

# Gunthorpe Primary School

The Pentlands, Hallfields Lane, Peterborough, PE4 7YP

## Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Determined leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher has brought about considerable improvements in attendance, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- A systematic and organised programme of training has resulted in most teaching being good, with some that is outstanding.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Excellent relationships create a positive climate in which pupils feel confident to learn.
- Teaching assistants and other adults make a good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Children in Reception make a good start to their education. They settle quickly and benefit from a wide range of well-planned and interesting activities.
- The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to use computers to enhance their learning.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. They say they enjoy coming to school and almost all feel safe there.
- Attendance figures have improved and are now above the national average.
- Governors ask challenging questions of senior leaders about pupils' progress and attainment, which have helped staff to improve achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More-able pupils are sometimes given work which is too easy for them.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise the skills they have learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects.
- Pupils' presentation of their work is sometimes poor, and their handwriting is untidy.
- Not all school leaders are sufficiently involved in checking the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons. Of these, 17 were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils reading in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6, and observed break and lunchtimes.
- The team held meetings with school leaders and managers, the Chair of the Governing Body and three groups of pupils. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. In addition, inspectors spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school and during a special Mother's Day lunch.
- The range of documents examined included: the school's self-evaluation; the school development plan; documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils; minutes of governing body meetings; information on pupils' progress and attainment; information about the performance of teachers and records of pupils' attendance, exclusion and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors looked at the responses to a questionnaire distributed to parents by the school and analysed questionnaires completed by 43 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Valerie Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helena Mills

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Rudman

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Gunthorpe Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is higher than average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority, and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school partway through their primary education.
- Four governors have joined the governing body since September 2013.
- There have been substantial changes to the school's staffing since the previous inspection, including some changes this term.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching and eliminate any that requires improvement by:
  - ensuring that teachers set work at the right level to challenge the more-able pupils in literacy and numeracy
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to use and apply the skills they have learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects
  - improving the presentation of pupils' work, particularly by consistently applying the school's policy for handwriting.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that all school leaders play a full part in the monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- In the past, pupils have not made sufficient progress and attainment has been too low. Since the last inspection, a concerted effort from the headteacher, senior leaders and staff has resulted in a marked improvement in the quality of teaching. This has led to a dramatic increase in the rates of progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- Despite improvements in progress, standards in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of Year 6 in 2013, were well below average. This was because of teaching in the past which required improvement, partly through changes to staffing. This had led to weak progress across Key Stage 2 as a whole for this year-group, and some substantial gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Leaders' success in turning the school around has meant that pupils are now making rapid progress, and they are steadily making up ground lost in previous years when they underachieved. This is very evident from pupils' current work, the school's now-accurate tracking data and the progress seen in lessons and over the past year.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the national screening check for reading in Year 1 increased in 2013. Standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were each slightly below national averages.
- Since the previous inspection, the school's checks on pupils' progress show that it has been good or better in all age groups and all subjects. There are no significant differences between the rates of progress of different groups, reflecting the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Children start in Reception with varying levels of ability but, overall, their skills and abilities are usually below those typical of their age. They settle well and make good progress in all areas of learning. They leave Reception as confident learners, with skills and standards in line with those expected for their age.
- All pupils undertake daily reading tasks through 'guided reading' lessons. Good use is made of information and communication technology to engage and motivate pupils in reading. Electronic books provide opportunities for pupils to work together in groups or to work alone, and successfully improve their reading. Teaching assistants listen to pupils read individually and help them to hone their skills. Pupils respond well to a wide variety of challenging tasks. Having read an article from *The Times*, Year 4 pupils identified the main components of the successful text and went on to write their own.
- Strategies to improve standards in writing are flourishing. Through the introduction of a number of new initiatives, including the use of drama, pupils are more able to use complex vocabulary and sentence structures to improve the quality of their writing. However pupils' handwriting remains a weakness.
- More-able pupils, throughout all year-groups, do not consistently make as much progress as they could, as work is not always challenging enough in reading, writing and mathematics. Despite this, in 2013, due to additional support and extension activities in mathematics, a small proportion of pupils achieved Level 6, which is a standard much higher than ordinarily expected for their age.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding to ensure that those eligible have the

same access to learning opportunities as all other pupils. The school's performance data show that they make similar progress to their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. In the standards reached, eligible pupils were about a year behind their classmates in mathematics and writing and around five terms behind them in reading. However, school data shows that the gap is closing.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs generally make good progress. They receive good support within classrooms in small groups and work is adapted to their needs. The 'nurture room' makes excellent provision for pupils who have a wide range of academic and social needs.
- Pupils who are new to speaking English make good progress and often achieve higher standards than their classmates. They learn English quickly before going on to make the same good progress as others in literacy and numeracy. Pupils who join the school partway through their primary education quickly settle due to effective support by adults and other pupils, and then are able to achieve well.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Almost all teaching is good and some is outstanding. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. It shows the very positive impact of recent initiatives to improve its quality.
- Pupils engage enthusiastically with activities, and respond well to questions which extend and deepen their knowledge. This helps them to make good progress. Classroom displays are bright and cheerful. They reflect the work which is currently being undertaken and support pupils' learning.
- Teachers use imaginative ways of engaging pupils in the tasks they set by using topical themes. Their explanations of tasks are clear and pupils move seamlessly from listening while sitting on the carpet to desk-based activities. In a Year 5 literacy lesson, for example, pupils moved smoothly from a drama activity to the writing of persuasive letters, to implore impresario Simon Cowell to represent their rock band.
- Pupils are successfully encouraged to apply their knowledge and skills by discussions in groups and pairs, and by working collaboratively. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils worked amicably together to sort objects into groups by deciding their own criteria, while others applied previous knowledge to decide the best methods of halving using practical apparatus to gain the correct answers.
- The quality of marking is excellent. Pupils are very clear about what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve. They are given time to read teachers' comments, correct work and reply. Pupils are equally clear about the levels they are working at and what aspects they need to improve to reach the next stage.
- The needs and abilities of the children in Reception are taken into account as teachers plan a wide range of adult-led and child-initiated activities for both inside and outside. Teachers make learning fun and exciting. They offer advice and extend learning activities by observing and skilfully judging the correct point at which to get involved to maximise children's learning.
- There are excellent relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils and, as a result, pupils want to work hard and do well. Knowledgeable teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and work effectively leading small groups, providing one-to-one

support and helping class teachers within the classroom.

- Handwriting is not taught consistently or effectively and, as a result, the presentation of pupils' work in books is not good enough. Pupils learn many new skills in literacy and numeracy, but are not given enough opportunities to apply and consolidate them in other subjects.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite to adults and to each other. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View were highly positive about behaviour in the school, as were parents and carers who spoke with inspectors at the start and during the school day. Staff, too, feel behaviour in the school is managed well.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and school records support this. However, if an incident were to occur, pupils are clear about who they would tell and express confidence that an adult would help to rectify the situation.
- Pupils respond positively to the school's behaviour policy, called the 'Castle' within the school. Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour and have a good understanding of how their behaviour can make an impact on others. School records show that good behaviour is typical. There have been no exclusions in the last 18 months.
- In the main, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils settle to work quickly. They do not call out and they listen well in class.
- Older pupils have roles of responsibility, such as monitors, and they take these roles seriously and carry them out conscientiously. Older pupils act as corridor monitors, playground friends and play with Reception children during lunch breaks.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe in a number of situations. Pupils could describe how to keep safe when using a computer and were aware of the risks involved with social networks. They said that assemblies and lessons on road safety also helped them to keep safe.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in the improvements in attendance, which is now above the national average.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- With the full support of staff, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have secured very substantial improvements since the last inspection. They have been successful in raising the quality of teaching, accelerating the progress of pupils and improving attendance. They have challenged teachers and other adults to make extensive and effective changes, organised a raft of good-quality training and implemented a number of successful new initiatives. As a result, staff morale is high.
- Teaching has improved over time because leaders have established regular, systematic and rigorous checks on teaching and learning. Leaders' monitoring has included scrutiny of pupils'

work, lesson observations and analysis of assessment information on pupils' progress and attainment. Among the improvements this year has been a notable sharpening of the accuracy of teachers' assessments of how well pupils are doing.

- The school improvement plan is based on accurate self-evaluation. The priorities identified are well chosen to drive the school forward. They include appropriate success criteria so that leaders and governors can monitor the effectiveness of actions taken to secure improvements.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher robustly check pupils' progress and standards every half term. By contrast, subject leaders are not as effective in using the information to gain as clear an overview of standards and progress in their areas of responsibility.
- There is an effective and robust system in place to check the performance of all staff. As a result, targets for teachers are directly linked to the school's priorities, the achievement of pupils and teachers' own individual professional development.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents of Reception Year children are invited to spend time with their child in class on a daily basis. Regular events, such as the Family Values Scheme and Re-cycled Garden Art, are organised for parents to take part in school activities. Special events, like the Mother's Day lunch held during the inspection, saw over 200 parents enjoying a tasty meal with their child. This was much appreciated by parents. The school newsletter, website and messaging service were also commented on favourably by parents.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It is enriched by a wide variety of after-school activities, a range of special days, and theme weeks. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a number of visits including a residential trip.
- The primary sports funding has been used to develop a range of after-school clubs, daily lunchtime sports coaching, swimming lessons in Year 4 and release time for the physical education leader to observe and support staff in teaching the subject. The lunchtime sessions and after-school clubs have increased the number of pupils taking part in exercise.
- The local authority has supported the school well. It has provided a wide range of training opportunities for staff and governors in areas such as checking that pupils' work is assessed accurately, quality of teaching, safeguarding and finance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - A number of governors are new to post, but bring a range of skills and expertise to the school. They are very supportive. The governing body has developed a good action plan, which includes regular monitoring visits. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and use data well to check the progress and standards pupils have achieved. Governors are fully involved in the management of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. They ensure that good teachers are rewarded, and action is taken to address any shortcomings. They undertake the performance management of the headteacher, drawing on the expertise of an external agency. Governors check the budget regularly and carefully monitor spending. They are aware of how the pupil premium and sports funding are being spent and the impact they are having; they are especially mindful of the difference the funding has had on increasing pupils' attendance and progress. Governors have taken up many training opportunities and have found them beneficial.

## 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>	110730
<b>Local authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	431623

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>	378
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Holly Mahon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fran Hollingsworth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 571193
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