

Cowick Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Snaith Road, East Cowick, Goole, DN14 9DG

Inspection dates 20–21 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

- From their starting points, most pupils' achievement is such that they make expected progress. Too few pupils make better than expected progress.
- Standards in writing and mathematics are broadly average. Too few pupils reach higher than expected levels.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. Not enough teaching is good or better to enable pupils to make good progress. The pace of learning and challenge for pupils is not always strong enough. Marking does not always make it clear how to improve.
- Subject leaders do not fully monitor the school's curriculum to check that it meets the needs of all pupils across a range of subjects. While much emphasis is given to English and mathematics, other subjects are not covered well enough.
- Leadership and management have not been strong enough overall to have made significant impact on raising the quality of teaching and achievement.
- Many recent changes in the governing body, particularly in the role of Chair of Governors, have meant that the governors are not yet in a position to challenge the school effectively about its performance.

The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching is showing some signs of improvement, and where good teaching is evident, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading.
- Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils say that they all get on well and play together happily.
- Pupils enjoy school life. They say that they feel totally safe in school and that if they have a problem they know it will be dealt with by the staff.
- The very recent appointment of the Interim Executive Headteacher (IEHT) has had a positive effect on the work of the school. All staff and governors support her well.
- The newly appointed Chair of Governors enjoys a good relationship with the IEHT, and they work together well to bring about improvements already identified.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four teachers teaching in seven lessons.
- Observations took place of pupils in lessons, at play, in assembly and as they moved around the school.
- Discussions were held with the staff, the Chair and other members of the governing body, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector heard children read from Years 1 and 6. He analysed, in detail, pupils' work from across the school.
- The inspector took account of the 24 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of a few parents who wrote letters to him during the inspection. He spoke, by telephone, to one parent who asked to speak to him personally.
- Following the departure of the previous headteacher, the school appointed an IEHT to lead the school. The IEHT has been in post for six weeks and is expected to remain until Easter 2014. The governors have been proactive in appointing a new, substantive headteacher.

Inspection team

John Foster, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds. All pupils have English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. Those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average, although widely variable between year groups. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by the local authority and those of serving forces personnel.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards that set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - raising teachers' expectations about what their pupils are capable of achieving
 - ensuring that teachers' planning is based on secure and accurate assessment of pupils' previous learning
 - ensuring that all teachers adhere to the marking policy so that pupils know what they do well and how their work can be improved.
- Raise attainment further particularly in writing and in mathematics by:
 - using data gained from the improved assessment of pupils' work to ensure that all pupils, and particularly the more-able, are challenged in their work
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is brisk and work set for pupils matches their individual needs
 - ensuring that pupils have frequent opportunities to use their developing literacy and numeracy skills across a wide range of subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making the monitoring of teaching more robust and providing tailored support where weaknesses have been identified and sharing the best practice found in the school and beyond
 - establishing more firmly the role of subject leaders especially in monitoring the curriculum to keep a balance between the time allocated to each subject
 - embedding the role of the new governors so that they are in a better position to hold leaders to account for their actions.
- 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

- It should be noted that the small number of pupils in each cohort means that data relating to the school's performance may be unreliable. However, data makes it clear that not enough pupils make more than expected progress. Most children start school with skills and knowledge broadly expected for their age. Most pupils reach standards in writing and mathematics that are expected for their age. This indicates that achievement requires improvement.
- Children make expected progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their individual starting points, although progress is often better for the increasing number starting school with limited language and communication skills. Arrangements are in place so that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy many activities based on their particular needs so that they have a solid start to their schooling reaching the level expected when they start in Year 1.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils' progress requires improvement. At the end of Year 2, attainment is above average.
- By the end of Year 6, although most pupils reach standards in writing and mathematics that are expected for their age, few exceed this level.
- Standards in reading have risen significantly and are above average. Teaching has improved and pupils have regular opportunities to read. Pupils enjoy reading. They choose and talk about their books enthusiastically. While most pupils use basic writing skills well, they do not get enough opportunities to write at length or to apply these skills in other subjects.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure pupils have secure basic skills and know several different methods of calculations. However, a lack of challenge leads to pupils being less confident when applying their skills in different situations.
- More-able pupils do not always make enough progress and this varies between classes linked to the focus and challenge they receive in lessons.
- Disabled pupils and the relatively small number of pupils with special educational needs are identified early. Teachers plan work to match these pupils' specific needs so that they make expected progress. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups also make similar progress to other pupils.
- Pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding make similar progress to other groups. In 2012 and 2013, no pupils were eligible for this funding, so no clear comparison can be made to the progress and attainment of these pupils in relation to national figures. The school ensures that all pupils are treated fairly and that there is no discrimination.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils have acquired sound communication and mathematical skills to enable them to be satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching requires improvement because lessons have weaker aspects that hamper learning. Teaching is not strong enough to enable pupils across the school to make consistently good progress.
- In lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not always set work that challenges pupils' thinking skills well enough because the teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- In too many lessons, pupils are not given enough opportunities to work themselves because the teachers spend too much time on explanations about what they want their pupils to do.
- Teachers' planning is variable across the school. Although improving, too often the plans do not focus well enough on pupils' individual needs and similar work is set for all abilities and the pace of learning slows down.
- The quality of teachers' marking is variable. The recently devised marking policy is not adhered to consistently, so that pupils are not always informed about how well they are doing, or how

they can improve their work.

- Where teaching is most effective, pupils make good progress. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged to think about their tasks and what they need to do to complete them successfully. For example, in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson pupils were challenged to use their knowledge of prime numbers to solve problems. Most completed this successfully, although the challenge for a few of the more-able pupils was not as high as it could be.
- The teaching of reading is good. Letters and sounds are taught successfully and pupils use this knowledge to work out unknown words.
- Examples of good planning clearly focus on what individuals and groups of pupils need to do to make the best progress and identify the role of the effective support staff in helping pupils.
- Teachers manage pupils well so that lessons run smoothly.
- The quality of teaching for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding, is similar to that for other groups, enabling these pupils to make similar progress in their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted satisfactorily. They are given frequent opportunities to work collaboratively, helping them to support each other in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good overall and at times it is exemplary.
- In lessons, pupils behave well for most of the time and teachers' behaviour management skills ensure that the rare occasions of inappropriate behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively. The good relationships that exist between pupils and adults in the school support pupils' good behaviour well.
- Pupils have very positive views about their school. They say that they enjoy life at the school and being with their friends. It is good to see children of all ages playing well together and that the older pupils care for the younger ones well. Pupils have a detailed knowledge of different types of bullying and recognise how name-calling can be hurtful to others. They are adamant that there is no bullying at their school, but should it ever arise, they are confident that the staff would deal with it quickly and effectively.
- Pupils behave well as they move around school. They are considerate to each other and to adults. At lunchtime, pupils enjoy a pleasant and calm atmosphere before they go out to play. In the playground they play well together and the well established 'buddy stops' mean that no child is left to play on their own.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel totally safe in school and that should they have any concerns, there is always an adult to talk to, knowing that they will be listened to and their fears acted upon.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They are keen to learn, although the presentation of their work is variable across the school.
- Attendance is average. The school works well to encourage regular attendance, but the small size of the school means that a very small number of pupils who do not attend regularly affect the overall figures for attendance.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has experienced significant instability in its senior management over recent times and this has led to several aspects requiring improvement. Nevertheless, the current IEHT who has only been in post for about six weeks is already bringing about improvement. Along with the assistant headteacher, the staff and governors, she has undertaken a clear analysis of what is good in the school and where improvements need to be made. This ensures the school is clear about how to move forward.

- The school's evaluation of its performance is now largely accurate and closely matches inspection findings. As a result, the school's planning for its future highlights clearly where improvements need to be made and how this is to be managed.
- The monitoring of teaching has not been robust enough to eradicate variability between classes and to ensure best practice is shared. A major aspect of the present changes is the extra support given to staff to develop their teaching skills, following more recent monitoring of teaching and learning by the IEHT and the local authority.
- Within this small school, subject leaders take responsibility for several subjects. The staff have only recently taken over these responsibilities, and have had limited opportunities to influence the development of the subjects. They have begun to monitor standards and progress more fully, and have drawn up plans for developing their subjects. The plans are too newly formulated to have raised standards and to ensure the curriculum has an even balance between subjects.
- Overall the curriculum covers the basics well but the extension of skills across a range of subjects is not fully embedded. There is currently limited use of visits and visitors to support pupils' learning.
- Arrangements for checking the performance of staff have been consolidated since the appointment of the IEHT. All teachers have been observed and challenging targets set for their future performance. Staff recognise that these targets need to be met before the governing body considers pay progression.
- Since her appointment, the IEHT has gained further funding to use external expertise in developing the staff's skills in teaching physical education, so that when funding ceases, teachers will be able to maintain the improvements in developing pupils' sporting skills.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet the government's current requirements.
- Links with the local authority are good. The local authority has given significant support in the past and continues to do so.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement. There have been recent and frequent changes in governance, including the role of Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors works well alongside the IEHT and they share a clear vision for school improvement and in raising standards. Although limited in the past, recent changes mean that governors are becoming more closely involved in reviewing data and checking the school's performance and in planning for its future. Closer links are being established to gain more first hand experience of school including the quality of teaching. Governors understand the school's finances and ensure that money, such as the pupil premium funding, is spent well for pupils' benefit.

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	118025
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	425822

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Watson
Headteacher (Interim Executive)	Hilary Leach
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2011
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