

Elliston Primary School

Elliston Street, Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire, DN35 7HT

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

- Progress has been inconsistent throughout the school since the previous inspection. Pupils have not made the progress expected in mathematics and English between Key Stages 1 and 2.
- At times, teachers' expectations are not as high as they should be. Although there is high-quality writing on display, this is not always the case in pupils' exercise books.
- Teachers do not always ensure that work given to pupils matches their ability. In addition, pupils are often not given appropriate levels of challenge.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills using open-ended problems that include events related to the real world.
- Sometimes pupils are not given sufficient time to investigate independently, seek answers for themselves and with others.
- Leaders do not use the data systems rigorously enough to track and analyse the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Some members of the governing body do not have sufficient understanding about the school's data in order for them to be able to provide further challenge and drive the school forward more rapidly.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics and more are reaching the higher levels in this subject.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get a good start to school life and make good progress.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. Attendance is above average.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Leaders have created an inclusive school that provides good support for those in challenging circumstances. Leaders are improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 13 parts of lessons, including teaching in small groups. One lesson was jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors also visited a whole-school assembly.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6.
- Meetings were held with key staff, pupils, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. In addition, a telephone conversation was held with a previous School Improvement Officer.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school’s evaluation of its own performance, pupils’ work, minutes of governing body meetings and notes of visits. They also considered the school’s own data on pupils’ current progress, documents relating to safeguarding and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.
- There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to access. However, informal discussions were held with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors analysed 42 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Sharona Semlali, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Victoria Johnson	Additional Inspector
Paul Spray	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding (additional money given to the school for particular pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and pupils from service families) is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good or better in order that pupils make consistently good or better progress in all year groups by ensuring that:
 - pupils have more opportunities to produce and present high levels of quality writing so that it at least matches that seen on the displays around the school
 - the work given to pupils matches their abilities and provides appropriate levels of challenge
 - pupils are given more opportunities to investigate independently, and find things out for themselves and with others
 - pupils have increasing opportunities to apply their mathematical skills using open-ended problems that involve events related to real-life situations.
- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - the data systems used to track and analyse the progress of different groups are used more rigorously to ensure pupils make good and rapid progress throughout the school
 - all members of the governing body have a better understanding about the school's data in order that they can ask more searching questions of school leaders and thus continue to drive improvements in 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

- Children generally join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below that seen for their age. They make good progress by the time they leave and enter Year 1 with skills below average. This is because there are strong links with parents before children start school and the learning environment is adapted well to meet children's different needs and interests.
- However, achievement requires improvement because the rate of progress is uneven throughout the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. In 2011 and 2012, for example, pupils did not make the progress expected of them across Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics.
- In 2013, the progress of all groups of pupils improved and standards in reading and writing were broadly average overall and above in mathematics by the end of Year 6. Indeed, there was an increase in the percentages of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in mathematics and a small proportion reached Level 6 in this subject. There was also an increase in the proportions reaching the higher Level 5 in writing. Overall, therefore, achievement still requires improvement but is now beginning to accelerate.
- Displays around the school celebrate pupils' quality writing well. However, inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' exercise books demonstrate that presentation of work and performance in writing is not always of the same standard.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also inconsistent. However, they benefit from the extra support sessions by teaching assistants who help them to build their confidence when they are faced with any challenges in their learning.
- The gap is narrowing between the performance of those known to be entitled to support through the pupil premium and others in the school. The funding is spent wisely to provide more small group and individual support for these pupils. In almost all year groups, pupils known to be entitled to free school meals are now making better progress in mathematics, reading and writing. Those who left Year 6 in 2013 were just over a term behind in attainment in mathematics, reading and writing combined. This shows that the school is promoting equality of opportunity soundly.
- Pupils at the early stages of reading are well supported by both teaching assistants and teachers. They help these pupils to develop their phonics (the sounds letters make) skills quickly, so that they can read unfamiliar words accurately. Results in the 2013 phonics screen check improved significantly and were above average. In consultation with pupils, leaders have recently revamped the library. It is now a vibrant and stimulating place where pupils like to go and read for pleasure.
- Pupils achieve better in mathematics than they do in reading and writing. This is because leaders have introduced several relevant initiatives, including more training for staff.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been strong enough to enable pupils to make good progress by the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2. Currently, teaching is not yet consistently good but is improving.
- Where teaching is least effective, work given to the pupils does not have appropriate levels of challenge and tasks given do not always match their abilities. For example, in a Year 1/2 lesson where pupils were learning about the features of a non-fiction book, some groups of pupils found the different tasks too difficult. As a result, their progress and understanding slowed.
- Where mathematics is not taught well, teachers do not give pupils enough open-ended problems that use events related to the real world. This was seen in a Year 3/4 lesson where pupils were learning about the difference between grams and kilograms. Most pupils were given uninspiring worksheets to develop their understanding and they quickly lost interest. However, one group worked well with a teaching assistant, feeling the different weights and using real objects to

explore this further.

- Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities for independent research, so that they can find things out for themselves or with other pupils. When this does happen, pupils are not given enough time to complete the work, because too much time is spent listening to the explanation of the tasks to different groups. This was observed in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson where pupils spent too long passively listening to the instruction for other groups.
- Where teaching is effective, good subject knowledge and effective questioning help to probe pupils' understanding. In a Year 1/2 lesson, for example, the teacher used good quality questioning for specific groups of pupils and individuals, to probe their understanding about ordering numbers.
- In most books, teachers' marking informs pupils of how well they are performing and of what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Both the indoor and outdoor learning environments help to support the development of children's curiosity. All adults provide good quality questioning and have high expectations of the children. Children respond positively.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning in the classroom. They are well trained to provide small group support for those who need additional help.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning. They conduct themselves well around school. They are polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors.
- Behaviour is typically good over time. Parents interviewed and pupils and staff all believe that behaviour is good. This is also confirmed by the school's well-recorded documentation.
- Pupils are clear about the different rewards and sanctions in the school.
- Pupils feel safe and have confidence that all adults will help them if they have concerns. Pupils have helped to make maps that show the safer routes for them to use when going to school. All of this helps to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe beyond the school.
- They have a good understanding about different types of bullying. They say that bullying is rare and if they have any issues they can write their concerns in the 'worry boxes' and these will be quickly dealt with by staff.
- Children's behaviour is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They learn and play well together. They respond well to all adults.
- Pupils say, 'It's a privilege to be in Year 6.' This is because they enjoy having their own café and are the only ones who wear ties in preparation for entering secondary school.
- Pupils' opinions are strongly valued. They have contributed well in making important decisions in the school. For example, they now have a pet rabbit. This idea came as result of them visiting another school which has pets.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Peer mediators support others to solve their disputes and differences. They have to apply for their job and take part in an interview. This helps to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Attendance is above average because the pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Breakfast club is well attended and helps to give pupils a healthy and settled start to the school day.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because where teaching is not as good as it could be, pupils either become passive in their learning or lose interest in the activities.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although senior leaders and subject and aspect coordinators are beginning to secure improvements in achievement, teaching, behaviour and the skills of the middle leaders, leadership and management overall still require improvements. This is because there is not enough rigour in the way leaders use their data systems to track, analyse and secure consistently good progress for all groups of pupils.
- The headteacher is supported by two able deputy headteachers. They are supported strongly by the rest of the staff team. They work well to support those pupils and their families, whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.
- Well-founded structures and systems are starting to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Almost all inadequate teaching has been eradicated and support plans are in place where teaching is not yet good. All teachers have the chance to see other classroom practice both within and beyond the school. Teachers' targets are now linked more closely to pupil progress, are also based on the national Teacher Standards and are reviewed termly.
- The curriculum is structured around topics which are tailored towards pupils' interests. Educational visits and visitors help to widen pupils' experiences and understanding about the world around them. For example, pupils visited the chocolate factory in York, which helped to develop their knowledge of the area.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. This can be seen in the way pupils conduct themselves around the school and the positive way in which they treat each other. Pupils are given time to reflect in assemblies. They engage with the local community and they enjoy taking part in fund-raising activities for those in need. Currently, the school delivers 'Bollywood' dancing which is very popular among the pupils. This is helping to widen their knowledge about other cultures.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors were very appreciative of the school's work. They made particular mention of the family learning activities, cookery and the workshop about 'letters and sounds.'
- The Primary School Sports Funding is not yet spent but careful plans are in place to do so. For example, the money will be used to support training for staff and improve summer and after-school clubs.
- The local authority provides good support once a term. Independently, the school paid for external support to strengthen the skills of the middle leaders. This has helped them to become more confident in their roles. As a result, more pupils are now reaching the higher National Curriculum levels in writing and mathematics.
- All safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. The school rejects discrimination in all its forms.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is in a period of transition. Some experienced governors have left and newer ones are joining. For example, the Chair of Governors is new to the role. However, the few established members have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development because they regularly visit the school and meet the different leaders. They ask fairly challenging questions and hold leaders to account adequately. However, not all members have a good enough understanding about the school's achievement data and therefore are not able to provide further challenge to leaders. The few experienced members know how the school makes decisions in relation to rewarding good teaching. The performance management of the headteacher is firmly in place and governors have received training to undertake this role. They have a clear understanding on how pupil premium funding is spent, as this is a standing item on the agenda of all meetings, they understand the positive impact of the spending on the achievement of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

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	131700
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425853

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	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy McRae
Headteacher	Marlene Ranshaw
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2011
Telephone number	01472 235116
Fax number	Not Applicable
Email address	office@elliston.nelcmail.co.uk

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