

# Dale Hall Community Primary School

Dale Hall Lane, Ipswich, IP1 4LX

**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 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

- Pupils' progress is inconsistent. Too few pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics.
- In some classes pupils do not produce enough written work.
- The way in which mathematical skills are taught varies too much and this confuses pupils.
- Some teachers do not show high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in the work they provide in lessons.
- The most able pupils are not always given difficult enough work to do and this holds back their progress.
- The work of teaching assistants is not directly checked, so they do not receive feedback to improve their work.
- Leaders do not always check rigorously enough that points for improvement given to teachers are being applied in practice.
- Governors are knowledgeable but are not yet playing a full role in holding leaders to account for the school's performance.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children get off to a good start in Reception and achieve well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those supported by the pupil premium, make good progress.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel safe at school.
- Reading, physical education and design and technology are taught well.
- Leaders have introduced new approaches to improve teaching and learning, which are having a positive impact on improving teaching and especially raising the achievement of boys in reading and writing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 31 lessons or parts of lessons, including some jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspection team heard pupils read and, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 112 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke informally to parents in the playground.
- The inspectors considered the 47 staff questionnaires that were completed.

## Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Matthew Rayner	Additional Inspector
Jane Ladner	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which in this school provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also average.
- There have been some recent changes in staffing and some classes have temporary teachers to cover absence.
- A privately-run breakfast club and after-school club operate on the school premises. These did not form part of the inspection.
- 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?

- Move teaching to good by making sure that:
  - teachers all demonstrate the same high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve
  - the most able pupils are given hard enough work to do so that they all make good progress.
- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write down their ideas and produce more writing
  - revising the school's calculation policy so that pupils are confident about which methods to use when solving problems.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - following up promptly points for improvement identified by checks on the quality of teaching and learning
  - checking the work of teaching assistants to give them clear feedback about how well they are doing
  - making sure that governors carry out the recommendations of the recent external review in order to hold leaders fully to account for the school's work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Too few pupils make good progress. This was especially true in mathematics in 2013. Pupils' achievement is uneven over time and varies between year groups. This has also been the case so far this year.
- While most pupils make the progress expected nationally, not enough exceed expected progress in writing or mathematics. The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to accelerate their progress.
- In Reception children achieve well. They join the school with skills below what is expected for their age and make good progress because interesting activities are designed to fire their curiosity and develop their early reading and writing skills.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. They have a good understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make). The proportion of Year 1 pupils that reached the required standard in the annual reading check in 2013 compared favourably with the national picture. Pupils develop a love of reading and older pupils are able to extract meaning from text. Pupils enjoy visiting the school's well-stocked library.
- Standards have been improving by the end of Key Stage 1 and in 2013 were above average in writing and mathematics. However, pupils' progress is not always good and even where they have made good progress in Key Stage 1, this has not always continued through Key Stage 2.
- The current Year 6 pupils are performing better than their predecessors at a similar stage in the year because the school has introduced new approaches to supporting mathematics and has invested in considerable training for staff in improving their subject knowledge, which is beginning to have a positive impact.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and achieve well because programmes of support are tailored to meet their particular needs.
- The school has spent much of its pupil premium funding on additional teaching and releasing class teachers to support eligible pupils. In 2013 pupils supported by the pupil premium were three terms behind the others in the school in mathematics, two terms behind in reading and half a term behind in writing. The school's performance information shows that eligible pupils are making faster progress than the others and gaps are narrowing.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school and this has been the case for some time. Expectations of what pupils can do and achieve vary, and this is reflected in their books. Some teachers do not give pupils enough work to complete.
- The most able pupils are not always given difficult enough work to do. Sometimes they have to work through activities that have been set for the less-able and middle-ability pupils before being given work that is more demanding.

- While the teaching of mathematics has improved, there is some unevenness in the way skills are taught. This means at times that pupils are unsure about which methods of calculation to use when solving problems.
- Books show that marking usually helps pupils to improve their work and there is a useful dialogue between teachers and pupils. Older pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing and use prompts to assess the quality of their own work and that of their classmates. In too many classes, however, pupils are not given enough written work to do, and this slows their progress.
- Teaching assistants are used well across the school. They are trained well and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, both inside the classroom and when taking small groups outside. However, they are not given enough feedback about how well they are doing, or advice on how to become even better.
- Reading is taught well. From an early age pupils are given reading activities that give them the skills to understand what they are reading and to begin to read with confidence. This was observed in a Year 1 class where different groups of pupils engaged in a range of interesting tasks while the teacher was able to focus on her group. An online reading system also motivates pupils to read widely and answer quizzes.
- In Reception, children benefit from a stimulating class setting and have ready access to the outside area, where they are able to explore all areas of learning. Skilful staff make sure that children get off to a good start in developing proficiency in early reading, writing and mathematics.
- Design and technology is well taught, especially in Key Stage 2. Year 5 pupils had designed model cars and were using materials carefully to build them. Year 3 pupils were making puppets of Biblical characters so that they could perform parables.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say they behave well and bullying is not an issue. They respond well to adults and play cooperatively. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning even when teaching is not so strong. They are very tolerant of one another.
- The school can point to individuals whose behaviour has improved considerably as a result of the support they have received. The school welcomes pupils regardless of their ability or background, and makes sure that there is no discrimination.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know about keeping safe in a range of different situations and know how to tackle different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying. They use tools safely when making their models. The vast majority of parents agree that their children are safe.
- Pupils take responsibility as play leaders and prefects. They raise money for charity. They move calmly around the school and are polite to one another and to visitors.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because occasionally some pupils can be distracted in lessons, especially if the work is too easy for them.

- Attendance has been rising and is now above average. This reflects the work the school has done to make families aware of the importance of coming to school regularly, and pupils' enjoyment of school.

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

- Leaders have not yet done enough to make sure teaching is consistently good and pupils achieve well. The school is still having to improve mathematics, even though this was identified as an area to develop at the previous inspection.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together as a team and have brought about some improvements to teaching and have raised standards in writing. The use of progress information has been refined so that leaders have a clear understanding of how different groups of pupils are performing and where support is needed. This helps to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed.
- More frequent meetings with staff about how well the pupils in their care are doing have resulted in teachers being held more to account for pupils' progress. This links directly with the management of teachers' performance and subsequent pay rises and promotion.
- The school's view of its performance is accurate and plans set out key priorities for improvement. As part of this leaders have introduced several new approaches to teaching in reading, writing and mathematics, which have proven successful in raising achievement, especially of boys. This is because they can be accessed using computers, and this appeals to boys in particular.
- The work of teaching assistants is not directly checked, so they miss out on feedback that could celebrate the many things they are doing well and also show them how they could improve further. Where teachers are given points for improvement, these are not always checked soon enough to make sure they have been carried out effectively. This limits their impact.
- Some imaginative approaches to writing have been successful, drawing on different subjects, but in some classes pupils do not write enough. The extensive and attractive school grounds mean pupils can learn outside the classroom. A good mix of clubs, visits and visitors contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Physical education is a strength of the school. The primary school sport funding is spent on coaching, additional sports such as fencing and taking part in tournaments. This has led to a greater participation in sport by pupils and a greater confidence in staff to teach it.
- The local authority has strengthened its support for the school as aspects of the school's work still require improvement, and this is proving beneficial for leaders and managers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - A recent independent external review of governance came up with some helpful recommendations to make the governing body more efficient and to hold leaders more fully to account for the school's work. It is too soon for these to have been acted upon. Governors bring a wide range of expertise and experience to support the school from many walks of life. This wealth of talent is not yet being fully used, although some governors are very active in finding out about the school's work and testing out the information they are being given. Governors know about performance information and the quality of teaching and how this links to the management of teachers' performance and their pay. They know how the pupil

premium is being spent and the impact it is having. They make sure safeguarding arrangements meet 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124668
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	430805

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	405
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Martin Reason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Beckett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 251651
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