

Delph Side Community Primary School

Eskdale, Tanhouse, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 6ED

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

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

- Since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement, particularly for pupils who need help with their work and the most able, has not been as good as it should have been.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to use and extend the calculation skills they already know to solve number problems in mathematics lessons.
- Teachers do not always give pupils work that meets their learning needs. This means pupils do not make enough progress in some lessons.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always help pupils to improve. Not enough time is provided for pupils to follow up on the advice given.
- Pupils do not have enough time to exercise and improve their writing skills in different subjects.
- Leadership and management require improvement because middle leaders are not involved fully in checking the quality of teaching or how well pupils learn.
- Governors have not checked fully with senior leaders that all pupils are achieving the best they can.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Dynamic leadership from the new headteacher is leading to improvements in teaching.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe and well cared for by all adults.
- Lessons provide well for pupils' physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lesson one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, a group of parents and groups of pupils.
- A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined the school’s own documentation relating to pupils’ progress, school self-evaluation and policies relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also scrutinised the work in pupils’ books.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6. They spoke informally to pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- There were no parental responses received at the time of the inspection from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors took account of parent responses to the school’s own parental survey.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Heap

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium 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 who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school offers a breakfast club each day.
- The headteacher took up the post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all is good or outstanding by ensuring that:
 - the work set in lessons helps all pupils, particularly those who need help with their work and the most able, achieve the best they can
 - the marking of pupils' work always helps them to improve and enough time is given to them to follow up on the advice given.
- Raise pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics by providing:
 - more opportunities to develop and extend their writing skills in all the subjects they study
 - enough time to use and extend the calculation skills they already know to solve number problems in mathematics lessons.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - providing more opportunities for middle leaders to develop their skills in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
 - increasing the skills of the governing body in order that they can fully check with senior leaders that all pupils are achieving the best they can.

An external review of governance 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

- Achievement requires improvement because, since the previous inspection, all groups of pupils have not made good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. This is because the work set in some lessons does not allow all pupils to achieve the best they can. Because of this, the school is not promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination fully.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 was below average in the two years since the previous inspection. However, attainment is currently improving in Years 1 and 2 because a greater focus is given to providing pupils with more opportunities to read widely, to practise their letters and sounds and basic mathematics skills more systematically.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2012 and 2013 was below average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, inspection evidence from observations of lessons, school records and pupils' current work in their books shows that achievement in Years 3 to 6 is now rapidly improving because of recent improvements to teaching. However, not enough pupils, particularly the most able, achieve the higher levels of attainment. This is because the work given to them is too easy.
- Although achievement in mathematics is now improving steadily in all year groups, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and extend the calculation skills they already know to solve number problems in mathematics lessons. This is because, in some lessons, the teaching moves on too quickly. At other times, the range of activities is too narrow.
- Pupils enjoy reading and achievement is improving rapidly in all year groups. Teaching of reading is stronger than other subjects. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good use of their letters and sounds to tackle new words. Daily reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation lessons in all classes are helping all pupils to read with accuracy, expression and enthusiasm.
- The improvements noted in pupils' achievement in reading are not as strong in writing. Consequently, pupils in each year group do not achieve as well as they could because there are not enough opportunities for them to develop and extend their writing skills in all their studies.
- Because work is not always pitched at a suitable level, those who need extra help with their learning do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are below those expected for their age and, particularly in their speaking, social and emotional development. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because they have good opportunities to investigate, explore and develop their confidence in good quality indoor and outdoor provision. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Extra help in lessons and working in small groups enables those pupils supported by the pupil premium funding in all classes to progress at a generally faster pace than their classmates. In 2013, their attainment was better than that of similar pupils nationally and of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. In their overall attainment, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are half a term ahead of their peers in school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is uneven across the school and, over time, has not been good enough overall to enable pupils to make good or better progress.
- Nonetheless, closer and more regular checks of classroom practice, introduced by the new headteacher, are already seeing results, and the quality of teaching is improving steadily. During the inspection, no inadequate teaching was observed and most of the teaching was good. However, none was outstanding.
- Warm relationships between pupils and between pupils and the adults who work with them are evident in all lessons.
- In all classes, there are pupils who do not learn as well as they could because the work set in

lessons does not help them, particularly the most able, to achieve their best.

- Furthermore, too often pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- The quality of teaching is now improving in all year groups. Pupils are being asked more probing questions to check their understanding and this is helping pupils to think carefully about their answers and also extending their understanding. However, marking of pupils' work does not always help them to improve and not enough time is provided for them to follow up on the advice given.
- When pupils are asked to think hard, they respond well and make at least good progress in their studies. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, where the most able made rapid progress as they investigated the measurements needed and the cost of materials to produce the stain glass windows they designed. When this does not happen, pupils do not reach the levels of attainment their ability warrants.
- Learning support assistants provide good levels of care so that pupils who need extra help become more engrossed in their learning although work is not always hard enough for them to achieve their best.
- The teaching of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well managed with a wide range of extra chances for them to take part in learning experiences outside school. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in all areas of learning because they are provided with plenty of time to investigate and problem solve. Adults ask searching questions which help children to think, to talk and to write about their ideas. This was evident as they confidently explored and talked to each other and the adults about the magic potions they were making in the Magician's Kitchen.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour observed in lessons by inspectors was good and sometimes outstanding. This has a positive effect on pupils' rapidly improving achievement.
- Inspectors' observations and school records show that behaviour is typically good in classes, around the school and over time. Pupils say that poor behaviour never stops them learning in lessons.
- Pupils behave well in the dining hall, on the playground and around school. They are courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors. They display good attitudes to learning and any minor lapses in behaviour in class are dealt with straight away. Pupils have a good awareness of the many different forms bullying can take, including cyber-bullying and that based on prejudice. They say that bullying is rare and that it is dealt with quickly when it occurs.
- Occasionally, pupils chatter to friends rather than concentrate fully because the tasks set do not challenge them well enough.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents spoken to and those who returned the school questionnaire agree with these views and believe their children are safe and happy.
- Pupils are proud of their school and feel safe because, in their words, 'Teachers look after us' and, 'teach us to be good to others and to look after the world'.
- The school also ensures that pupils understand how to use the internet safely and that they know why social media sites can be dangerous.
- Pupils value the wide range of responsibilities they have, as play leaders, members of the eco or school council or being a representative on Skelmersdale's Pupils' Parliament, for example. They are eager to say, 'we are happy to gather the views of the pupils in our classes and try to improve our school'.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are safe and secure and settle quickly because of the good levels of care provided by all the adults.
- A daily breakfast club and a wide range of sporting and musical activities, attended by a high proportion of pupils, make a good contribution to pupils' personal well-being.

- Attendance is rapidly improving and is currently closer to the national average than it has been since the inspection in May 2012. This is because staff are vigilant in dealing with non-attendance and have a wide raft of rewards on offer for those whose attendance improves.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and governors have not made sure all pupils and, particularly those who need help with their work and the most able, have achieved as well as they could in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Not all middle leaders have the skills to check that teaching and pupils' learning are good enough.
- The decline in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection is being reversed under the leadership of the new headteacher. A very clear vision of what needs to be done to improve teaching and pupils' learning has been undertaken along with a full review of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, in a short time, drawn the staff together in a culture in which teaching and good behaviour can flourish.
- Clear actions for improving the quality of teaching to make sure that pupils' achievement becomes good or better across the school are now in place. The local authority has provided high levels of support in this work.
- Targets set for teachers now concentrate on improving pupils' achievement, and are linked to training and to teachers' salary progression.
- High quality staffing appointments, including that of the headteacher, improvements to the quality of teaching, pupils' attainment in all classes and the good progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and those pupils supported by the pupil premium funding, demonstrates the school has turned a corner and can improve .
- The curriculum covers all the necessary subjects well. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well because good opportunities for pupils to extend their artistic, musical and sporting skills are built into lessons. It is particularly strong in the provision and leadership of physical education. However, it does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop and extend their writing skills in all the subjects they study.
- The new primary school sport funding has increased pupils' participation in physical education and sport and is contributing to developing better physical well-being for pupils. The impact of this spending is currently being checked by the governors.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and child protection procedures meet statutory requirements.
- Parents say they are well-informed about the work of the school because of information on the website, newsletters home and the use of twitter.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Because of changes and resignations within the governing body, governors have not checked fully with senior leaders that all pupils are learning well enough. This is improving with new governors now appointed. However, this is fairly recent and the impact of their work has yet to be fully realised. In the past, although governors received information from senior leaders about pupils' achievement, governors did not question them enough about the rate of pupils' progress. They have relied on information from leaders without checking it fully. Governors are now more involved in the checking the staff's performance and checking that clear steps needed to show improvement are in place. However, a high proportion of governors are new to their role and do not have the knowledge and skills to undertake this work fully. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and members of the governing body carry out regular checks to make sure that pupils are kept safe. Governors check the spending of the pupil premium funding and the impact it is having on pupils' achievement. They also keep a close eye on the school budget.

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	119304
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	440839

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	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gwenda Brown
Headteacher	Christan Upton
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2012
Telephone number	01695 721881
Fax number	Not applicable
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