

Pollington-Balne Church of England Primary School

Balne Moor Road, Goole, DN14 0DZ

Inspection dates

27–28 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

- The rate at which Key Stage 2 pupils have made progress over the past three years does not compare favourably with pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, overall standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average, despite varying trends.
- Weaknesses in teaching since the last inspection have had an adverse impact on pupils' achievement, leaving gaps in their learning.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to learn independently and teachers' questioning does not always develop pupils' deeper understanding.
- Leadership and management requires improvement because the results of recent actions taken to boost the school's performance and improve the quality of teaching are yet to be fully seen.
- Senior leaders and governors need to strengthen links with parents.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school due to the leadership of the headteacher and continuous support and challenge from the governors. Currently, pupils' attainment and progress are improving quickly.
- Pupils feel safe at school. Behaviour has improved and is typically good during lessons and around the school. Attendance is improving.
- The 'Carousel' curriculum entuses pupils to want to learn and achieve well.
- Since the last inspection, weaknesses in teaching have been tackled through robust systems for performance management. Since September 2013, teaching and learning in lessons has improved for all year groups.
- Pupils know what they have to do to be successful in their learning. Marking gives pupils clear next steps to regularly work on in order to improve their learning further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight parts of lessons taught by three class teachers and the headteacher. One was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made other short visits to lessons and learning activities and attended an act of collective worship.
- The inspector analysed pupils' work and the school's data about their standards and progress.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with them during lessons and at break times.
- Pupils were observed as they moved around the school, at playtimes and in the dining hall.
- Meetings were held with a representative from the local authority, members of the governing body and with senior leaders.
- The inspector heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy.
- The inspector analysed a range of documentation, this included: safeguarding records and those relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; records of the monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of comments from 14 parents during a discussion carried out during the inspection, and 42 responses submitted to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View.
- Fifteen staff completed the voluntary staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Julie Harrison , Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school with three mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very few pupils speak English as an additional language and they have only joined the school this term.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding 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 who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- All three classroom teachers were appointed since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the recently improved quality of teaching remains as least so over time in order to raise standards and accelerate progress further in reading, writing and mathematics across the school by:
 - ensuring all pupils are given more opportunities to learn independently and to manage their own learning
 - improving teachers' questioning so that pupils of all abilities are challenged to deepen their thinking
 - filling in the gaps in pupils' learning due to previous weak teaching to accelerate their progress.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - further improving achievement and the quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics in all key stages
 - developing the Parent Council to strengthen links with parents.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because attainment and progress over the past three years in reading, writing and mathematics has been below national expectations.
- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are below those typically expected for their age. They settle into school life quickly but by the time they enter Year 1, most are still working at a level below that typical for their age due to progress that requires improvement. However, the current cohort is showing a better rate of progress.
- Pupils continue to make expected progress throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment at the end of year 6 is still below national expectations. Pupils' progress has not been better because of previous weaknesses in teaching.
- At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average but trends across key stages vary. Improvements were seen in 2012 in Key Stage 1 for reading and mathematics but then all three subjects declined in 2013. Key Stage 2 has shown a decline in reading and mathematics for the past two years. However, this decline has now been halted, because current school data show better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics for all year groups, which is improving standards. The current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have already achieved a higher standard than the previous cohorts.
- The small size of the cohorts has a significant impact on varying trends in attainment and progress between subjects and especially for the very small groups including the most able, the few eligible for the pupil premium and those who speak English as an additional language. Currently, additional support is quickly put in place to close any gaps and to accelerate the learning for these pupils. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language have settled well into school and are making good progress with their speaking and listening skills.
- In 2013, the very few pupils supported through pupil premium funding were much closer to the national average for reading, writing and mathematics than their peers by the end of Year 6. They made similar progress in reading and better than expected progress in writing and mathematics than other pupils.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 read new and unfamiliar words confidently because they have a good understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics). Year 1 pupils achieve above national expectations in this skill. By the end of Year 6, pupils are becoming confident readers.
- Even though performance data for writing is low, the standards of pupils' written work is improving quickly and shows that pupils are now making better than expected progress.
- There is a similar picture in mathematics where pupils are given opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge. Year 2 pupils successfully completed their 'Snowman' shopping lists using various mathematical strategies. The most-able pupils are continually challenged in Year 5 and Year 6, especially when adding fractions with different denominators to form a complex jigsaw.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has fluctuated due to weaknesses in teaching. However, recent school data shows these pupils are now making better progress across the school because teachers understand their individual needs and they are well supported during lessons and intervention activities. The gap is now closing between the standards they reach and those of their classmates.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and all pupils have the chance to succeed.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Weaknesses in teaching since the last inspection have had an adverse impact on pupils' learning and achievement overtime and so teaching requires improvement. However, since September 2013, improved teaching has ensured that all year groups are receiving consistently good teaching and pupils' attainment and progress is rising quickly.

- In the most effective lessons, teachers expect the best from pupils and activities are planned thoroughly. Teachers know their pupils well and understand their different capabilities. Pupils know what they have to do to be successful and the pace of work is brisk. All groups are given sufficient challenge and the relevant support when required. Pupils work well together; supporting each other's learning.
- Teaching is less effective when questioning does not deepen pupils' thinking or there are missed opportunities for pupils to work independently and so take some responsibility for their own learning.
- Some pupils have gaps in their learning as a result of previously weak teaching but this issue is being addressed. For example, the headteacher is teaching Year 3 and 4 pupils daily for literacy and numeracy and there are three smaller classes with fewer year groups.
- Pupils use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to support their reading and spelling. Year 1 pupils segmented and blended words during a spelling test and lower-ability Year 2 readers used the same strategy to read new words.
- Pupils' work on correcting grammar and punctuation to support their writing in different styles across the curriculum. During 'Snowman Carousel' activities, some Year 2 and Year 3 pupils produced accurate instructions on how to make a snowman with appropriate diagrams or wrote an acrostic poem based on a well-known story with comments such as 'a nose made of tangerines' and 'over the houses flew the snowman'.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage improve their creative and cutting skills when making and decorating snowmen and stars; at the same time staff focus on improving the children's speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching assistants are successful in building pupils' self-confidence and in helping them to learn and make good progress both within the classroom and during intervention activities. They support equally well the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language, those who are entitled to the pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is very thorough. In English and mathematics, strengths are highlighted and next steps for improvement are given. Pupils regularly respond to this advice to further improve their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and behave well throughout the school, especially on the stairs and during break times. This results in a calm and friendly learning environment.
- Pupils enjoy school, they play and work well together and are keen to learn. The school's behaviour policy is effectively used when any low-level misbehaviour occurs.
- Pupils say they feel safe and that behaviour has improved so 'bullying doesn't happen now'. They are confident that issues are dealt with quickly and effectively. They speak confidently on how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils take on various responsibilities including 'serving monitors' for hot dinners. The school provides healthy hot meals and pupils behave well throughout the meal.
- Attendance is improving and is now above the national average.
- Adults establish good relationships with pupils and provide effective strategies for improving behaviour. Incidents of poor behaviour are now rare.
- Pupils, staff, governors and the parents spoken to by the inspector state that the school provides a safe environment and that pupils enjoy school and behave well. However, responses to Parent View indicated a few concerns about pupils' behaviour. Governors have already decided to form a Parent Council to forge closer links with parents to help discuss these concerns.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because weaknesses in previous teaching

have had an adverse impact on achievement since the last inspection. However, these issues have now been addressed through a robust performance management system and the school is improving. Robust targets are set for teachers, training opportunities are offered and salary increases are linked to the achievement of these targets. Since September 2013 pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of teaching have improved quickly.

- The headteacher has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Her high ambitions are shared by staff and governors, who robustly scrutinise the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and work in pupils' books. They pursue the appropriate priorities to enable improvements to occur.
- Middle leaders are becoming more accountable for carrying out their roles and responsibilities. For example, the newly appointed leaders for special educational needs and the Early Years Foundation Stage have ensured pupils' attainment and progress is improving quickly.
- The 'Carousel' curriculum enthuses staff and pupils and supports various cross-curricular links. For example, the enjoyable Years 4, 5 and 6 physical education lesson on the Roman Army combined role play, instructions in Latin and English, a physical education warm up and coordinating marching activities. The various artistic, musical, cultural and sporting opportunities offered develop pupils' skills and knowledge and prepare them well to live in a diverse society.
- The new primary school sports funding is planned to involve the use of a sports coach and taking part in competitions with other schools and is intended to have a significant impact on pupils' physical well-being.
- The school meets safeguarding requirements.
- The local authority has provided support when required especially in helping with past staffing issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well led and discharges all of its statutory responsibilities. The governors are knowledgeable and have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. They constantly question the leadership team and hold the school to account for pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They understand the impact of weak teaching on achievement and the quality of teaching and, with the headteacher, have used the school's performance management system to tackle previous staffing issues competently. They were involved in the appointment of new staff. They decide whether staff should be rewarded with salary increases and review targets for the headteacher. They review the spending of the pupil premium grant and its impact on the achievement of the pupils on whom it is spent. Governors use their initiative. For example, they are currently setting up a Parent Council to better forge links with parents and to address any concerns they have.

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	118044
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	425825

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dawn Lewis
Headteacher	Hayley McNeill
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2011
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