

Grange Primary School

Station Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 2DU

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2014

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

- Overall attainment at Key Stage 2 declined to average in 2013. Pupils' attainment in writing has been lower than should have been expected at the end of Year 6 in the last three years.
- Extra government funding is not used effectively to raise the achievement of eligible pupils, especially in writing.
- A few weaknesses in teaching hold back the development of pupils' writing skills.
- Teachers do not consistently have high enough expectations for pupils' progress or plan lessons that enable pupils to acquire and to apply their skills systematically and quickly.
- Teachers do not always check carefully on how well pupils understand new ideas to help guide their learning.
- Some leadership roles and responsibilities are not fully developed across the school. This limits the contribution these leaders make to checking up on pupils' teaching and learning and to improving the school's effectiveness.
- Governors have not yet developed the skills and in-depth knowledge of all aspects of the school's work to enable them to be fully effective in holding leaders to account for the school's performance.

The school has the following strengths

- Most pupils from Nursery to Year 2 make good progress.
- Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading rose to above average in 2013.
- Mathematical skills are usually taught well.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, and behave well in lessons and around school. Their attendance is above average. The school ensures they are kept safe.
- Senior leaders have very accurate views of the school's priorities and have good plans in place to tackle them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 24 lessons taught by 20 teachers or teaching assistants. Four of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher or deputy headteachers.
- Samples of pupils' work in writing and mathematics were analysed. An inspector listened to a sample of Year 2 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 29 questionnaires completed by staff and the 40 responses by parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspection team also took into account a few letters which they received from parents and the results of the school's own recent survey of parents' views. An inspector spoke informally to some parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; consultants' reports; the school improvement plan; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Aitken, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pippa Jackson-Maitland	Additional Inspector
Lesley Sanderson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for certain groups such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, is broadly average.
- 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.
- Significant changes in staffing took place in September 2013. Five teachers joined the school and several teachers were allocated to classes in key stages where they were less experienced.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have high expectations for the quality of work pupils can produce, especially in English lessons
 - choose lesson activities carefully to enable pupils to acquire and to apply new learning systematically and at a brisk pace
 - make good use of assessment to check on how well pupils are learning in lessons and re-shape tasks as necessary.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by ensuring that:
 - close attention is paid to pupils' handwriting and presentation and any mistakes are corrected as they occur
 - good use is made of questioning to enable pupils to develop their ideas in greater depth
 - pupils have more opportunities to research topics, to use resources such as dictionaries and to write at length in different subjects
 - pupil premium funding is targeted sharply to support eligible pupils who are making less than expected progress in this skill.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders identify and check up closely on the achievement of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding
 - senior staff have more opportunities to share their expertise with colleagues
 - subject leaders and those with other responsibilities lead improvements more effectively by making good use of data to analyse pupils' achievement
 - governors receive more training and acquire a more informed knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning to enable them to hold school leaders more effectively to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Over the last three years, after a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and generally above average attainment by the end of Year 2, pupils' progress has slowed in Key Stage 2. This is particularly evident in writing. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2013 was no better than average.
- The proportions of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 who made expected progress in reading and mathematics compared favourably with national averages. The proportions of pupils who exceeded expected progress were below average in writing and mathematics.
- Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in writing has been below average at both the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 for the last three years. A few weaknesses in the teaching of writing hold back pupils' progress in this skill. Pupils, including the more able, do not have enough good opportunities to research topics, to use resources such as dictionaries, or to write at length in different subjects to improve their standards in writing. Only a few more-able Year 6 pupils combine a wide range of sentence openers, subordinate clauses and ambitious vocabulary in their accounts.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of most other groups of pupils. Leaders have not used data sharply enough to check on these pupils' progress and to adapt support precisely to meet their needs.
- The school has not succeeded in closing or reducing all gaps in attainment between different groups. Year 6 pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding in 2013 were, on average, working one and a half terms behind their classmates in reading and mathematics and three and a half terms behind in writing.
- Children join the Nursery with levels of skills and aptitudes which are below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in Reception, and their attainment at the start of Year 1 is broadly average, although their reading and writing levels are slightly weaker.
- Most pupils also do well in Key Stage 1. Results in the Year 1 screening test for phonics (the sounds that letters make) have been above the national averages for boys and girls in the last two years.
- Year 2 pupils can explain their reasons for enjoying reading. They use their decoding skills well to read new or 'difficult' words, and use their comprehension skills capably to recall texts and to predict how the narratives might unfold.
- The overall picture in Key Stage 2 is now improving. Variations in rates of progress between year groups have been largely eliminated and Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading rose to above average in 2013. However, overall attainment in Year 6 remains average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has been too variable, especially in writing, to ensure that pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2.

- Teachers do not consistently make good use of questioning to improve pupils' speaking skills, to develop their ideas and so to prepare them to carry out their writing tasks well. Teachers' expectations for what pupils, including the more able, can produce are sometimes too low in English lessons. An occasional over-reliance on worksheets prevents pupils from writing in depth, using a variety of sentence constructions, in other subjects. Pupils do not have sufficient access to a wide range of resources to research, to edit and to enrich their writing. Handwriting errors and weaknesses in the presentation of their written accounts are sometimes overlooked by staff.
- Not all staff intervene at the right moment to assess and to re-direct pupils' learning or plan very effectively to enable pupils to acquire and to apply new skills quickly.
- Effective teaching in some short-term programmes has helped some individual disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to keep up with their classmates. The progress made by other pupils in this group is sometimes inconsistent. In general, better use is made of teaching assistants in mathematics lessons to reinforce and accelerate these pupils' learning.
- In the best lessons, pupils acquire knowledge quickly because teachers focus very closely on the concepts and skills they wish pupils to develop and plan an enjoyable variety of activities to enable them to do so. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson, the teacher used an intriguing question and answer game to recap pupils' knowledge of basic facts on electrical circuits. She then questioned pupils expertly to deepen their understanding of the topic and to enlarge their knowledge of scientific terms, such as 'filament'. This enabled pupils to explain confidently the difference in the properties of conductive and insulating materials.
- Mathematical skills are usually taught well. Teachers have good expectations for pupils' progress in the subject and provide tasks which engage and challenge pupils of differing abilities. They are alert to, and build on, pupils' responses to deepen their understanding. This encourages pupils to persevere, for example in working through different strategies for solving problems.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Children settle well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Clearly established routines and firm expectations for children's behaviour ensure children work well together. Pupils are considerate and help each other when tidying up or when someone stumbles in the playground.
- Pupils in all classes have positive attitudes to learning. On a few occasions, this can vary between lessons if the topic or the teacher's methods do not capture their interest or attention. Most pupils work hard in lessons and try their best to answer teachers' questions.
- Most staff manage pupils well and relationships are nearly always respectful and supportive. This encourages pupils to behave sensibly in corridors and in the dining hall and at lunchtimes. Pupils are fully aware of the very small minority who sometimes spoil things for others in lessons and the playground, and handle them tactfully.
- There have been no exclusions in the last five years and pupils' enjoyment of the wider aspects of school life, including trips and extra-curricular activities, is shown by their attendance which is consistently above average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff keep detailed, up-to-date records of any minor incidents and accidents which occur and the actions they take to follow them up.

The letters received by the inspection team from parents commend the support given by staff, often when their family or child has encountered unexpected, trying circumstances. Nearly all parents who responded to the questionnaires and/or spoke to an inspector indicated that their children were well cared for in school.

- Pupils say that they trust staff, including the 'worry councillor', to look after them and that staff step in quickly to deal with any bullying matters. There have been no recorded incidents of homophobic bullying in the last two years.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and are clear what to do in the event of a fire. Some pupils are appointed as risk assessors to check aspects of site security. Older pupils are taught about cyber-bullying and stranger danger. Pupils know that they have to handle equipment in science lessons with care to avoid potential danger, for example from electric shocks.
- Staff work effectively to create a community spirit, for example by creating opportunities for pupils from different year groups to work together. Pupils feel that they have a voice in school affairs through the school council and provide a useful service to pupils in other important ways, for example through running the tuck shop at breaktimes.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Substantial changes in the teaching staff and among subject leaders have reduced the capacity of senior leaders to tackle variations in pupils' achievement and to raise the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Senior staff, including the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, have limited opportunities to check the work of their colleagues and to share their expertise.
- Subject leaders and those with other responsibilities have not made sufficient use of assessment information to review pupils' achievement across all year groups and to enable them to make a significant contribution to school improvement. While there are some strengths in the leadership of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, the coordinator has just started to use data to check on the impact of support programmes.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium are not closely monitored in the school's tracking system. Senior leaders are unable to demonstrate clearly that government funding has been targeted sharply to support this group of pupils and to tackle weaker areas in their skills, such as writing, effectively.
- Senior leaders have very accurate views of the school's overall effectiveness. They have detailed, sharp plans for improving the school progressively as staff settle into their new classes and responsibilities. These plans are at the early stages of being implemented.
- Senior leaders have demonstrated their capacity for securing improvement by adapting the curriculum, through a range of measures including staff training and lessons in guided reading, to raise standards in this skill in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered adequately through the curriculum and in lessons where, for example, pupils weigh up arguments for and against the use of mobile phones or keeping animals in captivity. However, there are few planned opportunities outside the classroom to promote pupils' wider awareness of cultural diversity.
- The local authority has worked effectively with school leaders to ensure that they are very clear about priorities for the school development plan and how to go about achieving them.

- The first instalment of the recent national sports funding for primary schools has been spent suitably, for example in increasing the range of new sports available to pupils and in boosting pupils' participation in competitive events. In this work, leaders have considered carefully how vulnerable groups might be encouraged to take up physical activity.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Some vacancies on the governing body in recent years have resulted in much of its day-to-day involvement with the school being over-reliant on the work of a few key governors. Governors are aware that they need to undertake more training and increase the range of expertise on the governing body to contribute more effectively to school improvement.
- Governors do not have sufficient command of data to enable them to make accurate judgements about the achievement of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding and to help them make wise decisions about the allocation of these monies.
- Governors have not undertaken sufficient activities jointly with staff to enable them to acquire a first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning in the school and to hold senior leaders fully to account. They ensure that sensible decisions are taken about staff pay rises and promotion.
- Key governors are well informed about several other important aspects of the school's work. They know which staff require mentoring and support to ensure consistency in practice across year groups. They realise that new appointees will require time to settle in before significant improvements in pupils' achievement can be detected.
- Key governors know clearly that writing is pupils' weakest skill and can describe the actions leaders have taken to secure improvements in this area and in other aspects, such as marking.
- Governors make sure that the school's systems for safeguarding are secure and meet current national requirements.

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	112584
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	430689

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	462
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bruce Bignall
Headteacher	Michael Hannon
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2012
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