

# Python Hill Primary School

Kirklington Road, Rainworth, Mansfield, NG21 0JZ

**Inspection dates** 29–30 April 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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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.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from starting points that are below those nationally. As a result, they reach average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' enjoyment of reading is promoted well. It is reflected in the consistently good progress which they are now making across the school.
- The most-able pupils are successfully challenged to reach the higher levels in mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently at least good. There are increasing levels of outstanding teaching.
- Teaching assistants provide good levels of support, particularly to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave well and feel safe in school.
- The headteacher is highly committed and passionate that pupils are given the best chance to succeed by ensuring that they receive good quality teaching within a supportive, caring and stimulating environment.
- Senior leaders and those responsible for leading subjects ably support the headteacher in securing improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and challenges leaders to improve the school further.
- The school makes excellent use of the primary sports funding to enable pupils to participate in sport and develop healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. The school has developed a good range of partnerships within the local, national and international communities.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not consistently effective in helping pupils to learn quickly.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 and more-able pupils in Key Stage 2 do not learn as quickly in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils, particularly lower-attaining pupils and those eligible for support via the pupil premium, do not develop their skills in solving problems in mathematics as well as they could.
- Teachers have too few opportunities to learn from the best practice within the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 14 teachers.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors heard a group of pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher and other school leaders; two groups of pupils from Key Stage 1 and 2; members of the governing body; an external consultant; and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning; school policies; information provided to families; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; and the schools' most recent data relating to the attendance and punctuality of pupils.
- Consideration was given to 29 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own analysis from its own surveys. Consideration was given to 27 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- There is a separate pre-school on the school site which was not included in this inspection.

## Inspection team

David Carter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Myatt

Additional Inspector

Stephen Hopkins

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Python Hill Primary School is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in 13 classes. There is a Nursery class and two classes for the Reception Year children; two classes each for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2; two mixed-age classes for pupils in Year 3 and 4; two mixed-age classes for pupils in Year 4 and Year 5; a mixed-age class for pupils in Year 5 and 6; and one class solely for Year 6 pupils.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils from other heritage groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is well above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is similar to that which is found nationally. This is additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs its own breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
  - teachers' marking consistently helps pupils to understand how they can improve their work and learn more quickly
  - pupils in Key Stage 1 and more-able pupils in Key Stage 2 make the same progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics
  - pupils, particularly those of lower ability and those for whom the school receives the pupil premium, have more opportunities to develop their skills to solve problems in mathematics
  - teachers have more opportunities to learn from each other.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are typically below those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, and number. Children make good progress, especially in their personal, social, physical and emotional development with most reaching expected levels in these areas by the time they start Year 1. Children make good progress in developing their skills in reading, writing and number although by the end of the Reception Year, achievement in these areas remains below average.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has risen markedly over the last three years. Pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics in 2013 was average. Pupils' progress in writing is slower than that in reading and mathematics. Attainment in writing is below average at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' progress accelerates across Key Stage 2 and they attain standards which are at least in line with expectations by the end of Year 6. In 2013, standards in mathematics, spelling, grammar and punctuation were above average. Although the gap in attainment for the majority of pupils in writing has closed by the end of Key Stage 2, too few of the most-able pupils reached the higher levels in writing.
- Pupils' knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is improving. The proportion of pupils on track to achieve the required level at the end of Year 1 is average.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They enjoy reading a wide range of books and have a good understanding of the different types of books that they are reading. Early readers work out unfamiliar words confidently; older pupils read with fluency and expression.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, especially in reading. This is helping them to successfully narrow the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. In 2013, more pupils attained Level 6 in mathematics than in schools nationally.
- The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups reach standards of attainment which are similar to their White British classmates. However, in reading, writing and mathematics, they make faster rates of progress from their starting points. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language make better rates of progress than others, especially in mathematics and writing. As a result, they attain standards that are higher than their classmates by the end of Year 6.
- In 2013, pupils for whom the school received pupil premium funding did not achieve as well as their classmates. Year 6 pupils supported through the pupil premium were three terms behind others in reading, two in writing and five in mathematics. The gaps in attainment between eligible pupils who are currently in the school and the rest of the pupils have reduced markedly, especially in reading and writing, where pupils are making good progress. Gaps in mathematics have also reduced but not as quickly. As a result, eligible pupils remain about two terms behind the rest of their class.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teachers' high expectations of pupils, effective use of assessment information and pupils' positive attitudes to learning combine effectively to ensure that pupils make good progress during their time in school.
- Teachers have ensured that all teaching areas are exceptionally well-organised, attractive and tidy in order to stimulate effective learning. Displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievements and motivate them to improve. Teachers display helpful materials which pupils refer to frequently during lessons to support them in their learning.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school because teachers make learning 'fun'. Teachers draw on their good subject knowledge in order to present new learning in interesting ways which capture pupils' interests. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were captivated while the teacher worked with them on how to improve a narrative text.
- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, who make a valuable contribution towards promoting learning, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils and support them well in order for them to reach their personal targets.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults have created highly stimulating indoor and outdoor learning areas, which are well resourced. Adults ensure that children are able to participate in a good range of activities. They check on children's learning carefully and make sure that they are engaging in their learning effectively. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers are using their assessments more accurately than at the previous inspection to plan activities which are appropriate to pupils of different abilities. While this is helping pupils to make good progress, especially in reading and mathematics, the level of challenge is sometimes too low in writing, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work clearly shows them how well they have done. In many cases, marking provides clear guidance on how pupils should improve their work. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils are not always given opportunities to show how they have improved their work in response to teachers' comments.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and respond quickly to the instructions and guidance of adults.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. Those who attend breakfast club not only receive a healthy meal, but also enjoy a sociable start to the school day. Pupils are courteous towards adults and each other and enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities, including those that occur beyond the normal school day.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in the school and say that they are well cared for. Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet is particularly good, as well as their awareness of the dangers associated with transport and substance abuse.

- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and how to keep themselves and others safe. Parents, staff and pupils confirm that bullying is taken very seriously by senior leaders and, on the rare occasion that it does occur, issues are quickly resolved.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school which is reflected in above average rates of attendance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have many opportunities to forge friendships and they are supportive of each other. Pupils told inspectors how they are developing a good understanding of the lives of people from different faiths and cultures to their own. This is because of the links which the school has made with schools locally, in different parts of the United Kingdom and in Kenya.
- Occasionally, a few pupils tend to lose concentration in lessons and do not complete their work as well as they should.

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

- The headteacher has high ambitions for the pupils and he is ably supported by key members of staff and governors. His determination that pupils should be given the best chance to succeed is evident by the way in which he has ensured that pupils are provided with high-quality resources, within a stimulating environment, to help them in their learning.
- Senior leaders and those responsible for leading English and mathematics have a good understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. School improvement planning is clearly focused on appropriate priorities and has been used effectively to secure improvements to the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and rates of attendance.
- Senior leaders have implemented a rigorous system for checking on the quality of teaching and managing teachers' performance. Teachers have benefited from clear guidance on how to improve their practice and have appreciated the opportunity to visit other schools. These activities have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, the school does not make enough use of the existing strong practice within the school to improve teaching further.
- Senior leaders check closely on the progress being made by pupils. Where a pupil is falling behind, the school quickly engages parents so that they can build on the additional support which the school provides. In particular, this is helping disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who are in receipt of additional funding, to narrow the gap in attainment with other pupils. This is indicative of the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- Pupils say that they enjoy learning about different subjects which are presented within topics and are supplemented by themed days and weeks. They benefit from specialist teaching in music and art as well as taking part in activities which raise their understanding of enterprise. Senior leaders acknowledge that less-able pupils and those for whom the school receives additional funding are not always provided with enough opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- The school is making highly effective use of the primary school sport funding. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports as well as to compete against other schools locally and regionally. This is helping to promote pupils' health and physical well-being. Pupils know their own personal targets in physical education and are highly motivated to achieve them

by the end of each term.

- The school has developed strong partnerships with parents and carers as well as organisations within and beyond the local community. The headteacher in particular is held in high regard by parents and carers and almost all who responded to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. This is because parents value highly the standards of care, support and guidance which the school provides to pupils and their families.
- The local authority advisor has provided effective support to the school. She has challenged leaders to improve pupils' achievements and has supported the development of leaders so that the school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school has drawn upon support from an external consultant who has helped it to accelerate the progress of pupils who are falling behind in reading, writing and mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a good understanding about the school's performance. They use their good knowledge of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to plan well for further improvements. They provide good levels of support and challenge to senior leaders. Governors draw upon their individual expertise to support the school in all aspects of leadership and management. This is demonstrated by the way in which they make strategic decisions about staffing to best serve pupils in the school.
  - Governors have a good understanding of how teachers' performance is being managed and are fully involved in making decisions relating to pay. Governors ensure that additional funding, such as the primary sport funding and the pupil premium, is used well to improve pupils' academic and personal development. Governors work closely with the headteacher to ensure that principles of 'best value' are adhered to, so that the budget is allocated appropriately. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet 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>	133389
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	445975

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wendy Moakes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Burns
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 464164
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 464899
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@pythonhill.notts.sch.uk

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