

Dogsthorpe Infant School

Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough, PE1 4LH

Inspection dates 17–18 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Pupils' progress is uneven in different classes and year groups.
- A lower-than-average proportion of pupils attain the higher National Curriculum levels.
- Teaching is not strong enough to promote good progress in all classes.
- In some lessons, the rate of learning is not quick enough and pupils are not actively involved in their learning.
- Tasks are not always pitched at a level that results in good progress, particularly for the most able.
- In a few lessons pupils are not clear about what they are expected to learn because they receive insufficient guidance.
- The checking of the progress of different groups of pupils and planning to bring about needed improvements are not always sharp enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in Reception make good gains in the areas of language, literacy and number work.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff have created a positive and safe environment for pupils to learn and develop.
- Positive action is being taken to improve teaching.
- There are examples of good and outstanding practice.
- A good range of additional activities are provided.
- Most pupils show a keen interest in learning and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for by all adults.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons. Some of these were seen jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff, a representative from the local authority, the Chair of Governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the results of the school's own parent survey.
- Pupils were heard to read and discussions were held with them about their reading.
- Questionnaires from 16 members of staff were analysed.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work, safeguarding procedures and the school's development planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Piers Ranger	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized infant school.
- Almost half of the pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a range of different ethnic heritages including Any Other White background, Pakistani, African and Indian.
- Nearly half of the pupils speak English as an additional language and this is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups.
- The leadership of the school is shared. The headteacher leads the school for three days a week. The deputy headteacher becomes the headteacher for the remaining two days.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching good or better in all classes so that pupils in all year groups make consistently good progress by making sure that:
 - pupils have clear guidance in all lessons about what they are expected to learn
 - teachers always set tasks that result in pupils making good progress, particularly the most able
 - learning in all lessons moves on at a good pace.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - carefully checking the progress of different groups of pupils
 - sharpening plans for improvement especially for the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Children enter the school with low attainment. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain broadly average standards. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly in Year 1, result in pupils making more progress in some classes than others. This variation in teaching is why pupils' learning and progress are not good.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 in 2011 was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Attainment has dipped and during the last two years it has been broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference by the end of Year 2 in attainment between different ethnic groups. Boys have tended to attain lower than the girls in writing. Given the low starting points on entry to the school these are positive outcomes. However, pupils' progress is too varied, especially in Year 1.
- A below average proportion of pupils attain the higher National Curriculum levels. In some lessons, tasks are not sufficiently demanding to extend the most able.
- In 2013, Year 2 pupils supported by the pupil premium attained lower standards in reading, writing and mathematics than the others. These pupils were about four months behind the others in reading, three months in writing and two months in mathematics. One-to-one tuition and small-group work are having a positive impact on the progress of those supported. However, the school's drive to close the gap is being hindered by variation in the quality of teaching. The results of the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) check are improving but are still below the national average. While there are examples of high quality teaching of phonics this strong practice is not consistent in all classes.
- Children enter Reception with knowledge, understanding and skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language skills. Children make good progress in language, literacy and numeracy. However, because of their low starting points, attainment by the end of Reception is below average.
- In many classes, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because of the well-planned opportunities for them to discuss their learning. They respond well to teachers' clear questioning.
- There are good examples of pupils' writing, particularly in Year 2 where pupils write successfully for different audiences and in different styles. For example, pupils wrote interesting accounts of the Great Fire of London using the past tense and in the role of Samuel Pepys. Handwriting is well formed. There are signs, especially in Year 2 that the gap in attainment between boys and girls is narrowing.
- Pupils often make good progress in mathematics. They use calculation and practical apparatus to solve a range of problems.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to their fellow class-mates. Where the teaching is good and better, these pupils make good progress because they are well taught and they receive effective guidance and support from teaching assistants. Pupils' progress requires improvement when teaching and support are less than good.
- Pupils are developing healthy lifestyles and physical fitness through physical education lessons

and a range of additional sporting activities. Specialist coaching for sports activities is provided by the primary school sports funding.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Variation in the quality of teaching means that pupils' progress is uneven from class to class. Inconsistencies in teaching are most marked in Year 1.
- In a few lessons, the purpose of the lesson is not sufficiently well conveyed to the pupils. When this happens, pupils are not clear about their learning and what they are expected to do.
- Teachers do not always plan tasks that results in all pupils making good progress. In particular, the work is often not sufficiently demanding to ensure the most able make the progress of which they are capable.
- In some lessons the pace of learning declines when teachers do not check to see that pupils are concentrating fully on what they are being taught.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the support they receive from teaching assistants is effective in most classes. However, when pupils are unclear about their learning and the tasks are not sufficiently engaging, pupils' learning declines.
- There are examples of good teaching in every year group. There are examples of outstanding practice in Year 2 and in support for reading.
- Where teaching is good or better, pupils are engaged and inspired to make good progress. Learning intentions are clearly conveyed and pupils are set challenging tasks that are pitched at the right level for all their abilities and needs.
- Pupils in a Year 1 class made good progress in solving capacity problems. They acquired and used mathematical vocabulary well. Pupils' learning was promoted effectively by the teacher's clear practical demonstrations and skilful questioning. Interesting and practical tasks were well-suited to pupils' needs, particularly the most able that were able to successfully make estimates and test out their predictions.
- In a highly effective Year 2 literacy lesson the teacher's enthusiasm, lively approach and secure subject knowledge motivated pupils to draw on their imagination and use interesting vocabulary in their writing. As a result, pupils made rapid progress in developing their writing skills and they had good opportunities to share their writing with the class.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour and safety continue to be strong elements of the school. Parents and carers who responded to Parent View and the school's own survey confirm that their children are happy, safe and well looked after. They believe that the school promotes good behaviour. These positive views are supported by the inspection findings.
- Children in Reception settle well into school and their behaviour is generally good. They enjoy their learning and develop good relationships with adults and other children. As a result, children in Reception make good progress in their personal and social development.

- In Years 1 and 2, most pupils show a keen interest in their learning, particularly when the teaching is lively and engaging. Some pupils told inspectors, 'I like art', 'I like finding out about space' and 'I enjoyed the work on The Great Fire of London'.
- In some lessons, when the teaching is engaging and inspirational, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are extremely positive. Where teaching is less than good, pupils can become restless and do not always produce sufficient work. This is why behaviour and safety are not outstanding.
- The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is usually good over time and that effective steps are taken to deal with any unacceptable behaviour. There are clear systems of rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils spoken to said they felt safe at school and very well looked after by adults. The inspection findings support these views.
- Pupils show a good understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including name calling and physical bullying. They correctly stated that bullying is 'hurting people' and 'saying mean things'. They are aware that bullying goes on and on. Pupils informed the inspectors that there was very little bullying in the school. They informed the inspectors that unpleasant behaviour, including bullying, is sorted out by staff.
- In an interesting assembly, pupils were fascinated by the gift in a mystery box. They had good opportunities to think about and reflect on the importance of giving to others. Pupils are cooperative, friendly and supportive. They show consideration and respect for others. They are developing a good understanding of different cultures and faiths within the community.
- Attendance has been below average but has shown steady improvement recently.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not fully effective in promoting good achievement and good teaching in all classes.
- While there are clear systems for checking the school's performance and planning for improvement, these are not always tightly focused. The analysis of the performance of different groups is improving but specific action to bring about improvement is not always sharp enough.
- The quality of teaching is checked by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the local authority. Senior leaders have a clear overview of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. The action taken to improve teaching where it is less than good has not been fully effective as there are too many lessons where pupils do not make sufficient progress.
- There are appropriate procedures for appraising the performance of teachers. Training and improvement targets are well linked to pupils' progress and school priorities.
- Key leaders of reading, writing and mathematics are developing in their role. Some are new to their posts.
- The curriculum provides an appropriate range of subjects and topics. Pupils enjoy the additional

activities, such as clubs and educational visits. The primary school sport funding has been effectively allocated to extend pupils' sporting opportunities and to train the staff in sporting activities. It is too early to see the impact of this work. Pupils successfully participate in the Peterborough Drama Festival.

- The pupil-premium funding is being properly used to provide eligible pupils with additional support. Specialist teachers of reading and numeracy are providing effective one-to-one and small-group support. Teaching assistants are providing a range of support.
 - The headteacher and staff have created a positive and welcoming place for pupils to learn and develop. There are no signs of discrimination and all pupils are valued and have full access to the activities on offer.
 - The local authority is providing good support to the school. Local authority advisers have reviewed pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Reports from visits are useful and provide clear pointers for improvement.
 - Not many parents completed the online survey, Parent View. However, over 100 parents returned the school's own survey. Both surveys indicate that the vast majority of parents are pleased with the care and education provided for their children.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors have a clear overview of pupils' attainment and progress, particularly children's attainment on entry and attainment by the end of Year 2. The governing body receives regular information about the quality of teaching in the school. Governors are aware that some of the teaching is less than good and raise questions to ensure that action is being taken to make needed improvements. Governors understand the requirements relating to the management of staff performance and ensure that promotion and salary increases are linked to pupils' progress. The governors have attended a range of appropriate courses to help improve their effectiveness. Safeguarding procedures meet all 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	110719
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	433159

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Smith
Headteacher	Gwyneth Mantom
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2010
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