

Park Primary School

Monmouth Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN2 4JP

Inspection dates 28–29 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement varies too much across the school, particularly in mathematics. Not enough pupils make more than the expected progress from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school.
- The most able pupils are not always given work that is hard enough to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- Teaching assistants are not always directed well enough so that they can assist pupils' learning.
- Teachers' expectations regarding pupils' progress and what they can achieve are sometimes too low. Pupils' work is often too hard or too easy.
- Teachers' marking does not help pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils across the school are not always provided with regular opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Some documents and evaluations are not yet sufficiently precise to easily identify the school's priorities.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, supported well by the staff and governors, is taking a strong lead in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils in Years 5 and Year 6 are presently achieving well because teaching is consistently good and often outstanding.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in lessons and around school.
- Pupils feel safe and like their school.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work.
- Reading is the most successful aspect of pupils' learning. They enjoy reading and use their skills to help them learn in other subjects.
- The governing body understands how well the school is doing and holds leaders to account effectively.
- The curriculum is much livelier than it was two years ago. Pupils enjoy visits and finding out things for themselves. They have many opportunities to enrich their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. All classes were seen at least once.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, representatives of the governing body, and groups of Year 6 pupils. A representative from the local authority was contacted by telephone.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's own data on pupils' achievement, minutes of meetings of the governing body, planning and monitoring records, and the records of how the school uses its funding, especially how money from pupil premium and primary school sport funding is spent. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also taken into consideration.
- They analysed the 16 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a parent questionnaire that the school has undertaken this year. Inspectors took into account the views of a number of parents spoken to during inspection.
- There were 24 responses returned by members of staff and taken into account by inspectors.

Inspection team

Michael Wintle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Salt

Additional Inspector

Edward Price

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is well above 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 looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and heritages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher has been in post for three and a half years.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than is usual join or leave the school at times other than the start of the school year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that it is always at least good in order to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - refining approaches to marking pupils' work so that teachers' comments focus on improvement and pupils respond accordingly
 - making sure work is always hard enough for the different groups of pupils in the class
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are used well across the whole lesson so that pupils make even quicker progress
 - providing regular opportunities for pupils of all abilities to solve problems and develop their mathematical skills in lessons
 - building on the work already started to ensure that all pupils have regular and sufficient opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills for a variety of purposes and in a wide range of subjects
 - sharing the good and outstanding teaching in the school.
- Further strengthen the effectiveness of the leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that information about what the school is doing is more precise so that it is clearer to all staff and governors which actions are being the most successful and which areas need further improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because the progress that pupils make is not always good enough across the school to ensure that they all reach the levels of attainment of which they are capable. While many pupils make the expected progress, too few make better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Achievement requires improvement because progress is not yet consistently good across all year groups and subjects, especially in mathematics. In part, this is because of weaker teaching in the past. However, strong leadership is bringing about improvements in its quality. This is helping pupils in all year groups to make faster progress, especially in reading and writing.
- Pupils now do better in reading and writing because teaching in these subjects is usually more effective in helping them to learn and make progress. In mathematics, pupils of all abilities do not have enough chances to solve problems and develop their mathematical skills and, as a result, they make slower progress.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They settle quickly in nursery and make a good start to their learning. Progress is good in their personal and social development because the children feel safe and enjoy being at school. However, sometimes the planned activities for them are too easy or too hard.
- By the time they start in Year 1, most pupils are still working at below average standards. In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make steady progress and, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics are broadly average and slightly above average in writing.
- By the end of Year 6, however, most pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is below the level expected for their age. In mathematics, standards have been below average for a number of years. It is clear that current pupils' progress is improving but there is still more to be done to help some pupils catch up, especially in mathematics.
- The large numbers of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times and who are new to learning English settle into school life quickly and, as a result, soon begin to make similar progress to their peers from their own individual starting points.
- The most able pupils make expected rather than good progress and, therefore, do not always reach the standards of which they are capable, especially in mathematics. This is because sometimes teachers do not challenge them with work that is hard enough throughout the lessons and so time is wasted repeating work they can already do.
- In Key Stage 1, the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) provides pupils with a firm start in their reading. Pupils say they enjoy reading and talk eagerly about their books. One Year 2 pupil said to one inspector that, 'I love reading because it's important.'
- At the end of Year 6 in 2013, pupils eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, were behind their classmates in English and mathematics by over one term's progress. School data and inspection evidence show that current pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium are now on track to match the attainment of their classmates in reading, writing and in mathematics in all year groups because of better teaching.
- Despite not providing fully for the most able, the school is committed to equal opportunities and provides effective support, particularly on a one-to-one level, to ensure that those pupils identified for support through school action, school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs make at least expected progress in relation to their starting points.
- Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are presently achieving well because teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. In a literacy lesson, excellent teaching meant all pupils were able to comment successfully on figurative and literal language. Pupils' engagement was very high and their progress was rapid.
- Improvements in the curriculum are having a positive impact on pupils' writing skills. Visits to places of historical interest such as Eden Camp, for example, provide pupils with memories and

ideas to include in their extended writing. Year 6 pupils speak fondly of such experiences.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Not enough of the teaching is consistently good. This means that pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Nevertheless, inspection evidence indicates that teaching is improving. During this inspection, much of the teaching seen was good and a small amount was outstanding.
- However, there is too much variation in the way pupils' skills are developed and extended. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. This is because they do not tackle problems which make them think deeply about mathematics and this slows their learning.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve, especially the most able pupils, are often not high enough. Too many teachers set tasks that are either the same or similar for all pupils. This means that work is too simple for some and too hard for others. This explains why not enough pupils reach the expected standards at the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics.
- In some lessons, pupils are busy and enthusiastic. This was so in a Year 1 lesson on literary tales. Effective questioning by the teacher encouraged pupils to be fully involved with their learning. The pace was swift and all pupils clearly enjoyed the class discussions.
- When they mark work, teachers' comments often do not inform pupils precisely how they can improve. Some books show simple comments repeated several times, with no sign that the pupil has responded to the advice given. Too many comments in mathematics books relate to presentation and handwriting and do not help to deepen pupils' mathematical thinking.
- Pupils have good opportunities to write across different subjects. Work completed in upper Key Stage 2 on the Egyptians and displayed showed pupils using mature vocabulary when they were learning about the tomb of Cleopatra. There were links between art, literacy, information and communication technology, and history. In mathematics, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in different subjects.
- The use of teaching assistants to deliver specific support programmes and to support learning in the classroom is good. Teaching assistants are used highly effectively in some lessons, but this is not always the case.
- Lessons were often lively and well structured, providing pupils with good opportunities to discuss their ideas. Pupils in a religious education lesson, for example, were encouraged to think deeply about the Christian ethos and how it is exemplified in everyday life. Pupils were very engaged and able to reflect and change their viewpoints as they found out more.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and behave well throughout the school, resulting in a calm and friendly learning environment.
- Pupils enjoy school and, as a result, their attendance is improving to a shade below average. They thrive on the school's warmth and friendliness and from the strong sense of community it has nurtured.
- Pupils say they are well supported in their learning and trust their teachers. The Junior Leadership Team meets regularly with members of staff to make sure pupils' views are heard. One pupil said, 'The headteacher and deputy headteacher listen a lot to what we have to say.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe. This is because they have formed trusting relationships with all staff. Pupils understand that bullying can happen in a range of ways, including through mobile phones. They say that there is no bullying in the school and are confident that, if incidents occur, the school would deal quickly with it.
- Parents express positive views about the school. Overwhelmingly, parents agree that the school

keeps children safe and that behaviour is good.

- Assemblies, class debate, links with the local schools and the many opportunities for pupils to work together contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is given strong emphasis. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the governing body, provides clear direction for the school. The rigorous programme of checks on the quality of teaching and learning taking place has started to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Decisions about staff pay rates are based solely on the quality of teaching.
- The leadership team has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas to develop. The plans for improvement correctly indicate the main priorities for the school. The headteacher is clear about how actions will improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. However, some of the information in the school improvement plans and the school's self-evaluation as a whole lacks precision in clearly identifying the impact of actions to improve provision. This makes it difficult for staff and governors to gain a quick overview of which actions are being the most, or the least, successful.
- School leaders recognised the need to extend the leadership and management responsibilities and introduced a programme to achieve this. This programme has been successful and leadership is now growing in confidence and all staff are regularly checking on the progress pupils make in all subjects.
- A significant innovation is a rigorous system for checking pupils' progress that allows the school to carefully analyse how well different groups of pupils are doing. This valuable analysis provides the school with a clear picture of the progress of pupils receiving the pupil premium, pupils identified who have special educational needs and all other groups. As a result, teachers are able to take swift action to support any pupil in danger of falling behind.
- There is a strong focus of developing teachers to be as good as they can be. The staff are unanimous that leaders do all they can to improve teaching skills and that teaching is improving. While subject leaders play an important role in improving the quality of teaching across the school, the sharing of best practice, so that the good teachers in the school share their expertise, is still limited and could be developed further.
- The school involves parents well by encouraging them to support their children's learning, for example, by sharing the children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage on a Tuesday morning.
- Pupils' personal development is nurtured very effectively and they are robustly safeguarded.
- The curriculum provides for learning in a full range of subjects and encourages enthusiasm for learning. The leadership of and provision for sport and physical education are growing strengths of the school. The primary school sports funding has increased the number of activities and has had a good impact on pupils' confidence and well-being.
- The local authority provides appropriate support to the school through annual review meetings.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, under the leadership of the two vice-chairs of the governing body, discharges all its statutory responsibilities well. The governors have high aspirations for the school. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and check that teachers' pay awards link to their performance. They assess the school's performance and budget well. They have a good understanding of school improvement data regarding the school's current performance and pupils' progress. Consequently, they have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas to develop. They have been successful in raising the profile of the school within the community. The governing body is well placed to help the school to improve and to move forwards.

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	106728
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	430858

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	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy West and Ian Rutherford
Headteacher	Wendy Adamson
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2012
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