite some remaining weaknesses in teaching, the behaviour of most pupils in lessons is good. This is because they have a very good understanding of the right ways to behave and are clear about the school's systems to manage behaviour. School records and inspection evidence show that behaviour over time is also good, including behaviour in the playground and dining hall. Disruption to learning in lessons is uncommon although a very small number of pupils occasionally lose concentration, for example, when teachers do not provide work that is challenging enough.
- Pupils have very positive and mature attitudes to learning. They enjoy kind and friendly relationships with adults and each other. Pupils relish the opportunities to take initiative. For example, in lessons, they enjoy deciding for themselves if they need to move to another group to get extra support from the teacher or to work things out for themselves. They also enjoy checking on and improving their own work when the teacher explains clearly what the content and quality of their work should be like.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is average. Pupils say that they enjoy being a part of the school. Older pupils are proud of helping younger children to improve their reading, as it makes them feel valued and helps them to make a positive contribution to school life.
- Pupils feel very safe and free from bullying. They show good awareness of different types of bullying. A large majority of parents who responded to Parent View and to the school's most

recent survey judge that their children are happy and safe.

- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep safe on the internet and how to safely handle equipment they may use at school and home.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school's leaders have yet to ensure that teaching is good enough to make up for pupils' previous underachievement and to rapidly raise standards. A small minority of inadequate teaching is yet to be dealt with. However, since the arrival of the headteacher, strong teamwork has been established among staff and governors.
- The work of senior staff and subject leaders has strengthened. By working alongside other training organisations, including other schools with outstanding practice, school leaders at all levels are coaching others more effectively in improving teaching in their subject areas. As a result, the pace of improvement is accelerating.
- School leaders show that they are capable of continuing to improve the school's effectiveness. Good standards of behaviour are being maintained and improved upon. The learning environment has been improved and is vibrant and welcoming. More pupils are coming to school regularly and standards are rising, particularly in writing.
- Better leadership of teaching by senior and middle leaders is helping to strengthen the quality of teaching. There are firmly established routines for checking teachers' effectiveness. More rigorous monitoring of classroom practice, for example, as well as improved actions by subject leaders to check on performance in their subject has already addressed some weaknesses in teaching. Senior leaders and governors have taken difficult decisions to deal with teachers who have not risen to the challenge of having higher expectations of pupils' achievement. All teachers know that they are accountable for pupils' progress and this, too, is checked regularly. Leaders know that their next steps are to check even more carefully and regularly that staff training is helping to improve teaching quickly.
- School leaders and staff share a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know what must be done to improve the school's effectiveness.
- The school's survey of parents' views indicates that parents believe the school supports effectively pupils' emotional development and physical well-being. Leaders have ensured that the new primary sports fund is being used to good effect to enhance the quality of coaching in a range of sports and to develop teachers' skills in teaching physical education lessons. As a result, pupils' confidence, health and well-being are well promoted.
- The local authority has recently provided some helpful support, such as to develop the quality of teaching by referring the school to training organisations that can support them further. In the past, however, support has not been effective enough.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not been effective in the past. Since the appointment of the headteacher, however, they have renewed their commitment and expertise in driving improvements. As a result of training on understanding information on pupils' progress, governors now have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of what the weaknesses are in teaching and achievement. They are taking action to tackle pupils' underachievement. They are keen to improve further and have started to monitor the impact of their own contribution to the school.
 - Governors have good oversight of the school's finances including the pupil-premium funding. They have recently taken decisive action to tackle the underperformance of some teachers. They are now moving towards a system that ensures a close match between those staff progressing through pay scales and their performance in the classroom. The governing body is effective in ensuring that the school meets all of its duties in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 123979 |
| Local authority | Stoke-on-Trent |
| Inspection number | 426985 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 450 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Stephen Mansell |
| Headteacher | Sharon May |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6 March 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01782 234544 |
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