

# Portway Infant School

Woodlands Road, Allestree, Derby, DE22 2HE

**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils reach standards which are well above average by the time they reach the end of Year 2. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- All pupils make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of effective teaching and the special arrangements the school makes for them. Progress seen in pupils' books was particularly good in English.
- The large majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good. A small proportion was outstanding, especially in Reception.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are unfailingly polite and friendly. They say they feel safe in school, that there is no bullying, and that adults can always be relied upon to give support when needed.
- The headteacher is passionate about ensuring that pupils make as much progress personally and academically as they can. She has managed recent upheavals within the leadership team and, as a result, the school continues to do well.
- Governors provide effective support and challenge to the school to improve further. Recent changes have been managed well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics across the whole school, while good, is not as strong as that found in reading and writing.
- Teachers sometimes set work for pupils that is too hard or too easy. They do not ensure that pupils are able to work on their own or find things out for themselves.
- Leaders do not observe learning in lessons enough. They focus too much on what teachers are doing rather than on how well pupils are learning.
- Pupils supported by extra funding do not reach standards as high as their classmates. This is particularly true in mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons. All permanent teachers were seen teaching.
- Four lessons were observed jointly with senior staff, two the headteacher and one each with the literacy and numeracy leaders.
- One inspector listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with senior staff, groups of pupils, and the Chair of Governors.
- One inspector had a telephone conversation with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school's website; pupils' assessment information; the school improvement plan, and headteacher's reports to the governing body.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work books and files, school policies, and other documents including those relating to the curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 24 responses to the staff questionnaire
- Inspectors spoke with several parents, and considered 65 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David West

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This infant school is a little smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- Each year group comprises three classes. The school is oversubscribed and expanding.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is low. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those children looked after by the local authority and children from service families.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- There have been recent changes to the senior leadership of the school.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that those pupils supported by the pupil premium reach standards comparable to their peers, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - providing sharply focused and timely extra help for those pupils who need it
  - providing additional mathematical resources and materials to support learning in all classes
  - giving pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by making sure that:
  - teachers plan work which is neither too hard nor too easy, especially for more-able pupils, and encourages pupils to work on their own and find things out for themselves
  - teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of, and consistently challenge them to make faster progress and reach even higher standards in mathematics
  - leaders at all levels, including subject leaders, check the amount of new learning going on in lessons with more frequency and greater rigour
  - leaders always record their evaluations of learning so that clear feedback can be given to teachers to help them improve.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception classes from many different settings, with skills and knowledge that are above what is typical for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that the large majority reach expected levels or better by the end of their time in those classes.
- Children in the Reception classes are typically able to follow up discussions about particular topics, and independently write correctly constructed sentences using well-spaced words with capital letters and full stops.
- Achievement is good because the school is successful in maintaining standards that are consistently above average. Pupils of all abilities make equally good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive excellent support in school. This is through a mixture of individual, paired or small-group work, carefully tailored to meet individual circumstances.
- As a result, pupils are helped to become fully involved in everything that the school has to offer. They make good and at times outstanding progress. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In Year 1, in 2013, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics (how letters and sounds link together) reading check was broadly average.
- The school's provision for pupils with a statement of special educational needs is strong. A number of parents made this clear to inspectors. Parents are fully involved in all decisions and are kept very well informed about their child's progress. The school enjoys the full confidence and support of parents.
- Reading is valued throughout the school. Pupils are able routinely to borrow books. Their reading records show that they read widely and often, both in and out of school.
- In 2013, those pupils eligible to receive support through the pupil premium were between two and three terms behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has used its pupil premium funding to provide general support for eligible pupils. Care is taken to make sure that these pupils are able to take part in all that the school has to offer. Though the standards reached by eligible pupils are above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics, the school has identified that it has not given sufficient specific support in mathematics until this year. Pupils have not received clear enough guidance on how to improve, nor have they received additional support quickly enough.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and pupils get on very well together. Almost all classrooms present welcoming, well-resourced and vibrant environments to motivate and inspire learning.
- Teachers make sure that the purposes of the lesson are clearly shared with pupils and, as a result, pupils have a good understanding of the focus of the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers provide many opportunities for discussion where pupils can exchange their views and opinions.

In these lessons, teachers encourage pupils to try things out for themselves.

- The strongest teaching is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where Reception class children are inspired by their teachers' enthusiasm and subject knowledge. They become absorbed in their learning, usually in small groups, whilst often being oblivious to external distractions. They learn at a very rapid rate and are highly productive. They talk convincingly about what they learned, and they know how well they are doing. The Nativity season presented many opportunities for fertile vocabulary development, for independent writing, for role-playing and for outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers and a skilful team of teaching assistants provide good support for those who need extra help, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This means that work is set at the right level, or provides appropriate catch-up to previous misunderstandings.
- Some outstanding lessons were seen; for example, a Year 2 dance lesson where pupils were enthusiastically engaged in developing their own group ceilidh. However, teaching is not yet outstanding overall. On occasion, the same piece of work is set for the whole class, which means that it is too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. More-able pupils often completed many examples correctly, particularly in mathematics, without being offered more challenging tasks to stretch them. Not enough new learning was taking place.
- Marking is regular and of very good quality in English, where it often guides pupils towards improvements. It is less informative in mathematics, where it sometimes celebrates the amount of work done and number of calculations made correctly, rather than specifically pointing pupils to what they need to do to improve.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils want to do well and they have positive attitudes to learning. They are consistently polite and well mannered. They have caring attitudes to each other and get on well together. They listen carefully to instructions and are keen to try their best. They are always prepared to answer questions, and have the confidence to politely ask their own questions if they are uncertain.
- Pupils show an interest in visitors, can tell them about school life, and can describe what they are learning about.
- Behaviour in all areas of the school is good. Lunchtimes are well ordered. Pupils pick up very quickly on the calm and respectful attributes consistently shown by teachers and other adults.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and are quite certain that there is no bullying. They like coming to school, as their above average attendance shows, because, as one pupil said, 'We all just get on so well here, because its naughty not to.'
- Pupils are aware of some of the dangers that are around them, but are also certain that they can ask for help from any adult and they are very confident that any 'bad things' will be dealt with swiftly by the headteacher.
- Sometimes, pupils are not given enough encouragement to work on their own and to find things out for themselves. This results in pupils being overly dependent on their teachers and occasionally not giving their full attention to the lesson.

## The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has provided clear and steadfast leadership during times of some staffing difficulties and changes in governance. High standards have been maintained, and the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection have been dealt with.
- The school's leaders, including governors, share a vision and commitment to improve the school.
- Staff morale is high. Teachers and other adults are well deployed, and their skills are recognised and nurtured. Continuing professional development through training or visits to other schools is regularly made available.
- The school's view of itself is accurate, because it is based on the progress pupils make, not simply on the standards they reach. The headteacher has identified inconsistencies in performance between subjects, for example reading and mathematics, and between groups of pupils, and has begun to take effective actions to address them.
- The quality of teaching is monitored closely by the headteacher. She knows the strengths and skills of her teachers very well. She does not always record what she has seen in different lessons, and this means that feedback on areas to improve sometimes lacks a little precision. Subject leaders are not involved enough in the scrutiny of teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs in literacy, a little less so in mathematics. It supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. Pupils have many opportunities to be involved in 'hands-on' practical work which gives them a good understanding of the world around them. Extra funds to support physical education have allowed the school to strengthen the skills of its own teachers.
- Discrimination of any kind is simply not tolerated in this school. The school intends that all pupils have equal opportunity to succeed. The gap in standards between those eligible for the pupil premium and other groups in 2013 has already been investigated by the school. Provision is being revised to ensure the gap in standards is markedly narrowed.
- Parents who responded to Parent View and those who spoke to inspectors hold the school in high regard. They place a high value on the all-round education the school provides for their children.
- The local authority considers the school to be 'light touch', rightly judging that its performance is good. The school accesses specific training when required.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is ably led by a new Chair, who is highly motivated and very focused on securing further improvements. The governing body has developed its procedures for supporting the school and checking its performance. It knows what is happening in school, how the school is managing the performance of staff, and what the quality of teaching is like. Governors know what the school is doing to reward good teachers and tackle underperformance. Governors have a sharp understanding of school performance data, and have identified their own priorities for action. Governors keep a watchful eye on the school's budget, and on the additional funding coming into school. They know how this is used and they are able to assess its impact. This is particularly the case with respect to the pupil premium. Governors are appropriately experienced and trained for their role. They maintain

very close scrutiny of the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112740
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	425072

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kay Walker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Walker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 550702
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