

Dale Community Primary School

Porter Road, Derby, DE23 6NL

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils of all abilities, including the high proportion who speak English as an additional language, now achieve well throughout school in English and mathematics. They particularly benefit from the successful focus on developing early reading and writing skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. It is sometimes outstanding. Pupils are ambitious and keen to learn. They respond well to the high expectations placed upon them, and the good use of accurate measures of their progress to ensure the work they do is challenging.
- Pupils are well behaved. They are very polite and friendly. All groups of pupils present their work to a high standard, taking particular pride in their handwriting. Pupils feel safe and take many responsibilities well. Attendance is above average.
- Pupils' health, well-being and personal development are promoted very well. Boys and girls successfully participate in wide range of sporting events.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide clear and purposeful leadership to improve the school. They are well supported by senior and subject leaders, and an effective governing body. As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved considerably since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, errors and misconceptions, especially in mathematics, are not addressed soon enough while pupils are working. They do not always have enough guidance to check the accuracy of their own work.
- Pupils do not always fully understand mathematical terms in order to use them well.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in different subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons, including several observed jointly with the headteacher or with the deputy headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms, looked at a wide range of pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Discussions were held with several groups of pupils, the Chair of Governors and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- Inspectors took account of the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the results from the school's own consultations with parents, and spoke to several parents. The responses from staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, the school's plans for improvement, the management of teachers' performance, the use of pupil premium funding, and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Chaplin	Additional Inspector
Jenny Edginton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is average. The proportion of such pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support from the pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage, particularly Pakistani. An increasing proportion of pupils are from Eastern European countries. Almost eight percent are now of Gypsy Roma heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. Over 16 heritage languages are currently represented in the school.
- A higher proportion of pupils than usual join the school in year groups other than Reception, with many joining in Years 5 and 6.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2013 national tests which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been several staff changes since the last inspection and the school has reorganised its senior leadership team, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards further, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring pupils' errors and misconceptions are addressed in a timely fashion while they are working
 - enabling pupils to regularly check the accuracy of their own work in mathematics as they do in English
 - ensuring pupils have a thorough understanding of mathematical terms and vocabulary
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematical skills in real-life situations in a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally well-below those typical for their age. They are especially low for communication and literacy skills. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. In particular, the early stages of speaking and listening and reading are speedily established and provide a strong basis for their later learning. Standards are still below expected levels by the time they start Key Stage 1 but increasing. Children are inquisitive, work well together and are keen to learn.
- The results of national tests had been well below average at Year 2 and Year 6 prior to the last inspection. The school took rigorous steps to improve pupils' progress and raise the standards of work from this time through strong action to measure pupils' achievement accurately and raise expectations. However, there was not sufficient time for this to make an impact on the 2013 national assessment results, which were weak at both key stages. This was exacerbated by previous staffing issues and a significant influx of new pupils, many with little or no English or previous school experience.
- Pupils' progress has accelerated rapidly in the last four terms as a result of higher expectations. The current Year 2 are working at standards which are below but closer to expected levels, especially for reading and writing. By Year 6, pupils' achievement is now broadly average for reading and writing, and slightly below for mathematics. This marks sustained improvement to pupils' progress over the last four terms and is evident in their books, teaching observations and discussions with pupils, as well as the school's own detailed data.
- Those supported by pupil premium funding achieve well. They now make good progress. In 2013, at the end of Year 6, these pupils were about a term behind other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. In many classes, they are now working at standards which are similar to and sometimes above their peers as a result of effective teaching programmes matched to their needs.
- Pupils from the different ethnic heritages, including the large proportions from Pakistani or Gypsy Roma backgrounds, achieve equally well. The high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress and attain standards which are largely similar to other pupils by time they leave. They make particularly good progress in speaking and reading skills, which underpins their learning in different subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. The school takes careful account of their achievement in planning the support they need and encouraging them to make decisions and take a pride in their work.
- Most-able pupils make good progress. They think logically work with imagination. They use their knowledge and skills well, especially in written work, in several different subjects. 'Distinctly audible, the argument became diffused through the passage way,' is typical of their choice of language by Year 6.
- Pupils' reading skills are well developed and they make good progress. Early readers understand the link between letters and their sounds and pupils of all abilities read with expression and fluency. This is reflected in the scores they achieve in the national check for these skills at Year 1. By Year 6, pupils make good use of a variety of skills in reading non-fiction, understand different genres and talk knowledgably of the writing styles of a range of authors.

- Pupils make good progress in writing. They develop a good understanding of grammatical structure and spell accurately. Their neat and fluid handwriting is a strength in all their work and contributes to their productivity and pride in their work.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. However, recent standards are below those of English as the developments to teaching and learning have concentrated on the need to establish better reading and writing skills. Pupils' calculation skills are good and they understand place value well. They are less effective in making decisions about which skills to use to solve mathematical problems.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is now consistently good or better throughout school. This is an improvement from the last inspection and is based on the development and effective use of thorough procedures to measure and analyse pupils' progress to boost learning.
- Children are eager to learn in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are engaged through well-planned activities and attractive resources which interest all groups of learners. There is a strong and successful focus on quickly developing children's speaking, listening and social skills to support the development of reading and writing skills.
- Throughout school, teachers encourage pupils to be ambitious and aim high. They respond well to clearly stated high expectations for all groups and abilities of pupils. Pupils are helped to develop good learning skills, such as persistence and attentiveness, through good example and direct teaching. This boosts the achievement of all groups of pupils including the most able and those who find learning difficult.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well because of frequent assessments of their academic, physical, emotional and social development and carefully matched activities to develop skills. Timely and well-planned additional English and mathematics sessions increase achievement for pupils who are falling behind or who find it difficult to learn new skills and concepts.
- Pupils who are new to speaking English and those who start school later than the usual points also often learn well in response to speedy assessment of their needs, sometimes in their home language, and with skilled support.
- The most-able pupils often make good progress because they are given work which fully challenges them right from the start of sessions. Pupils' respond well to thoughtful questions which help them to think more deeply and recall information. They think for themselves, organise their own ideas and rise to the high expectations set for them.
- Pupils increasingly improve their own work, especially in English, because of the clear guidance they receive in regular marking and feedback. They have a good understanding of the next steps they need to take and often assess their own achievement in reading and writing.
- Occasionally, pupils do not make the best progress they could, especially in mathematics, because errors and misunderstandings are not always addressed soon enough while they are working. They do not always have the right guidance to check the accuracy of their own work.
- Sometimes, the questions pupils are asked do not help them to reach a deep enough understanding of mathematical terms and vocabulary, to ensure they use them effectively in

problem-solving.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very positive. Pupils are polite and considerate towards each other because of the good example all adults set for them. As a result, pupils' behaviour is sometimes exemplary.
- Pupils' pride in their school is evident in their smart appearance, the careful presentation of their work and their exceedingly tidy and well-ordered books. They value the care staff take in ensuring their work in attractive and orderly classrooms.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and are punctual and well prepared for the day's learning. Attendance has improved and is above average. The school care team works closely with parents to encourage the best levels of attendance and punctuality.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe and well looked after. Parents are fully confident that their children receive the highest levels of care.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how their behaviour affects others and that they should be kind and considerate. Staff make good use of a wide range of stories, songs and rhymes to reinforce positive attitudes and to promote good social skills. Assemblies reinforce these messages. Consequently, pupils have a good knowledge of potential bullying situations including racial and homophobic concerns. They are certain that little takes place and any events are successfully managed by the staff. This is confirmed by the school's good record keeping procedures. There have been no recent exclusions.
- Pupils learn to take appropriate risks and to keep themselves safe. They enjoy adventure on residential and other visits but know the dangers and how to stay safe. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, such as their role on the school council. In particular, Year 6 pupils value the 'Badges of Responsibility' they can earn.
- On a few occasions, pupils are not as enthusiastic and engaged in their learning as they could be and this limits the progress that they make.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher's enthusiasm, clarity of purpose and determination are central to the school's improvement since the last inspection. They have developed an effective senior leadership team which is driving forward achievement, especially in English and mathematics. There is a continuous pursuit of high standards in all aspects of the school's work. Staff morale is consequently high.
- The procedures to measure and review the progress made by all groups of pupils are now strong and key factors in the drive for improvement. They provide a precise framework for the governing body to hold leaders to account and ensure that the school's view of its own success is accurate.
- Senior and subject leaders act as good role models for other staff through their own teaching and their skills in improving the work of others. The school has developed effective procedures since the last inspection to ensure staff are held accountable for the progress their pupils make.

They have to meet stringent criteria in order to achieve the next salary level.

- The school closely analyses the use of pupil premium funding which is narrowing gaps at both key stages. The use of funding is carefully matched to the specific needs of the eligible pupils. For example, a reading project involving information and technology provision has shown a sustained impact on most able pupils in this group.
- The impact of the leaders' approach to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils is reflected in the good progress made by everyone. There is no evidence of discrimination in the school.
- The school receives generally appropriate support from the local authority. This has contributed to improvements to the quality of teaching. The school works in partnership with other local schools and the deputy headteacher and other senior staff have roles in training and supporting other teachers.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are well-planned themes built around visits or visitors which form the background to much of pupils' learning. Pupils make good use of their reading and writing skills in a range of subjects such as history and geography. However, this is less well developed for mathematics.
- The school makes a very effective contribution to pupils' health and well-being. Pupils are particularly successful in cricket, football and athletics. This work is complemented by good use of sports development funding to improve teachers' physical education skills and introduce new sporting experiences. This has already contributed to the development of staff skills in teaching physical education and further participation by pupils in clubs and team activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is led and managed well. It is well informed through detailed headteacher's reports and regular detailed analysis of the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils, including a variety of data. The governing body re-structured following the last inspection and established a strategic management committee. The committee ensures that the governing body is well placed to ask challenging questions of the leadership. As a result, governors are fully involved in making decisions as to whether teachers and staff should be rewarded with salary increases and reviewing targets for the headteacher. Governors take advantage of a good range of training opportunities to improve their effectiveness. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met in full. They manage the finances well by, for example, carefully scrutinising the use made of pupil premium funding and its impact on learning.

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	112720
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	441870
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	565
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Adams
Headteacher	Linda Sullivan
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2013
Telephone number	01332 760070
Fax number	01332 272491
Email address	head@dale.derby.sch.uk

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