

Woodcote Primary School

Willowbrook Close, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1JX

Inspection dates 8–9 April 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

- There is too little good teaching to ensure that pupils make the rapid progress needed to raise standards.
- Teachers' expectations of the progress pupils should make are not always high enough, especially for the most-able pupils.
- The work teachers set is often too easy for some pupils but too hard for others.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills in writing across a wide range of tasks.
- Teachers do not check often enough how well pupils understand their learning, and this means their progress slows.
- Weaknesses in pupils' calculation skills reduce their ability to solve problems in mathematics.
- There is a wide gap between the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium and their classmates in some years.
- Teaching assistants are not always used effectively.
- Too much of the burden of leading the school falls on the headteacher. Staff who are new to leadership often do not have the skills or experience to lead improvements in their areas of responsibility effectively.
- The outdoor learning area in Reception lacks equipment and is not a stimulating learning environment. Consequently, it does not support the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills sufficiently.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has identified and begun to tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are rising, particularly in writing.
- The school provides an orderly learning environment in which pupils behave well and feel safe.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is rising.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons. Several lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. The headteacher also joined the inspectors in reviewing pupils' written work.
- The inspectors observed the breakfast club and one assembly, and made a number of short visits to classrooms.
- Pupils were observed at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, and pupils, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also had a telephone conversation with a further governor.
- Groups of pupils of different ages were heard reading.
- The inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the staff questionnaire and 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took account of 106 responses to a school's own survey of the views of parents and carers. Inspectors also met with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. Inspectors also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Longden

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a below-average-sized primary school.
- Virtually all pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above average. This is additional government funding for particular groups, such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The number of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 was too small to make comparisons with floor standards, which are the minimum expectations set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides breakfast that is managed by the governing body.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching at least good by making sure that:
 - teachers have higher expectations of the amount of progress pupils are able to make
 - pupils are given work with the right level of difficulty, particularly the most-able pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels
 - teachers regularly check pupils' understanding of their learning so that any misconceptions can be quickly identified and corrected
 - the marking of pupils' work provides detailed guidance on how they can improve their work and teachers check that pupils act on the advice they are given.
 - the best use is made of the support available from teaching assistants, particularly when teachers are introducing the lesson or explaining learning points to the whole class.
- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to write extensively and in different ways, both in literacy lessons and in other subjects
 - improving pupils' calculation skills and thereby their ability to solve problems in mathematics
 - using the pupil premium more effectively so that the gap in attainment between eligible pupils and the others closes quickly in all year-groups.
- Improve the outdoor learning environment in Reception by providing better levels of equipment that stimulate children's imagination and better promote the development of their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
 - leadership responsibilities are more widely shared among other staff
 - staff who are new to leadership roles receive training so that they develop the skills needed to lead improvements and tackle weaknesses in their areas of responsibility

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium 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 pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. Standards in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are not high enough, and too few pupils achieve well.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 in 2013 to compare their test results with national figures. However, school checks on the progress of pupils presently in Year 6, and other inspection evidence, show that standards are closer to the expected standards in reading than they are in writing or mathematics.
- Inspection evidence, including reviews of pupils' work, shows that that teachers' expectations of the progress pupils should make are not consistently high enough, and this slows their rates of progress, particularly that of more-able pupils. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to extend their writing skills, and weaknesses in their calculation skills limit their ability to solve problems in mathematics.
- There is a wide gap between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and their classmates. There were too few eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying them. However, in some year groups, eligible pupils are up to five terms behind their classmates in reading and writing, and three terms in mathematics.
- Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are generally well below those typically found at their age. Following recent improvements, they are now making good progress and join Year 1 with skills that are closer to average.
- Improvements in teaching are contributing to better progress and standards by the end of Year 2. In 2013, standards in reading, writing and mathematics rose to be broadly average overall and above average in writing.
- Successful action to improve the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has raised pupils' performance in the Year 1 phonics screening test. In 2013, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard increased to match the national figure.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive appropriately targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants both in lessons and in individual and small group sessions. They make at least expected progress from their various starting points.
- Well-planned use of the additional funding for sport is helping to increase pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and increasing their participation in a wider range of physical activities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- School records and inspection evidence show that teaching has improved and there is much that is good. However, there are remaining inconsistencies that slow pupils' progress so that they do not always achieve as well as they should.

- Teacher's expectations of the progress pupils can make in lessons are not always high enough, particularly for those of higher ability. As a result, pupils are not as productive as they could be.
- At times, pupils of markedly different abilities are given the same work, which is too hard for some and too easy for others. As a result, pupils do not always progress as rapidly as they should.
- Some teachers do not check pupils' level of understanding often enough. As a result, misunderstandings are not identified and corrected and pupils are not moved on to tackle more difficult work, once tasks are completed, quickly enough.
- Much has been done to improve the marking of pupils' work and there are examples of good quality marking. However, marking does not always make clear what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. Where such advice is given, pupils' books show that they do not always respond to their teachers' comments and so learn from their mistakes.
- Teaching assistants are usually effective in supporting the learning of those pupils who need extra help, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs and others who need additional support. However, the effectiveness of their support for pupils' learning is sometimes limited because their role when teachers are introducing or explaining the tasks pupils are to attempt is not always clear.
- Teaching is good in Reception, where the basis for pupils' good attitudes to learning, that are evident across the school, is laid. Adults work closely with children and take every opportunity to develop their social and academic skills. However, the outdoor area does not provide a stimulating enough environment to develop children's reading, writing and number skills.
- Where pupils learn well, teachers have high expectations and set challenging work that engages pupils in their learning. An example was seen in a lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. In this lesson, pupils displayed and explained their science projects in which they had researched, for example, the atmospheric layers and the solar system. Pupils were captivated by the topics they were studying, made rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding of the universe, and developed the confidence to present their findings to the class as a whole.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. The vast majority willingly comply with the requests of their teachers and are keen to learn. Staff and pupils confirm that behaviour is typically good, as do the great majority of parents and carers who responded to the on-line questionnaire and those spoken to during the inspection. Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They are friendly and care for each other well.
- Teachers' effective management of pupils' behaviour ensures there is a calm atmosphere for learning. However, occasionally, when work set is too complicated or too easy, some pupils lose interest and their progress slows.
- Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities to help the smooth running of the school. They enjoy their roles as members of the school council or as games leaders in the playground.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and cared for well. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agree.

- Pupils display a reasonable understanding for their age of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and say that incidents of bullying are rare. This is confirmed by school records. They say adults listen to their concerns and deal with any incidents quickly on the very few occasions that these occur.
- Attendance has risen to be broadly average. There has been a marked improvement in the attendance of pupils entitled to the pupil premium and of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The school ensures that everyone understands the need for good attendance, and takes decisive action whenever attendance is not good enough.
- Effective support is provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This ensures that they are maintained in full-time education and have full access to all the school provides.
- The well-organised breakfast club makes a good contribution to pupils' care and support.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher is providing effective leadership based on an accurate evaluation of the school's performance. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement are improving. However, there is too much reliance on initiatives being led by the headteacher alone, with too few other staff undertaking leadership roles. As a result, school improvement is not as rapid as it should be.
- Several staff with leadership responsibilities for subjects and other aspects of the school's work, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are relatively new to their posts. They do not, as yet, have the skills needed to drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.
- The school provides a variety of support and enrichment opportunities to raise the achievement of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding. There is, however, no systematic approach to identifying how effective these are in accelerating pupils' progress and closing attainment gaps with other pupils.
- The curriculum places an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. However, there are not enough opportunities to apply and develop pupils' calculation and writing skills systematically as they move through the school.
- Many aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. Science, for example, features strongly in the curriculum and provides pupils with many opportunities to explore the wonder of nature and the universe. Through assemblies, music, art and the good range of after-school clubs and sports activities, pupils' horizons are broadened and their self-confidence promoted.
- Procedures for managing the performance of teachers are effective. There is a clear understanding of the need for strong links between teachers' pay and promotion and pupils' progress. Although there are inconsistencies, teaching is improving because good use is made of information from checks on teaching to give teachers the training and support they need to develop their skills.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is managed well. There is a firm commitment to equality of opportunity and the elimination of any obstacles to learning

and discrimination. As a result, pupils of all backgrounds, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, can access all aspects of school life.

- The additional primary sports funding is being used well to increase the range of sporting activities and to develop teaching skills and pupils' physical skills. There are appropriate systems to measure the impact of this provision.
- The local authority provides the school with good support and has been engaged, for example, in helping the school improve both teaching and learning and the work of governors.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors work closely with the headteacher and other school staff to ensure they have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They understand how the school's performance compares with that of other schools and have appropriate procedures for holding leaders to account for outcomes, including the management of teachers' performance. Governors understand that teachers' salary progression should be linked to successful performance and additional responsibilities. Procedures for managing the performance of the headteacher are rigorous.
- Governors manage funding conscientiously and understand how the income received through the pupil premium is spent. However, they are less clear about the impact the extra spending has had on eligible pupils' progress. Governors ensure that the school meets statutory requirements and that all written policies, especially those related to health and safeguarding, are reviewed regularly.

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	120096
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	441164

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Parker
Headteacher	Suzanne Jones
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2011
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