

Wath Victoria Primary School

Sandymount Road, Wath-upon-Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S63 7AD

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 majority of pupils make progress at the expected rate. Very few exceed this.
- Less-able pupils, which include many supported by the pupil premium, are not achieving enough in lessons. They are not, therefore, catching up with other pupils quickly enough.
- Not enough teaching is good or outstanding.
- In some lessons, work is not adapted precisely enough to provide the correct level of challenge for all pupils.
- In some lessons, pupils are insufficiently motivated or involved in learning activity.
- Behaviour and attitudes are not consistently good. They sometimes slip when pupils are required to work independently.
- Leaders and managers have only recently eradicated weak teaching and good teaching is not sufficiently established to ensure that all pupils can accelerate their progress and catch up on the standards they should be attaining.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, governing body and recently established senior leadership team have successfully raised the quality of education from a very low level.
- Their success in improving achievement so far shows they have the capacity to raise standards further.
- Provision and children's progress are good in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work have improved significantly.
- The learning mentor provides exceptionally good support for pupils with significant behavioural and emotional difficulties.
- Attendance is improving rapidly from a very low level and is now close to the national average.
- Senior leaders plan good additional support for the lowest achieving pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- A new, more interesting curriculum motivates pupils and helps them to extend their reading and writing skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and pupils' achievement in 17 lessons.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, heard pupils reading in Years 2 and 3 and looked at exercise books from each class.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, four members of the senior leadership team, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB), six parents and carers and two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors read management documents relating to school evaluation, pupils' progress, the monitoring of teaching, improvement planning, pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Staff were not required to complete questionnaires for this inspection. No parents or carers responded to the online survey, ParentView.

Inspection team

John Rutherford, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynne Davies	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This school is similar in size to most primary schools nationally.
- Almost half of the pupils are supported by pupil premium funding, which is well above average. The pupil premium is extra money provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- An above-average percentage of pupils receive support at school action and school action plus levels for their disability or special educational needs. A very small number are supported with a statement of special educational needs.
- The previous inspection placed the school in special measures because of serious concerns about the quality of education and pupils' achievement. The headteacher took up her position in the term following this inspection. She has established a new senior leadership team and led significant changes to staffing.
- The school has been governed by an IEB since going into special measures.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set a minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is scheduled to become a sponsored academy in spring 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable more pupils to accelerate their progress above the expected rate by establishing more good and outstanding teaching. There should be a particular focus on:
 - planning lessons and group activities that have a much sharper focus on the learning of new skills
 - enthusing pupils with more interesting lessons
 - raising the levels of challenge for all groups
 - ensuring all pupils are involved and learning during whole-class teaching sessions.
- Ensure that the less-able pupils, including those who are supported by the pupil premium, achieve more in lessons by:
 - setting much more focussed, short-term targets for the learning of new skills
 - planning activities that more precisely meet their particular learning needs
 - introducing more challenge into their learning activities
 - improving their skills in working independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because stimulating learning activities are well planned to match their needs and interests. Most activities help them to develop their language skills. Their skills and knowledge are broadly in line with national expectations by the time they go into Key Stage 1.
- Between Years 1 and 6 the majority of pupils make progress at the expected rate in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are therefore broadly average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Few pupils make better than expected progress by the end of Year 6 because they do not receive a continuous provision of good and outstanding teaching and their progress dips in some classes.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium are around one term behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. Their progress is improving but this is at the same rate as all pupils; therefore they are not yet catching up.
- The less-able pupils are helped to accelerate their progress with well-planned programmes that meet their individual needs. This includes disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, many pupils supported by the pupil premium and other pupils in the lowest achieving 20%. Their progress, however, is slower in lessons because activities are not precisely planned to help them make the necessary short steps of progress towards their personal goals.
- In general, pupils make better progress in reading than in other subjects. This is because teachers have improved their skills in teaching the basic skills of reading and how to understand text. The teaching of letters and sounds has improved considerably in the younger age groups and, for the older pupils who have missed out on this, there are effective programmes of support to help them catch up.
- Pupils' writing is improving rapidly. This is helped by teachers providing a wider and more interesting range of purposes for writing in many subjects, for example protecting the rain forest and researching the impact of building developments in the locality.
- Many pupils are beginning to achieve well in gymnastics because leaders use the government's primary school sports funding effectively to buy specialist physical education teaching.
- Parents are happy with the improvement in their children's progress. They say that 'the academic side is much more driven now; there is much more push'.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is improving and there is no longer any inadequate teaching. While there is good and outstanding teaching, there is not enough of it to help pupils sustain good progress between Years 1 and 6. Teaching therefore requires improvement overall.
- Pupils' progress slows down in lessons that are not sufficiently focussed on the learning of a new skill. Some activities therefore repeat previous work or are no more than time-filling.
- In these lessons, activities are not interesting or challenging enough to motivate pupils to work hard and accelerate their progress. They spend too long sitting listening without challenging questions or tasks to keep them focused on learning their new skills.
- The less-able pupils, in particular, are often not challenged enough and are rarely required to tackle problems without support.
- Pupils' progress is much better in lessons where questions and group activities are carefully planned to provide the correct level of challenge for all pupils. Pupils are taught to work independently and to apply themselves to challenging tasks.
- Interesting activities linked to topic work or current affairs motivate pupils to work hard and make better progress. For example, in the week of Nelson Mandela's funeral, pupils researched, discussed and wrote about how he created harmony in a divided society. This helped pupils to

extend their reading and writing skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many, for example, understood the importance of tolerance and forgiveness in bringing about a cohesive community. Parents, rightly, see this work as a strength in their children's education.

- Teachers, with good support from senior leaders, use information about pupils' progress to identify those who are falling behind and to plan additional support which helps them to achieve more. Not all of the pupils sustain this improved achievement because work in many lessons does not link closely enough to their support.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The teaching of letters and sounds is a particular strength because it is supported by interesting practical activities that help the children to understand as well as to say the words. The children, therefore, make rapid progress in their early reading development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- In discussion with inspectors, parents highlighted a significant improvement in behaviour since the previous inspection, but also pointed out that more work is still required. Their view matches inspection evidence.
- Incidents of significant misbehaviour occur but they are much less frequent than before and are managed expertly by the learning mentor and staff.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour in lessons are mostly positive. The main exceptions are a minority of pupils who have not developed the ability to settle to work independently without direct supervision from adults.
- The majority of pupils are keen to learn. They deepen their understanding by discussing their work with adults and other pupils and they persevere with challenging problems until they master them. This helps them to accelerate their progress.
- The learning mentor provides very effective support, guidance and firm challenge to pupils with significant behavioural and emotional developments, and to their families. As a result the attendance of these pupils has improved considerably, their misbehaviour is greatly reduced and most of them make the same progress as all other pupils.
- Other staff have learned much by working with the learning mentor, therefore there is a consistent approach to improving pupils' behaviour across the school. The learning mentor keeps detailed records of all misbehaviour and poor attendance and his accurate analysis helps staff to target support where it is most needed.
- Through well-planned work on other cultures and the use of computers, pupils have a good understanding of the detrimental effects of racism and cyber-bullying and how to avoid them. In general, they feel safe from bullying and school records support their view that it is rare and always dealt with effectively.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Senior leaders and the governing body manage the performance of teachers well. They have removed inadequate teaching and promoted the strongest teachers into positions from which they help others to improve. Their support for teachers needing improvement is a key strength of the school.
- Leaders' evaluation of teaching and achievement is accurate. They know where weak areas remain and have sharply focused plans to tackle them.
- Leaders monitor the progress of groups of pupils in detail and know precisely where to target additional support to ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Based on this information they have used pupil premium funding effectively to provide eligible pupils with resources, additional teaching and access to constructive out-of-school activities that they would not otherwise have. These pupils are therefore accelerating their progress. However, this is no faster than other groups because some teachers have not had the training they require

on how to build on additional support in their lessons.

- Leaders have introduced a rich, interesting curriculum and they increase its positive impact through intensive week-long programmes of study in one subject. This enables pupils to extend their skills considerably in a short time and it helps teachers to deepen their knowledge of the subject and how to teach it more effectively. A recent art week, for example, has resulted in pupils demonstrating a range of new skills in very attractive and carefully produced work.
- Parents are kept well informed about their children's targets and how to support their learning at home. Written responses from parents, following target-setting meetings, show that the school has gained the support of a large number who are willing to help in this way.
- The school meets safeguarding requirements.
- The local authority has made a strong contribution to the school's recovery. They have monitored its progress closely and tailored additional support accurately to its priorities for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The IEB provides strong governance which has helped the school to remove its causes for concern. They monitor the progress of the school closely, often visiting to see the impact of new methods on teaching and achievement.
 - They give senior leaders appropriate support, especially with difficult staffing situations. They also ask searching questions when they see that some pupils are not making enough progress.
 - They make a strong contribution to planning for the school's future, especially in relation to the forthcoming conversion to academy status. They have ensured that this process has not diverted school leaders away from the essential task of improving pupils' achievement.
 - The IEB has been helped to fulfil its responsibilities by the headteacher who has kept them fully up to date with clear information about the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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	106887
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	427678

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	272
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Richards
Headteacher	Ruth Bessant
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2012
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