

Park Grove Primary School

Park Grove, York, North Yorkshire, YO31 8LG

Inspection dates 20–21 November 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 requires improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. This is because, over recent years, progress, including for pupils with special educational needs and the more-able, has been too slow and pupils have fallen behind.
- Teaching requires improvement, mostly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. This is because work is not always challenging, the pace of learning is not brisk enough and pupils sometimes have too little time for independent work to help them move forward.
- Leadership and management require improvement. The governing body is not holding the school to account and leading its direction well enough. Some subject leaders are not fully accountable for pupils' progress and the standards they reach. Initiatives introduced to improve teaching and drive up standards are at an early stage.
- Marking and the targets and steps to success that teachers set for pupils are not used consistently to help them make the best possible progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons, in the playground and around the school.
- Most teaching is good in Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils feel safe and like their school.
- There are good relationships at all levels.
- The new headteacher has already begun to make needed improvements. She has introduced effective systems to improve the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Priorities for development are the right ones and are being rigorously pursued.
- The rich curriculum provides enjoyment, interest and motivation for pupils, and helps to explain their above-average attendance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 18 lessons taught by 11 teachers; four were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils and talked to the Deputy Director of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to three pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' work in all classes, especially focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 2 and Year 6.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents including: the school's own evaluation documents; plans for the school's future development; a recent external review of aspects of the school's work; notes from leaders' observations of lessons; safeguarding policies and records; the school's analysis of data on pupils' progress; and attendance information.
- The 98 responses on the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View), were analysed. Inspectors also spoke with a small number of parents during the inspection, taking account of their views.

Inspection team

Derek Pattinson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Steven Goldsmith	Additional Inspector
Rajinder Harrison	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (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.)
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on improvements started to improve the quality of teaching to ensure that all teaching is good or better in order to accelerate progress and raise attainment further, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 by:
 - checking that activities are always challenging
 - making certain that the pace of learning is always good in lessons and providing pupils with more time to work independently
 - ensuring that teachers' marking, and the targets and steps to success they are set, are used consistently to help pupils make best possible progress
 - checking that pupils always have opportunities to share what they have learnt and how challenging they found the work to help inform teachers' planning for the next lesson.
- Ensure that all pupils make at least good progress, especially those, including the more-able, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, so that all achieve as well as most pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management in order to increase the pace of school improvement by building on the good work already started to develop the roles of new subject leaders to ensure that they are fully accountable for standards and progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this area of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not good because standards in reading, writing and mathematics have not risen by the end of Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection. As a result, progress has slowed, with pupils in Key Stage 2 having to play 'catch up' to reach the above average standards achieved in the most recent national tests.
- Arrangements for assessing what pupils know and understand when they start school, previously insecure, are now clear and accurate. As a result, pupils' individual starting points are correctly judged as typical for the picture nationally.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, especially for the more-able and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is not as good as in Key Stage 2. This has been due to weaknesses in teaching and organisation. For example, more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 perform less well compared to the same group nationally, but in Key Stage 2 they do better. Pupils with special educational needs do as well as the same group nationally by the end of Key Stage 2, whereas they do less well at the end of Key Stage 1. However, initiatives to boost writing, improved teaching, more rigorous analysis of data and targeted help for pupils who need it most, are now starting to show success to help drive up standards for the younger pupils in school.
- This improving picture includes pupils receiving the pupil premium who are now performing as well as the same group nationally in reading, writing and mathematics in national Key Stage 1 assessments and by the end of Key Stage 2 in national tests. These improvements indicate that equality of opportunity is promoted increasingly well.
- In the most recent national check on children's ability to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics) which is carried out at the end of Year 1, the performances of both boys and girls was below the expected standard. Nevertheless, they make good progress across Key Stage 2 in learning to read accurately and fluently for pleasure, information and enjoyment. This is due to initiatives, such as, regular reading, improvements to phonics sessions and a renewed focus on writing for different purposes. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 2, more pupils than nationally often reach the higher levels in mathematics, reading and writing. For example, in mathematics, older Key Stage 2 pupils show they can use different methods of multiplication to solve problems.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving in most Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes, it is still judged to require improvement because it has not been good enough over time to secure rising standards. As a result, pupils have been making good progress only in Key Stage 2 where teaching has been, and continues to be, mostly good.
- Some lessons, mostly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, do not challenge pupils well enough for them to make good progress. Examples of this were observed in a lesson linking letters to the sounds they make and in pupils' mathematics books where pupils were sometimes spending too much time undertaking number work that they fully understand. Despite very recent improvements to provision and teaching, some activities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage lack challenge and focus and there are missed opportunities to extend children's learning and increase their vocabulary.
- Some lessons do not provide enough time for pupils to work independently and the pace of teaching is too slow to secure best possible progress. In other lessons, such as in a Years 4 and 5 literacy lesson in which pupils write a play script in a modern context based on Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet', pupils have little opportunity to share how challenging they found their work. These negative features slow progress.
- A few lessons do not provide clear steps to success to help pupils measure the progress they are

making. Pupils' books, especially in mathematics and topic, also show that they are sometimes unsure of their targets. Teachers' marking gives praise where it is due. However, it does not always give clear pointers to pupils on how to improve their work. These omissions reduce pupils' ability to take their own initiative in moving their learning forward.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the school's work and is promoted successfully. All teachers establish good working relationships with their pupils successfully. As a result, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, ensuring a clear focus on learning.
- Two-thirds of teaching was judged good during the inspection, mirroring leaders' most recent monitoring. In the best lessons, teaching assistants are used especially well to extend pupils' learning, pupils know what they are required to learn, time is used well, pupils of all abilities are challenged, teachers' subject knowledge is secure and pupils' understanding is regularly checked as the lesson proceeds. These positive features were seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, in which they were organising poetry using imaginative vocabulary.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good. This is confirmed by records, observations and discussions with pupils.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always good, such as, when pupils in Key Stage 2 consider the main features of a play script, use alliteration in poetry and develop their vocabulary and speaking skills in French. However, a little restlessness sometimes occurs when tasks lack interest, work is too easy or when pupils are required to listen for too long before moving on to independent work.
- Behaviour is, nevertheless, almost always managed well. Pupils say that they like and understand the reward system, including the use of praise postcards, the headteacher's award and weekly Golden Table in the school canteen. They also like the celebration assemblies where effort and achievement are rewarded to help boost self-esteem. Examples of inappropriate behaviour are very rare and are not allowed to impinge on pupils' learning. Pupils like the Children's Champions who are used successfully to support vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Most parents and pupils are unreservedly positive about behaviour. Pupils say that occasional fall-outs in the playground are always dealt with and that most of the time pupils work and play happily together. They know about different forms of bullying, including of dangers posed by the Internet, say that it is rare and that there is no racism.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is good. For example, they enter the hall for assemblies quietly, listen respectfully and answer politely. Occasional high noise levels in the dining-room reflect the many friendly conversations taking place in this crowded area. Most pupils move around the school, such as on the stairs, calmly and sensibly. However, there can be occasional high noise levels when children are on the stairs unsupervised.
- Pupils enjoy school because they say that 'teachers make learning fun' and that all adults help them learn. This helps to explain their good punctuality and above-average attendance.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and understand the importance of safe practices. For example, they comment positively about the well-supervised playground and the high level of security for visitors.
- Assemblies, class discussions, links with the community and the many opportunities for pupils to work together contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is given strong emphasis. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. This is because the governing body is not holding the school to account and leading its direction well enough and subject leaders are at different stages in leading their subjects effectively. Also, some of the many improvements

leaders have introduced, such as, to improve the Early Years Foundation Stage, have yet to see their full impact to help the school to become good.

- The new headteacher has provided a rigorous agenda to drive up standards. Priorities for development are the right ones to help secure improvement. She has the full support of colleagues. The local authority has worked with the school to help identify and provide regular, well-focused challenge and support. Morale is high and team spirit is strong.
- All staff are now committed to continued improvement. Professional development, informed by recently introduced and now secure performance management arrangements, is given much emphasis. For example, teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 has already begun to improve through regular checks of its quality, which focus increasingly on how much learning pupils are making. However, work is in its early stages.
- Some subject leaders, such as in English and mathematics, know what works well and what needs doing because of the regular checks that they make. However, some, such as in science, are new. As a result, they are not all fully accountable for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school's own assessment information and checks on test results have significantly improved. Furthermore, leaders now have accurate information about pupils' individual starting points when they begin in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, they now know precisely how well pupils are doing from their start in school to when they leave, enabling them to give targeted support to those who are falling behind.
- Topics and themes, such as The Tudors, visitors, such as the Young Shakespeare Company, and visits, such as to the Castle Museum and Eden Camp, provide evidence of a rich and varied curriculum. Clubs, such as in music and sports, help also to extend pupils' learning.
- Primary sport funding has been used wisely to appoint a local successful sports organisation to help extend learning. The number and quality of sports sessions has increased, with teachers who observe and participate improving their skills. As a result, pupils are developing healthy lifestyles, better physical well-being and are beginning to improve their performance.
- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements meet requirements. For example, arrangements for access to the building are secure to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school with almost all who completed the questionnaire on Parent View happy to recommend the school to another parent.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is steadily increasing its involvement in the work of the school, such as by attending recent training on performance data analysis. It has some information about the quality of teachers at the school, although this is a developing area. It knows that pupil premium funding is being used wisely to ensure that pupils who benefit are mostly making similar progress to that of their classmates and is fully aware of recent staffing issues. However, some governors are new while others, such as the Chair and Vice-Chair, are new to their posts. Although individual governors are increasing their knowledge of pupil progress, the governing body as a whole is not yet holding the school to account or leading its direction well enough.

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	121280
Local authority	York
Inspection number	425945

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Yates
Headteacher	Jo Sawyer
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2008
Telephone number	01904 554 390
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	head.parkgroveprimary@york.gov.uk

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