

Althorpe and Keadby Primary School

Station Road, Keadby, Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, DN17 3BN

Inspection dates 29–30 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

- Pupils' achievement varies year-on-year because their progress is uneven between year groups.
- The standard of pupils' writing is below average because pupils' progress is not as good as it should be.
- Teaching over time has not been consistently strong enough to secure pupils' good learning and progress, especially in Years 1 to 4.
- Between Years 1 and 4, work does not always challenge all pupils, especially the most able, and they have too few chances to use their initiative and work independently.
- In all year groups, teachers' expectations regarding pupils' accuracy and presentation of their writing are not always clear and consistently high.
- While leaders are successfully tackling the weaknesses in reading and mathematics, they have yet to make an impact on improving standards in writing and to secure consistently good or better teaching in all year groups.
- Governors have not challenged leaders robustly enough on their plans for improvement, for example, to raise standards in writing.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 5 and 6 is good or better and so pupils make good progress.
- Across the school, standards in reading and mathematics are beginning to rise and are broadly average because these skills are now taught methodically.
- The gap between pupils supported through the pupil premium and others has narrowed significantly in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning.
- The school is a cohesive community liked by parents and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed all of the school's nine teachers. The headteacher and assistant headteacher joined inspectors in observing two of these lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils selected by inspectors.
- A sample of pupils' work in writing and mathematics was checked and an inspector met with a small group of Year 1 pupils to hear them read.
- The school documentation scrutinised included data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and the school's own evaluation of its work.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 16 parents who completed the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Tracy Fulthorpe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the expected minimum standards set for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a centre of support for up to five pupils who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Pupils come from primary schools in the immediate area for short periods of time to receive support. There are no such pupils being supported at the present time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 4 so that it is consistently good or better in order to boost pupils' achievement by raising teachers' expectations through:
 - quickening the pace of learning by setting pupils time limits for completing tasks
 - ensuring work is challenging, especially for the most able, and that it builds systematically on pupils' previous work and what they already know and can do
 - giving pupils the opportunities for taking charge of their own learning, using their initiative, working more independently and having time to assess at the end of lessons what they have learnt
 - sharing the good and outstanding practice that exists in the school.
- Raise standards in writing by:
 - planning frequent opportunities for pupils to write by taking notes, making lists and writing at length in as many subjects as possible
 - ensuring every teacher's expectations are clear and consistently high regarding pupils' accuracy and presentation of their writing
 - planning writing tasks that engage boys' interests and enthuse them to write.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management and governance by:
 - increasing the rigour with which the work of the school is examined for strengths and weaknesses, particularly those accounting for standards and progress in writing
 - using an in-depth understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement to set out clear, sharply focused objectives to improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 4 and in writing throughout the school.
- 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

- Achievement requires improvement. Standards in writing have been below average in recent years because pupils' progress is not as good as it should be. This has an adverse effect on pupils' opportunities to achieve and be prepared well for the next stage of their education. Leaders have worked hard on raising standards and this has been successful for reading and mathematics. However, their impact on improving writing has been limited.
- Pupils are not always neat and careful about spelling and punctuation when they are writing because teachers' expectations for accuracy and presentation are not as high as those found in mathematics. As a result, some of the most able pupils are not attaining the high writing levels of which they are capable. Pupils do not have enough chances to write by taking notes, making lists and writing at length in as many subjects as possible.
- While the changing composition of low-, middle- and high-ability pupils can account for the fluctuations in the overall achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in different years, it is the inconsistency in teaching between Years 1 and 4 that explains pupils' uneven learning and progress over time and the fact that some of the most able pupils are not reaching the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Each year, most children entering the Nursery arrive with levels of development well below those expected for their age. Nearly all children who finished Reception Year in 2013 made more than expected progress to reach the level expected in personal, social and emotional development as well as in communication and language because teaching is good or better. While less than half did so in mathematics, inspection evidence shows that the new, strong leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective in tackling the shortfall and raising standards in mathematics.
- The good start made by children in Nursery and Reception Years is not being effectively built upon in Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress in linking letters and the sounds they make to read effectively. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are fluent and accurate in reading familiar words and are skilled in tackling new and difficult words. However, they are not practising and improving their writing skills frequently enough. In lessons, a few pupils struggle to know what to write and some boys are not greatly enthused about writing.
- Decisive leadership of mathematics is raising standards across the school. Pupils now make good progress from their starting points. Pupils learn sound methods of calculation, setting out their work very methodically and neatly. The clear way in which they explain how they have solved problems shows they understand mathematics well.
- The gap in attainment between pupils supported through the pupil premium and others is narrow in reading and mathematics as a result of better teaching, most particularly that happening in Years 5 and 6. The gap remains much wider in writing, where the pupils supported through the pupil premium are about one third of a level behind in their attainment. Early extra small-group support for reading and mathematics and increasingly effective teaching of letters and their sounds ensure pupils make best use of the opportunities to learn in lessons.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have constant help and are supported in their learning through a wide range of additional literacy and numeracy work. From their starting points, many make good progress in reading and mathematics, the large proportion of pupils supported through school action in particular.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because too much teaching between Years 1 and 4 lacks pace and tasks do not always challenge all pupils, especially the most able.
- Teachers in Years 1 to 4 do not show high enough expectations. Some learning is broken down

into instructions which pupils follow, step by step, which takes away pupils' initiative or the need for them to work independently to any great extent. This fails to get the best from pupils and slows the pace of learning.

- In Years 1 to 4, writing is sometimes unnecessarily repetitive. As a result, opportunities are missed for creating challenge, increasing the pace of learning and giving pupils time to reflect and assess the progress of their written work. Pupils wasted time copying lists of words into their writing books rather than making a poem from the words. Others coloured two-dimensional shapes instead of using the time to learn the properties of those shapes and the vocabulary to describe them. Teachers read to pupils, and while pupils enjoy listening to the stories, they have few opportunities to read aloud or to discuss the stories heard.
- In all year groups, opportunities for writing are missed. Pupils are often confined in lessons to phrases and short sentences and are not encouraged frequently enough to write more at length. Pupils practise and improve their handwriting and learn to write in a well-formed and neat style in handwriting books. They do not always transfer these skills to their writing in other books and teachers do not insist enough that they do so. Teachers do not always insist on pupils' work being neat and tidy.
- Very well planned activities in Nursery and Reception Years and the good and excellent teaching are ensuring children are learning effectively and acquiring literacy and communication skills well; together with their rising numeracy skills, this prepares them well for their start in Year 1.
- Reading and mathematics are planned well and taught methodically. Teachers now set clear objectives and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in these subjects. As a result, standards are rising and progress from pupils' starting points is good.
- The good and excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6 ensures that pupils' learning and progress accelerate. This better quality teaching is instrumental in reducing the gaps in attainment that have not been narrowed in Years 1 to 4 as a result of the less effective teaching. A mathematics lesson, for example, set off at a storming pace. Timed, competitive exercises on multiplication thoroughly enthused boys and girls who set about their work energetically. The challenge kept their number skills and knowledge sharp and accurate and they made rapid progress in the lesson.
- The excellent practice of outstanding teachers is not used sufficiently to show others what highly effective teaching and learning look like.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is average. They thrive on the school's warmth and friendliness and from the strong sense of community it has nurtured. This benefits considerably pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Links with schools in China and the Republic of Benin offer pupils first-hand experience of peoples, their languages and cultures. Year 6 pupils wrote poems that express beautifully the experience of life as an African child.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive throughout the school. Pupils are keen to learn. They organise themselves efficiently for lessons and settle quickly to work. However, their enthusiasm, concentration and effort tail off when teaching is not sufficiently engaging. More often, they listen attentively and contribute to lessons thoughtfully. When the opportunity is given, pupils work together constructively and stay focused on the task at hand.
- Pupils behave well by adhering closely to the school's clear expectations for good conduct. Staff are expert in managing behaviour. The school's good reputation for managing and improving behaviour means it is a centre in the local authority for supporting other schools with this. Staff have a good effect on pupils that find it difficult to behave well and they soon learn to cooperate and reflect the school's positive values.
- Relationships between pupils are good. They show consideration for one another and get on well together. They feel safe and free from bullying, which is helped by what they learn in school

about all the forms of bullying and risks they might encounter, particularly using electronic media.

- Pupils enjoy a healthy lifestyle encouraged by the school's promotion of sports, physical education and keeping fit. Opportunities for running are planned at playtimes and a large group of pupils choose to run several circuits around the playing field during morning break.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not succeeded in raising the standard of writing and are yet to secure consistently good or better teaching in all year groups.
- Leaders have introduced new initiatives, which over the past few years have not had the impact desired on raising standards in writing. Teachers' expectations for writing have not been clarified sufficiently and approaches to writing that interest and engage pupils have not been fully developed.
- Leaders regularly check the school's performance. However, the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have not been used well enough to set out clear, sharply focused objectives to improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 4 and in writing throughout the school. As a result, this adversely affects the identification of annual performance objectives for teachers and improvement priorities in school development planning. In both cases, objectives are worded too vaguely to usefully pinpoint actions to improve writing.
- Leaders have had more success with improving the quality of teaching of reading and mathematics. Staff have succeeded in promoting pupils' positive attitudes to reading and there has also been more effective scrutiny to check standards and progress of reading, compared to writing. This has ensured provision for reading is now effectively implemented, which has impacted well on standards. In mathematics, a successful concerted approach to learning number, which leaders identified as a weakness, has ensured standards have started to rise.
- The local authority's support for leaders has started to take shape this year. Its contribution to school improvement is at an early stage.
- The headteacher's leadership has overseen the development of the school's cohesive community. Leadership ensures staff morale is high and that the staff are a close-knit team. Leaders have the support of parents and the school is rightly recognised for its strength in improving pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning. Pupils' personal development is nurtured effectively and they are robustly safeguarded.
- Strong leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is giving added impetus to more children achieving a good level of development before they enter Year 1.
- Overall, the curriculum has breadth and is well enriched by good opportunities for physical education, sports and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are enthused by these opportunities, as many are for learning a musical instrument and performing in the school orchestra. The physical education and sports grant is helping to offer swimming lessons to all pupils and this builds positively on what the school already offers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed to the school's success and stay closely involved with the work of the school through regular contacts with leaders, staff, pupils and their parents. They take up opportunities for training and, as a result, are effective in the conduct of many of their responsibilities. Governors understand their roles and seek the information they need to keep a check on the school's work. They pay particular attention to the performance of pupils supported through the pupil premium. While governors have learnt to interpret data on pupils' attainment and progress, they are dependent upon leaders for critical evaluations of data and this does not always enable them to question closely and challenge leaders where standards are not high enough, for example in writing, and where pupils' progress is not as good as it should be.

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	117726
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425938

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
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Podmore
Headteacher	Sarah Tate
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2008
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