

# Marlpool Junior School

Claramount Road, Heanor, DE75 7HS

**Inspection dates** 29–30 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Over time pupils of all abilities do not achieve as well as they should do.
- Some pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, do not make the progress expected of them from their different starting points.
- The quality of teaching is not always strong enough to bridge the gaps in pupils' learning.
- Some teachers do not plan well enough to make sure that activities are hard enough, including for less able pupils in mental mathematics.
- Teaching assistants occasionally do too much for pupils or sometimes do not do enough to help them understand their work.
- Some subject leaders are at an early stage in identifying areas for further improvement in areas for which they hold responsibility.
- The checks made of the work of the school are not always rigorous enough to identify if procedures are effective.

### The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Many pupils are currently making good progress and making up lost ground because teaching is now improving.
- Pupils are keen to do well and have positive attitudes to their work. Their behaviour in the classroom and around the school is almost always good. They understand how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Leaders and governors have accurately identified the most important priorities for further improvement and work well together to pursue the targets set.
- School leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching which ensures staff know what needs to be done to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed part of eight lessons and shorter group reading activities in three classes. Several of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, subject leaders for English and mathematics and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the responses of 45 parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also spoke to several parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books and heard some pupils read. She also looked at documents including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, records of the meetings of the governing body, planning and monitoring documents, and records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- The percentage of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, is close to the national average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The percentage supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is almost half that seen in most schools.
- The school is federated with a local infant school with which it shares a governing body.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Before and after the previous inspection there had been several staff changes. While one class is currently covered by temporary staffing arrangements, the staffing situation has largely become more settled.

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

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
  - make full use of assessment information to provide work that is always at the right level to challenge different groups of pupils
  - check that teaching assistants provide the appropriate amount of support to pupils.
- Accelerate the rate of progress made and raise achievement by:
  - ensuring that pupils entitled to additional support make similar progress to other groups in all areas of their learning
  - enabling pupils to develop secure mental mathematics skills so that they can carry out calculations speedily.
- Improve the checks made of the work of the school by:
  - developing the role of subject leaders so that they are able to identify areas for further improvement
  - ensuring that senior leaders rigorously check areas for which they hold responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In 2013, overall attainment in Year 6 was below national averages, especially in mathematics. The progress most pupils made was too slow, including the most able pupils and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils entitled to support from the pupil premium achieved in line with pupils nationally overall. However, they did not do as well as other groups of pupils across the school and were more than a year behind others in reading and more than a term behind in mathematics.
- Most pupils across the school have a reasonable grasp of grammar and punctuation, although spelling is not always secure. Pupils' reading skills are quite mixed and some older pupils are not always confident in working out irregular word patterns. Reading sessions are well organised and pupils working with the teacher in these are well challenged. More focus is now being placed on extending the way in which pupils either blend letters together or cut words into smaller parts to work out unfamiliar words.
- Progress in mathematics is still not as strong as in other areas, despite some improvements. More able pupils are currently doing well in mathematics as seen in an effective lesson when working out problems of ratio and proportion using the amounts stated in recipes. However, less able pupils do not make as much progress because tasks do not always interest them. Overall, pupils' mental mathematics skills are not always secure and sometimes they are slow in working out quite basic calculations.
- There is now a much keener focus on how staff support pupils to achieve well, including pupils entitled to the pupil premium, disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. The school now employs a part-time, experienced teacher to lead some of the support sessions and further training has been provided for teachers and teaching assistants.
- The sample of pupils' recent work, lesson observations, and data clearly show a better rate of progress is currently being made, especially by pupils in Years 5 and 6. While achievement still requires improvement overall, a growing proportion of pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds are now achieving well. Boys and girls generally make similar progress.
- Speaking and writing skills are usually in line with expectations for the age of pupils and are improving. Good progress was seen when pupils in Years 3 and 4 discussed what they already knew about the life of rich and poor children in Victorian times. Because they had enjoyed dressing as Victorian children earlier in the week, pupils' interest was captured and they enjoyed writing on small Victorian-style blackboards.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although the quality of teaching has improved and most of that seen during the inspection was good, teaching over time has not been effective enough. Because of this there are gaps in pupils' learning.
- The use of assessment information to provide activities that interest and challenge those of different abilities is mixed. Occasionally, teachers and support staff do not use the information they have on pupils' learning effectively enough. Therefore, some activities are too hard for some or too easy for others.

- At times, teaching assistants do either too much or too little to support pupils effectively. Some do not question the pupils thoroughly enough to assess their understanding. This results in pupils' learning not moving on quickly enough.
- Some pupils have targets in their books but this is not consistent across all years and classes. Some pupils clearly know their targets for improvement and the levels they are working at. Others are unsure and are not clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teaching is most effective where staff have consistently high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. They ensure the work is purposeful and engages those of all abilities through activities that interest all. The organisation of mathematics lessons based on ability groups ensures that more able pupils are well challenged. The marking of pupils' work identifies what the pupils have done well and some areas for improvement.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieved well when producing their own comic strip by researching the features of a super-hero and developing their stories in comic-strip style. They made good progress in deciding what imaginative language to use and recognising that some words such as 'Pow!' need specific punctuation. Here, teachers' effective use of both open questions and those directed at specific pupils urged them on to find even more interesting words and phrases to use.
- Classrooms are well resourced and some provide an interesting range of displays that celebrate pupils' achievement and stimulate their curiosity, including the study of the 1960s. This includes opportunities to carry out research using computers and links to art, resulting in good quality work reflecting the styles of the period.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils of all abilities have positive attitudes to their learning and most want to do well. Many are interested in what they are doing, especially when producing a comic strip featuring their super-hero. A growing number enthusiastically attend after school clubs, including those developed through utilising the new primary sports funding.
- Pupils' books show that most try hard with their work which is usually neatly presented. Discussions with pupils show they enjoy researching various topics and learning about Dr Barnardo. In lessons, most concentrate well and many are happy to work with a partner and share their ideas with the class. Occasionally, though, a few pupils do not make a lot of effort to join in discussions and wait for others to offer their ideas.
- Pupils show respect for each other and for staff. Relationships are strong as everyone appears to get on well together. When asked what their favourite thing about school is, several reply, 'The teachers'. Boys and girls work happily together and several say there are very few disagreements between pupils. Discussions with pupils confirm that most like school. Attendance has improved recently and is now above average.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They know that bullying is a repeated action and not just a single incident. Pupils can identify the different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying. They say in discussions there is little evidence of any form of bullying and that this would not be tolerated in school. They think there is a little bit of name calling but feel confident that staff would address this or any other issue if it became of concern.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. Checks are carried out on all adults to ensure their suitability to work with children. Careful measures are taken during the current building work to ensure that the site is kept secure. Almost all the parents who responded to the online questionnaire believe their children are kept safe and all of those spoken to think their children are safe and happy here.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Although there have been improvements in many key areas of the school's work, pupils do not yet make consistent enough progress to overcome gaps in their learning. Some improvements are recent and have not yet had time to take full effect.
- Most of the staff are supportive of the many recent changes and clearly understand their role in moving things forward. However, subject leaders for literacy and numeracy, while very enthusiastic, are still at a relatively early stage in fully developing their role and in recognising the steps for further improvement. For example, they have not yet rigorously analysed data to identify why progress is more limited in some classes than others.
- The checks the school carries out on different aspects of its work require some improvement because they are not always thorough enough to identify if there are minor inconsistencies. For example, planning in some Years 5 and 6 classes is better than in others, including in mathematics.
- The headteacher is leading the school with quietly determined but well-focused leadership. She has, for example, encouraged more links with the partner school to ensure consistency in assessment procedures. Joint lesson observations indicate the headteacher has an accurate understanding of what makes teaching good and of what needs to improve.
- The school's view of its own performance is generally accurate but does not always take sufficient account of recent dips in progress. Plans for improvement are focusing on the right priorities. This helps ensure the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- Leaders have put in place strategies to secure better teaching and pupil outcomes. There are now careful checks of pupil progress and frequent observations on the quality of teaching. Staff work with colleagues to model and share good practice. These features are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching that has improved in several areas since the last inspection.
- Checks of the effectiveness of teaching assistants are being made and additional training has been provided in some areas. However, as yet, this has not ensured consistently effective practice.
- Teachers' performance is monitored appropriately. Their targets and pay are linked to the school's priorities, especially pupils' progress.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school in the recent past. It now identifies that the school has improved and is no longer a major concern. It provides a suitable level of support to ensure that school resources and training continue to be targeted on the most important areas.
- The curriculum provides an interesting range of activities for the pupils who speak of their enjoyment of recent topics. There are strong links between subjects, such as history and literacy, with many carefully planned activities that encourage the pupils to write for a range of

reasons. Links between mathematics and other subjects are less strong.

- Leaders and governors make sure that there is no discrimination and that all pupils and their families are treated fairly. This ensures that everyone has equal opportunity to succeed. The school ensures that safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is secure with strong elements seen, for example in opportunities to compare and contrast the life of children in Victorian times and today. Pupils find out about other cultures including through recent topic work about chocolate, including finding out about life in Ghana.
- The school focuses on encouraging healthy lifestyles and promoting pupils well-being. The new primary sports funding is used effectively. A sports coach is working with staff to improve their skills in teaching a range of sports and by providing additional after-school activities. A positive impact of this has been the strong take-up for these activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body works effectively to ensure that this school continues to move forward. There are some strong elements, including the leadership of the Chair and Vice-Chair. Those governors who spoke to the inspector are very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about provision in school. Several have undertaken training and understand their role well. They are well-informed of the progress made recently and of the quality of teaching. Governors ensure that only good performance is rewarded financially. There is an accurate awareness of the challenges of such a large governing body. While there is only a standard number of meetings to cover the work of two schools, the numerous committee meetings ensure that there is more depth to discussions and that leaders are in a strong enough position to challenge the school in their role as critical friends. Governors work with senior leaders to ensure the school carries out checks of its effectiveness in key areas and that it meets the requirements to inform parents and ensure a safe environment for all.

## 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>	112561
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	430575

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Acikgaz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Hill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 712505
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