

Armthorpe Tranmoor Primary School

Tranmoor Lane, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 3DB

Inspection dates

9–10 October 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

- Achievement is not consistent at Key Stage 2. In 2013, Year 6 pupils made less than the expected progress in reading. In the previous year they made insufficient progress in mathematics. As a result, overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average.
- Not enough teaching is consistently good or better.
- On occasion, tasks do not provide sufficient challenge for the full range of abilities. In a few lessons, weakness in the planning of practical activities results in too much teacher talk. The teaching of guided reading is not good enough.
- The new and improved system of marking and feedback does not consistently guide and prompt pupils' response to teachers' comments.
- The new leadership has not sustained and directed professional development for long enough, or applied it to enough aspects of teaching, to secure consistently good teaching and progress by pupils throughout Key Stage 2.

The school has the following strengths

- It is an improving school. The new headteacher has raised expectations and improved the monitoring of pupils' progress and the marking of pupils' work.
- Teaching has improved, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and standards at Key Stage 1 have improved.
- Behaviour and safety are good.
- Governors are committed, ambitious and monitor the school well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 part lessons, including two joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, groups of teachers and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The headteacher was absent from school during the inspection. The deputy headteacher was also unavoidably absent on the second day of the inspection.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils from each year group and talked informally with others in lessons and around the school. Inspectors also listened to them read.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised including the school improvement plan, evidence about the work of the governing body, data relating to pupils' attainment and progress, and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 41 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire, Parent View, and 31 staff questionnaires. Conversations were also held with parents bringing their children to school.

Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Phil Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Fisher

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Armthorpe Tranmoor is a larger than average primary school. Its Nursery makes part-time provision for three- and four-year-olds.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. (The pupil premium is additional government 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 proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- In 2012, the school exceeded the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A new headteacher took up post in September 2012.
- The school provides extended childcare: Leapfrogs provides breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs. Lily pads provides day care for children aged two to three. The childcare is managed by the governing body and inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement at Key Stage 2 by ensuring that:
 - activities are more consistently and precisely matched to the range of abilities in the class, including those with special educational needs
 - teachers promptly engage pupils in practical and challenging activities which enable them to work independently
 - a wider range of strategies for reading enable pupils to better understand and interpret texts and extend their vocabulary
 - teachers provide more consistent guidance on pupils' next steps and make sure that pupils respond more frequently to teachers' marking.
- Further improve professional development by:
 - applying existing good practice to weaker aspects of teaching and learning
 - adopting and adapting models of outstanding practice from other schools, especially for the teaching of reading.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils have not made consistently good progress over Key Stage 2.
- In 2013, Year 6 test results in reading were below average because pupils did not make enough progress. Leaders' analysis shows that pupils did not read fluently enough or have a wide enough vocabulary to complete the test questions.
- In 2012, Year 6 pupils made less progress than expected in mathematics compared with their starting points at Key Stage 1. This was due to pupils' weakness in applying their knowledge to investigating and solving problems. The introduction of an additional daily practical session in mathematics and more practical resources in lessons improved progress across the school this year. As a result, the Key Stage 2 results in mathematics are in line with the 2013 provisional national average.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in writing are in line with national averages. However, fewer pupils than average make more than expected progress. In the last year, imaginative and practical devices have been introduced to stimulate interest and motivation to write. Expectations of how much pupils can write have been raised, targets for language skills have been defined more precisely and pupils are receiving more feedback about their writing. School data indicate that current progress in writing has improved in all year groups. Pupils' handwriting is generally well formed and well presented.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, in 2012, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics improved from below average to average. This trend of improvement was sustained in 2013. The proportion of six-year-olds that met the required standard in letters and sounds was above average in 2012 and was similar in 2013. The range of books has been extended and enables early readers to practise their knowledge of letters and sounds. Over the last year, pupils at Key Stage 1 have benefited from increased opportunities to read with adult volunteers. For example, pupils eligible for the pupil premium read every day with an adult.
- Trained teaching assistants provide well-focused support for weaker readers and for those with weaker basic skills in number. Pupils targeted for this short-term support, including those eligible for the pupil premium, make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the short-term catch-up programmes for basic skills but overall their progress is inconsistent across the year groups.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium perform nearly as well as other pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Key Stage 1, the gap in performance closed from 2012 to 2013 and this group of pupils attained in line with national averages. At Key Stage 2, the gap narrowed in mathematics but widened in reading.
- Pupils enter Nursery with attainment that is well below what is expected for their age. Although some benefited from day care before entering Nursery, this was often for a short time. In the last year, more two- and three-year-olds attended day care, and for more time, and this strengthened the personal, social, emotional and physical development of pupils entering the Nursery this term and their readiness for learning.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to the good provision. By the beginning of Reception, pupils have increased their independence, self-confidence and spoken language skills. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage an average proportion reach the expected level of development. However, a low proportion exceeds this level.
- In the last year, school targets for progress have been increased and pupils' progress has been monitored more closely. This has contributed to more rapid rates of progress across the school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because guided reading is not always sufficiently well planned to ensure that pupils enjoy reading and actively engage in understanding and interpreting texts. In a few lessons, tasks are not matched to the different levels of ability which restricts the opportunities for some pupils to demonstrate their skills or to tackle more challenging tasks. On occasion, too much teacher talk and closed questions are linked to weakness in the quality and range of planned practical activity. In these lessons, pupils sometimes become distracted and lack concentration.
- Feedback and marking are showing greater consistency since the introduction of a new policy at the beginning of 2013. Marking now provides specific comments on what has been achieved and the next steps. However, there is some variability in the guidance provided on the next steps and the frequency with which pupils respond to teachers' comments.
- In the good and better lessons, teachers establish a purposeful and calm context for learning and communicate clear expectations. Lessons build carefully on previous learning, provide well-structured and well-resourced practical tasks and sign-post clearly what pupils are aiming to achieve in future lessons. Teaching assistants are well-prepared and work flexibly to support individuals and small groups.
- In these stronger lessons, pupils work independently with good levels of concentration. They write with a clear purpose and at length, using adventurous vocabulary and extending their grammar. Pupils benefit from assessing their own use of language. Effective use is made of individual pieces of pupils' writing or art work to demonstrate successful learning and to check understanding.
- The morning mathematics sessions provide a wide range of engaging tasks for all classes to practise mathematical skills, making good use of information and communication technology.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults provide good models of spoken language and engage well with pupils. Reading is taught well. Positive relationships promote good learning and behaviour. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn through play, take risks and explore.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school has a positive ethos. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they have positive relationships with each other and adults. They are consistently polite and friendly, respond quickly to instructions and are willing to cooperate. Pupils, parents and staff agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils appreciate the new reward systems and the 'special mention assemblies' which acknowledge the achievements of individual pupils.
- Bullying is very rare and pupils know what to do if they have concerns. They say that they are kept safe. Staff ensure that parents and pupils understand any risks outside school or on the internet.
- Staff respond well to pupils with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties and work closely with other agencies and parents. A few pupils were excluded temporarily in the past year. Attendance is broadly average and most pupils are punctual.
- Behaviour is managed well. On occasion, attitudes to learning are less positive in lessons where teaching requires improvement.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because overall achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 has not improved. The teaching of reading has not secured good progress.

Improvements in teaching, which have been successful in some areas, are not consistent enough across teachers or in some aspects of subject teaching.

- The new headteacher has galvanised staff to take a more ambitious and rigorous approach to improving teaching and learning. There is early evidence of impact in the improvement in mathematics, better in-year progress by pupils and some improvements in teaching and assessment. A more positive environment has been created with popular rewards and recognition of pupils' success.
- She has raised the expectations of staff by increasing pupils' targets for progress. Pupils know and understand their targets. A new system for checking the progress of individuals and groups enables senior leaders and teachers to focus clearly on actions to tackle any underachievement. This also reflects the school's commitment to ensuring every pupil has an equal opportunity.
- A revised performance management procedure demands stronger evidence of targets met and individual targets are aligned more closely to the priorities of the school improvement plan. Lesson observation takes place regularly and feedback from senior leaders is accurate, detailed and constructive. However, the inspection team observed more teaching requiring improvement and less outstanding teaching than observed by school leaders.
- Individual cases of weaker teaching have been tackled effectively by team teaching and external support from another school. This resulted in improved teaching. Newly qualified teachers have been well supported. However, some aspects of teaching requiring improvement have not yet been targeted and rectified through professional development and performance management. The school's review of its own performance is reflective and accurately identifies areas for further improvement.
- Senior leaders make a good contribution to leadership and management and work effectively together. They are deputising effectively for the headteacher and have sustained the momentum of improvement since her absence at the beginning of term. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Staff morale is good.
- The local authority has monitored the school appropriately. It is ready to broker additional support for leadership, if it becomes necessary.
- Writing is promoted well across the curriculum with real-life contexts and purposes for writing, including visits. Theme weeks enrich the topic-based curriculum. Trained teaching assistants provide skilled support for catch-up programmes in basic skills. Adult volunteers provide effective support for individual readers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported by good opportunities for reflection in assembly. Pupils enjoy art which is of a high standard. Specialist instrumental music teaching benefits the whole class and pupils sing confidently. Pupils take part in competitive sport. Plans are in place for the new government sports funding to develop dance, gymnastics and field sports and the role of playground leaders.
- Parents are positive about the school. They made positive comments about the new headteacher, the target-setting system and the increased frequency of parents' evenings. The support group for parents of children with communication difficulties is a notable strength.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are energetic and communicate a high level of ambition. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, the governing body has become sharply focused on the performance of the school.
 - Governors welcome the higher pupil targets. Training has given them a better understanding of pupil progress data. They are well-informed about the school's progress as a result of good communication by the headteacher and their focused visits which check on the impact of actions in the raising attainment plan.
 - Governors have taken ownership of their agenda and rigorously pursue questions about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. They have improved the school's reporting of the pupil premium by requesting a breakdown of funding to improve the evaluation of its impact.

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	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.
		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.

School details

Unique reference number	106753
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	427302

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	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kim Kellett
Headteacher	Elizabeth Ruston
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2010
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