

Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy

Mere Lane, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 2DG

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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

- In 2013, the standards reached by pupils were low by the end of Year 6 and did not represent good enough progress from their starting points.
- Too few pupils are currently making better than the progress expected of them in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has not been strong enough over time, particularly in Key Stage 2. Consequently, there are gaps in what pupils know and understand in mathematics.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve in their writing are not always high enough, particularly for the most able.
- On occasions, pupils do not always display good attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils say that while they do feel safe at school, adults do not always respond quickly enough if they are upset or report incidents such as name-calling.
- Leaders have not ensured that data are used well enough. As a result, adults are not always able to respond swiftly to support pupils who are not making fast enough progress.
- The roles of middle leaders are not fully developed. They are only at an early stage of using data to measure the effectiveness of their work in raising pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Since the appointment of the two acting headteachers, the quality of teaching is improving quickly.
- Leaders have successfully focused on improving pupils' reading and progress is now securely good.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and children are very well prepared to start Year 1.
- Effective use of the pupil premium is helping eligible pupils make good progress and catch up quickly with others in their class.
- Governors have confidently steered the school with a steady hand through a series of difficult staffing issues. They have not lost sight of their primary role to hold leaders robustly to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons or small group activities, of which seven were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders, school staff and a local authority adviser who is currently supporting the academy.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work in lessons, looked at books, listened to pupils read and met with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to the on-line survey (Parent View) and also a recent survey conducted by school leaders. Inspectors also spoke with a number of parents during the two days of the inspection.
- Inspectors also took account of the 51 questionnaires returned by members of the school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at progress data, information about staff targets, records relating to behaviour and safety, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Jim Alexander, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Smith

Additional Inspector

Baljinder Khela

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is below average.
- In July 2013, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The headteacher is currently on short-term absence due to ill health. The school is currently being led by two acting headteachers. New middle leaders have also recently been appointed to lead developments in English and mathematics. Five new teachers have been appointed this year and seven are due to start in September. A new Chair of Governors was appointed in December 2013 and a number of new governors elected.
- Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Shaw Wood Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better, so that pupils make at least good progress in their writing and mathematics and reach standards of which they are capable by the end of Year 6, by:
 - making sure activities in mathematics suitably engage all pupils, so they quickly fill in gaps in their knowledge and understanding
 - raising expectations of what the pupils can achieve in their writing, particularly the most able
 - making sure all pupils use time in lessons productively, working hard and developing positive attitudes to their work.
- Further improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - making better use of data on pupils' progress to step in more quickly if pupils are not achieving well enough
 - developing the role of middle leaders to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teachers' work to raise standards and accelerate progress in their subject areas
 - acting more swiftly to address pupils' concerns about name-calling.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have not been making good enough progress to help them reach standards of attainment of which they are capable. This is why the achievement of pupils requires improvement.
- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They are helped to settle quickly into excellent routines and soon make excellent progress. As a result, the majority have reached a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1, so that by the end of Year 2, pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who did not read as well as expected in Year 1 last year have been given additional support and now an above average proportion are reading at the expected standard.
- Across the school, pupils have developed a love of reading and talk positively about the support they get at school and home. This is helping them make good progress and an above average proportion of pupils are now reading better than expected for their age.
- School data, lessons observed and work in pupils' books all demonstrate that pupils' achievement improved last year and continues to improve this year. The vast majority of pupils are making the progress expected of them in writing and mathematics and a growing number are exceeding these expectations. However, these improvements are not yet consistently strong in every Key Stage 2 class and remain weakest in the Year 4 classes.
- Improvements to the way mathematics is taught are helping pupils gain a better understanding of basic number calculations. However, there remain gaps in what pupils should know as a result of previous weaknesses in teaching. Consequently, pupils are not always confident to apply their knowledge when asked, for example to solve word problems.
- Pupils are encouraged to write at length and some are now developing good spelling, punctuation and grammar skills. However, opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills into other subjects beyond English are not well developed.
- Overall the progress of the most able pupils is similar to other pupils. It varies between years, especially in writing, when expectations of what they can achieve are not always high enough.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals are making increasingly good progress, so that their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now typically only a few months behind others in their class. This is one example of the school's commitment to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are well supported when working in groups outside the classrooms, but their progress can slow when in whole-class lessons.
- Pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same progress as others in school, which can vary from class to class, depending on the quality of teaching they receive.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, it still requires improvement because its impact on pupils' achievement is not yet consistently good across the school, especially in writing and mathematics.
- In some lessons pupils are given work that is too easy, they finish quickly and then have to wait for others to catch up. This is not a good use of their time and limits the progress they make. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- In other classes, lessons move on at such a fast pace that some pupils struggle to keep up. This limits the progress made, for example, by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

- Inconsistencies in the approach to teaching writing mean that pupils' progress varies from class to class. For example, pupils are taught well in Year 6 and make good progress, but expectations of what Year 4 pupils can achieve are not high enough. Also, while pupils are now given more opportunities to write at length, there remain inconsistencies in the way in which spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught. This slows the progress pupils make.
- Learning activities have focused on helping pupils develop basic number skills and to be secure in carrying out simple calculations. However, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to apply these skills or reinforce their understanding by, for example carrying out problem-solving tasks.
- The quality of marking is improving but remains variable; while the majority include positive comments, not all include explanations as to how pupils' work can be improved. When pupils do receive such guidance they are not always good at acting upon this advice quickly.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from very well designed activities to capture their imagination and promote very positive attitudes to work, both inside and outdoors. Adults are skilled at listening to children and observe how well they are learning. They know when to step in and help and when to step back and allow the child to work things out for themselves.
- The school has a large number of teaching assistants. These members of staff often make a valuable contribution to helping pupils' learning in small group or one-to-one activities. However, they are not always deployed so effectively when supporting in a whole-class lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because pupils' attitudes to learning are not as good as they could be in every lesson. Most pupils show respect for one another and this allows lessons to move on without interruption. However, when activities are not interesting enough to capture pupils' attention, some can become restless or silly and waste learning time.
- Many pupils behave very well at lunchtime and playtime, enjoy school life and provide positive role models for younger children. However, this is not the case for all pupils and some explain that adults do not always act quickly enough to help them when they have been upset by name-calling.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to recognise different types of bullying and how to keep safe, for example when using the internet.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. While records of unacceptable behaviour are logged, leaders do not keep a close enough watch to spot any trends or see if the number and frequency of incidents are falling.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is now broadly average. Pupils enjoy the many musical opportunities available. They also speak positively about how they are enjoying the increasing amounts of sporting activities which are available.
- The well-attended breakfast club provides a positive start to the school day for many pupils.
- Pupils benefit from links with schools in Finland and Spain, for example. Pupils from these countries have made visits to the school, which help pupils have a good understanding of other cultures around the world.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership requires improvement because, while the acting headteachers have taken robust action to effectively improve the quality of teaching, it is not yet consistently good enough to ensure pupils are making good progress in writing and mathematics. Also, leaders do not always use data well enough to identify those pupils who are not yet making the progress expected of them.
- The two acting headteachers are tackling key priorities with a strong sense of urgency and have achieved much in a short space of time. They have the full confidence of the staff and morale is

high. There is a strong determination, shared by all staff, that this quickly becomes a good school.

- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to improve, and have a secure grasp of how to do this. Robust plans and many well-considered initiatives to improve pupils' achievement and behaviour are well underway.
- The leadership of teaching, including arrangements to manage staff performance, has strengthened considerably this year. Expectations of good quality teaching for all staff are clear. All staff are now set targets for improvement, and there are improvement plans for individual teachers' performance. This is helping to hold staff robustly to account for the quality of their teaching and pupils' achievement. Staff appreciate the increasing number of opportunities to receive training and support.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new to their role, have already identified what is working well and what needs to further improve in their subject areas. Development plans have been written and agreed actions are being implemented. However, not all middle leaders have fully developed the skills required to use data effectively so they can measure the success of their work in raising pupils' achievement.
- The new primary school sports funding is used to provide more clubs for pupils to attend, as well as improve the quality of teaching in physical education lessons. Teachers have also set targets for pupils to achieve in this subject. Although this is a new initiative, pupils say that this is leading to a healthier lifestyle and improved physical fitness.
- The curriculum is enhanced through a growing number of school trips and visits. Plans for developing the curriculum further in September are at an early stage of implementation.
- The academy has made good use of external advisers to support improvements. The local authority has also provided effective support this year after a request from the headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The newly elected Chair of Governors has strengthened the governing body by recruiting experienced members and also by taking advantage of training provided by external consultants and the local authority. Governors regularly visit school spending time looking at work in pupils' books, lessons and performance data. It is because they are so well informed that they are able to ask searching questions of leaders, holding them robustly to account for the school's performance. They have set challenging targets to be met and agreed a timescale for any remaining underperformance to be addressed. They make sure good teaching is rewarded and take every opportunity to encourage staff when appropriate. The skilled leadership of the governing body has helped to keep the school on an even keel through a period of difficult staffing issues, carefully following all agreed procedures. They are knowledgeable about how additional funds are used, including the pupil premium funding, and the difference being made to pupils' achievement and enjoyment in school life. Governors have been trained in the safe recruitment of staff and 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

Unique reference number	138705
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	440918

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	484
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Cawley
Headteacher	Sharon Faulkner
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01302 831307
Email address	admin@shawwood.doncaster.sch.uk

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