

Bessacarr Primary School

Ellers Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, DN4 7DT

Inspection dates

5–6 March 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		Requires improvement	3
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

- Achievement requires improvement. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 has slowed recently and is too variable, particularly the progress pupils make in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching requires improvement because in this academic year, not enough is expected of some pupils in Key Stage 2 and the quality of their work is too variable and is not marked regularly enough.
- The teaching of calculation skills requires improvement in some classes in Key Stage 2. As a result, some pupils currently in this key stage do not have the basic skills needed and so, for example, cannot do calculations in their heads.
- Currently, some teachers in Key Stage 2 do not develop pupils' writing skills in a range of subjects; this inhibits pupils' learning and progress. In a number of Key Stage 2 classes the standards of presentation in pupils' books is not good enough.
- Pupils' learning time in some Key Stage 2 classes is lost because lessons do not always start promptly.
- Behaviour requires improvement because some pupils become easily distracted when they are given tasks that are uninspiring.
- Systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning are not yet fully developed. Consequently, not enough time has been spent by leaders to identify and halt the recent down turn in some Key Stage 2 teaching.
- Leaders, including governors, have not acted quickly enough to stop the recent decline in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2, as seen in pupils' work.
- Governors do not ask challenging enough questions about the achievement of pupils who are currently in Key Stage 2.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The school ensures pupils are kept safe.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 1 make good progress because of good teaching.
- Pupils take their roles and responsibilities seriously and contribute well to the life of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 15 parts of lessons and a whole-school assembly. Two of these lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held formally and informally with groups of pupils chosen at random.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading and talked with them about their reading books in Years 1, 2 and 6. They also looked at pupils' work in English and mathematics.
- Inspectors met with four members of the governing body and with key staff. A meeting and a telephone conversation were held with representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for the school's future development, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, and minutes of governing body meetings, records of how the quality of teaching is checked and information about the achievement and progress of pupils across the school.
- The 79 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and written comments by parents were taken into account by the inspectors. In addition, parents were asked for their views at the beginning of the school day as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors also considered the 29 responses returned by staff.

Inspection team

Sharona Semlali, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynne Davies

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Eaton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The number of pupils that join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage has increased from 40 to 60. Due to the increase in the number of pupils on roll, extra teaching and support staff have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background. The second largest group of pupils are of Indian heritage. An increasing number of pupils come from Poland, Russia and Turkey.
- The headteacher, who was in the school during the inspection, tendered her resignation the week prior to the inspection.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is extra funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is good or better so that pupils make at least consistently good progress in mathematics and English, particularly in Key Stage 2 by ensuring that:
 - time for pupils' learning is maximised by making sure that lessons start promptly, particularly at the end of each break
 - pupils' mathematical skills, including their calculation skills, their knowledge of multiplication tables and their ability to carry out mental arithmetic are effectively developed
 - learning activities engage and motivate pupils so that their behaviour improves because they do not switch off from their learning and become distracted
 - pupils are given sufficient time to write for extended periods in different subjects and that they produce written work that is well presented
 - all pupils' work in Key Stage 2 is marked and clear guidance is given to them on how they can improve their work and ensure that they respond to this guidance.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance by:
 - making more rigorous checks on the quality of the teaching and taking effective action to attend to weaknesses in teaching and in pupils' learning, in some Key Stage 2 classes
 - ensuring that all teachers have the confidence and subject knowledge to teach high quality mathematics' lessons
 - ensuring that all leaders have the skills to use and understand data so that they can have an accurate picture of the school's performance and can then take the steps to halt the decline in pupils' achievement.
- Ensure governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are able to hold the school to account for the progress pupils currently are making, especially in Key Stage 2, as well as the

impact of the pupil premium funding.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

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

- Although by the end of Year 6, pupils have achieved well in the past, the achievement of pupils currently in the school requires improvement. This is because pupils' progress has slowed in Key Stage 2 during this academic year and is too inconsistent across the different classes. This is due to the decline in the quality of teaching in some Key Stage 2 classes in recent times.
- Inspection evidence and the school's information about the progress of pupils who are currently in Key Stage 2 show that progress in writing has slowed. This is because pupils do not always have enough opportunities to write at length in different subjects and are not always able to practice important skills, such as writing in a logical sequence.
- Current progress in mathematics throughout Key Stage 2 varies widely. This is because calculation skills are not always taught effectively in some classes. As a result, pupils in Key Stage 2 do not always have a secure knowledge of multiplication tables and so do not have the strategies that would enable them to work out calculations in their heads.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement in some Key Stage 2 classes. When teaching assistants support pupils with additional needs individually, they gain more confidence and develop well in their learning. However, when these pupils are not given the extra support, their progress is weaker and requires improvement. The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who have English as an additional language in some Key Stage 2 classes also requires improvement due to the weaker teaching that exists.
- The most able pupils in Year 6 in 2013 achieved the higher Level 6 in mathematics and a higher proportion of pupils than seen nationally achieved Level 5 in writing. However, the most able pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are not always challenged as well as they should be and this slows their progress. This is because in some Key Stage 2 classes they are given work that does not stretch their thinking or improve their ability to produce long pieces of writing.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding have until recently achieved well. Until this academic year, pupils who were known to be entitled to free school meals generally reached similar standards in reading and mathematics to those pupils who were not entitled to free school meals, though they were sometimes two terms behind in their writing. Since the start of this academic year, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in some Key Stage 2 classes have made progress which requires improvement. Like the other pupils in those classes, this is because of the weaker teaching they all receive.
- Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills typically expected for their age. They make good progress from their starting points because their teachers use assessment information well to inform the way their learning is planned.
- Pupils make good progress by the end of Key Stage 1. For example, by the end of Year 2, pupils who are at the early stages of reading are able to work out unfamiliar words using the sounds that letters make. They are able to comprehend what they read and answer simple questions. This shows that reading is taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and across Key Stage 1. Consequently, pupils are making good progress given their starting points.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement, particularly in Key Stage 2 since the start of this academic year. While teaching is usually good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, much of the teaching in Key Stage 2 requires improvement and a small amount of teaching seen was inadequate.
- The teaching of mathematics is weak in some year groups in Key Stage 2. This is because some teachers do not have good enough subject knowledge in mathematics, for example, some teachers on occasion accept incorrect answers as the right ones. As a result, some pupils in Key

Stage 2 are not fully equipped with some of the basic skills, such as quickly working out their calculations mentally and do not have a firm knowledge of their multiplication tables.

- Expectations of pupils are not always high enough, particularly in Key Stage 2. Not enough opportunities are provided to extend pupils' thinking. Pupils are not always encouraged to produce enough work or to present it to a high enough standard.
- Time for pupils to learn is not always maximised. This was seen in the way that pupils were allowed to leisurely stroll into some Key Stage 2 classes; this does not allow lessons to start promptly at the end of break time.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils' work sometimes goes unmarked for lengthy periods of time. Therefore, any decline in pupils' progress goes unchecked by some teachers. Where teachers mark pupils' work well, sometimes pupils are not given sufficient time to respond to the comments.
- The teaching of reading in Key Stage 2 requires improvement. Pupils report that they enjoy guided reading sessions. Pupils have access to an adequate range of reading books but the records of what books they have read and their progress in gaining more complex reading skills are scrappy.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All adults know and plan carefully to cater for the interests and needs of all children. They develop children's communication and mathematical skills well. For example, a small group of children in the Reception class were encouraged to practise saying the word 'recipe' which they found challenging while they busily made gingerbread men. Similarly, a group of children quickly developed their understanding of number by playing a game where they counted the dots of the dice and used a magnet to find the corresponding number.
- Teaching assistants are generally deployed well and offer good support particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and when they work closely with pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and friendly and pupils from different backgrounds play well with each other at break times. However, sometimes in lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2 where there is some weaker teaching, pupils lose concentration when they have been set uninspiring tasks and consequently they switch off and at times become distracted. Pupils say that their behaviour is not as good when they are not supervised by their teachers. The number of recorded incidents of poor behaviour is low.
- Pupils understand what is meant by bullying. They say it is rare and if it does happen it is dealt with well by adults. Parents and staff confirm that the school keeps pupils safe and that bullying is not an issue in the school.
- Eco representatives from each class make sure that pupils save energy and recycle as much waste as possible. This shows that pupils enjoy taking on extra responsibilities around the school and are fully committed to them. The school and classrooms are kept tidy particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All pupils wear their uniforms and are neatly presented.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are well prepared for keeping themselves safe outside school. For example, each class in Key Stage 2 has a representative that is part of the 'Health and Safety Squad.' They help the site manager to look for any hazards in the school. They worked with the Road Safety Team to issue parking tickets to parents who park their cars in the wrong places.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They have made posters which are displayed around the school and an on-line video which is used as a good reminder for helping other pupils to keep themselves safe.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and is improving. This is partly because the school issues fines to parents who take their children on holiday during term times.

The leadership and management**requires improvement**

- Leaders at all levels have not in recent times sustained good teaching across the school and so have not maintained the successes achieved in previous years. This has led, during the last academic year especially, to a decline in pupils' attainment and progress in some Key Stage 2 classes. This is because where there is weaker teaching; it has not always been robustly tackled by the leadership.
- Not all leaders make sufficient time available to analyse the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress effectively enough, including data that relates to the progress made by different groups of pupils. Therefore, those leaders with responsibility for teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 have not identified and rectified quickly enough the recent decline in achievement for pupils in some Key Stage 2 classes, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Systems to check the quality of teaching and learning are not developed fully enough to address the variations in the overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. While leaders have recently ensured that teachers' performance management targets relate to pupils' outcomes, it is too soon to see their impact on ensuring consistently good progress for pupils in Key Stage 2.
- The school offers a range of clubs beyond the school day, such as gardening, which are enjoyed by many pupils. However, the curriculum does not always provide pupils in Key Stage 2 with enough challenge, particularly for the most able and it is not equipping pupils with the calculation skills needed in mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is adequately developed through the reflection time pupils have. Pupils learn about other cultures and religions through celebrating and sharing their own backgrounds. For example, pupils are given the opportunity to present to their classmates what they know about the country their family originated from and are encouraged to share and experience food from other cultures.
- The school has used the primary school sports funding to help develop the skills of its staff and has worked with a specialist coach to improve pupils' skills. This, together with arrangements for competitions, is helping to increase the participation rate of pupils in sport. Weekly health education lessons, together with the 'Get Active' week, are encouraging pupils to lead more healthy lifestyles.
- The school works hard to inform and involve parents. Workshops about how they can support their children's reading are provided for parents. New parents in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a toolkit to help them to prepare their children to start school. As a result, children settle quickly into the school's routines when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The local authority has over time provided light touch support. Consequently it has not spotted in recent times the decline in pupils' achievement and in the quality of teaching. It is now aware of the extra support needed by the leadership team and has introduced a series of immediate actions to help them school.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Recently a few governors have had training but most are still at the early stages of developing their skills in understanding the information available about pupils' attainment and progress. Governors do not evaluate well enough how the school is doing; consequently their holding of leaders to account for the school's performance requires improvement.
- Governors have ensured that the performance management of the headteacher is in place. However, they do not have a clear enough picture of how the increases to teachers' salaries are linked to their impact on pupils' achievement nor how any underperformance is challenged. Governors know how the pupil premium funding is spent but they do not check to see whether it is making a difference to those pupils it supports.

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	106739
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	431323

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Veronica Chapman
Headteacher	Sarah Davies
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Telephone number	01302 535110
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