

New Mills Primary School

Meadow Street, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4AY

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Effective school leadership has improved teaching since the last inspection. As a result pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Good and occasionally outstanding teaching interests and engages pupils so that they are keen to learn.
- Standards in English and mathematics have risen and are now above average at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the development of pupils' early reading and writing skills.
- The governing body offers the school strong support and contributes well to the school's effectiveness.
- The school provides a calm and orderly learning environment in which pupils behave well and feel safe.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average.
- The school benefits from the support of the overwhelming majority of parents.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, teachers do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough to ensure that all pupils understand before moving on.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always provide guidance on how to improve and pupils are not always given time to respond when such guidance is given.
- The targets set for teachers to improve their effectiveness are sometimes not linked closely enough to the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- Some pupil-premium spending is too general to have a clear impact on the progress of pupils for whom this money is intended.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons. Four lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher also joined the inspectors in reviewing pupils' work and the work of teaching assistants.
- The inspectors observed one assembly, made a number of short visits to classrooms and observed pupils were at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and three members of the governing body, and a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Groups of pupils of different ages were heard reading.
- The inspectors took account of 20 responses to the staff questionnaire and 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They met with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. Inspectors also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Roary Pownall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for particular groups such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is 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?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
 - teachers constantly check pupils' understanding so that any misconceptions can be quickly identified and corrected
 - there is consistency in the marking of pupils' work so that they are always given guidance on how it can be improved and that pupils are given time to respond to the advice given.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - making sure that teachers' targets are always explicitly linked to improvements in pupils' progress
 - reviewing pupil-premium spending so that it is specifically focused on the needs of the pupils for whom it is intended and has a positive impact on their progress and achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's skills on entry to Reception vary from year to year, but in general, they are below those expected for their age. There are particular weaknesses in communication and language, literacy and mathematics.
- Good teaching in Reception means that most children join Year 1 having achieved the Early Learning Goals, although some weaknesses in communication and language remain.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well in English and mathematics. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 have risen over the last three years. These standards were above average in 2013. Reviews of current pupils' work and school assessment information show that good progress is being maintained.
- Successful action to improve the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has raised pupils' performance in the Year 1 phonics screening test. In 2013, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard increased to be close to the national figure.
- Across the school, pupils say how much they enjoy reading. The most able pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read fluently and with good expression. While the reading of less able pupils is more hesitant, they show that they are able to use their phonic strategies to cope with unfamiliar words.
- Pupils make good progress in writing because they are given opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences, not only in English lessons but also in other subjects.
- Standards in mathematics have risen because pupils are given more opportunities to apply and develop their mathematical skills in a wide range of contexts. For example, Year 6 pupils made good progress in a lesson on equivalent fractions because they were dividing chocolate bars into quarters and eighths. Their interest was captured and they quickly grasped that fractions which appear differently can have the same value.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the effective leadership of their provision. Their individual needs are well known and additional support is carefully tailored to meet those needs.
- There are too few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in each year group to comment on their attainment without identifying them. However, in general, their progress in both English and mathematics is comparable to that of their classmates.
- Pupils enjoy physical activity. Their health and well-being are enhanced by their participation in well-taught physical education lessons and the range of sports activities the school offers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Because teaching is mostly good and occasionally outstanding, pupils make good progress and achieve well. English and mathematics are taught well throughout the school.

- Teaching is good in Reception, where the basis for the good attitudes to learning seen across the school is laid. Adults constantly interact with children and take every opportunity to develop their social and academic skills. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor areas to provide purposeful and varied learning activities.
- Teachers make good use of their knowledge of individual pupils to plan work that is suitably demanding for all groups of pupils and appropriately challenging for pupils of higher ability. For example, thoughtful planning was a feature of successful teaching in a Year 2 mathematics lesson. In this lesson, pupils made good progress in solving addition and subtraction problems because the work was practical and well matched to pupils' differing ability levels.
- In most lessons, teachers make good use of their subject knowledge to explain what pupils are going to learn and then continually check the progress pupils are making. Occasionally, this is not done thoroughly enough to make sure that any misunderstandings are identified and corrected.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to make sure that the work given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium, builds up in sequence so they make good progress towards their learning targets.
- Teaching assistants make a particularly good contribution to the teaching of phonics. They have a good understanding of how letters and sounds should be taught. Daily sessions are carefully structured and provide a secure base for development of both reading and writing skills.
- Most of the marking of pupils' work is very thorough and this makes a strong contribution to the good progress they are making. In a few instances pupils are not given enough guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. Occasionally, pupils do not have enough time to respond to the teacher's guidance when it is given.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes and good behaviour both in lessons and around the school. They treat one another and adults with respect. Parents and carers and staff agree that behaviour is typically good.
- In most lessons pupils listen attentively to their teachers and work well in pairs or small groups. In a few lessons when learning is not made appealing enough, some lose interest and they are less motivated to learn.
- The emphasis on good social behaviour begins in Reception and is reinforced throughout the school. The vast majority conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour and this contributes to the calm and purposeful learning environment.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe in the community and the dangers posed by the misuse of the internet.
- Pupils say that there have been instances of bullying in the past, but there are no current concerns. This is supported by school records. The school makes clear that bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated and pupils are confident that adults will help them if they have any concerns.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to take on responsibility. Through their roles as school

councillors, play leaders or dinner helpers, they develop self-confidence and make positive contributions to the school community.

- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance and punctuality at the start of the day.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the full support of her deputy, staff and governors is providing the school with a clear agenda for continued improvement. All staff are fully committed to raising pupils' achievement and morale is high.
- The school improvement plan is based on careful checks of the school's work and identifies the correct areas for improvement. Successful management action has improved the quality of teaching, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Improvement is also seen in the teaching of phonics and the more effective use of teaching assistants. These improvements are helping to raise standards and pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher makes good use of information from checks on teaching to develop teachers' skills and improve teaching. There is a clear understanding of the link between teachers' pay and promotion and pupils' progress. However, in a few instances, the targets set for teachers are too general and do not relate closely enough to measurable improvements in pupils' progress.
- Subject and other leaders are being provided with appropriate training and support. This enables them to check the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility and so contribute to the drive for continued improvement.
- The curriculum promotes achievement well. The curriculum is enhanced through visitors and visits to places of interest, including residential visits for older pupils. These broaden pupils' horizons and promote self-esteem and confidence. The curriculum promotes pupils' understanding of religious and cultural diversity in modern Britain well.
- The school's commitment to providing equal opportunities for all is seen, for example, in participating in a nationally recognised project aimed at raising the aspirations and achievement of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Involvement in the project is too recent for the impact on pupils' achievement to be assessed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through art and music, and the school's clear vision and beliefs. The impact is seen, for example, in pupils' acceptance of clearly defined boundaries of what is right or wrong.
- The school plans to use the primary school sport funding to strengthen teachers' skills through the external coaching of staff and the introduction of more competitive sports. There are suitable plans to measure its impact.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. Through training and support for staff and governors it has contributed effectively to its improvement.

■ The governance of the school:

- The school benefits from the support of a strong and effective governing body. They offer the school considerable expertise and are rigorous in evaluating the quality of their own work and the impact they have on the school's performance. Governors ensure that all requirements, including those relating to child protection and safeguarding, are met. They set and review the headteacher's targets for improving the school conscientiously. They know about the targets that are set for teachers to improve their work, how pay is linked to pupils' progress and what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. Governors have a clear understanding of the link between teaching and pupils' achievement, and their effectiveness is enhanced through regular training. They understand how the school's results compare with those of other schools. Financial management is secure and governors are well informed about how the income received through pupil-premium funding is spent. However, they are less secure in their understanding of the impact that specific initiatives, financed through this additional income, has on pupils' progress.

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	112597
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	424962

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Cupit
Headteacher	Claire Whetstone
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2011
Telephone number	01663 744453
Fax number	01633 744453
Email address	enquiries@newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk

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