

Sketchley Hill Primary School

Sketchley Road, Burbage, Hinckley, LE10 2DY

Inspection dates 4–5 June 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 gain a secure start to their education in the Reception classes.
- Most pupils make good progress; by the end of both Years 2 and 6, their attainment is above average.
- Effective support for those pupils who qualify for additional government funding is enabling them to make increasingly good progress.
- More-able pupils are challenged and supported well throughout the school.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils value school life; they have good attitudes to learning.
- Most parents feel their children are happy at school, and value their links with the school.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have been working closely with the school's subject leaders to secure longer-term improvements and not just 'quick fixes'. This has laid the foundations for some excellent teamwork.
- A very good system for the monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress has been established. This is playing a major role in helping accelerate their progress.
- A consistent approach to pupils' personal, as well as their academic, development results in their good behaviour, polite approach, and thoughtful understanding of how to be and stay safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching, but it has not yet proved consistently strong enough to ensure that most pupils make outstanding progress.
- The school has not yet made the most of opportunities for its teachers to share their most effective practice, including that seen in partner schools, so that all are helped to reach the highest standards.
- The helpfulness of teachers' marking and the presentation of pupils' work, although good, are not yet of consistently high quality.
- The school's self-evaluation has focused well on how to improve, but has not always been fine tuned to identify the exact impact of the good work it does, so improvements can be refined.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning and teaching in 29 lessons; in total, 17 teachers and their teaching assistants were seen. In addition, two lessons were seen which were being taught by cover supervisors. Five lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and his deputy.
- Registration times and two assemblies were also observed.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work, and heard a sample of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils selected at random by the lead inspector. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including improvement plans, policies and reports on the school's strengths and aspects for development, monitoring records and reports, safeguarding and curriculum materials, information provided for families, and documents from the governing body. The school's data, including records of pupils' progress, were reviewed.
- Discussions and conversations were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, class teachers, administrative staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority who is the school's improvement advisor.
- The 113 responses to the online questionnaire, *Parent View*, were taken into consideration, as were written comments and letters given to the lead inspector and the school's own survey of its parents carried out in February 2014.
- A significant number of parents had indicated to the school that they wished to speak personally with the lead inspector. Consequently, a special meeting, open to all parents, was arranged at the start of the second day of the inspection in order to listen to parents' views of the school.
- Inspectors also took account of the 48 responses to an inspection questionnaire for school staff.

Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Moira Dales	Additional Inspector
Mary Maybank	Additional Inspector
David West	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils come from White British backgrounds; almost all speak English as their first language. There are very few children for whom English is an additional language. None are currently at an early stage of English language development.
- A very few pupils come from other heritage backgrounds, mainly from Asian or Asian British heritage.
- Most of the pupils joining the school in the Reception Year continue their education at the school until they leave at the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- Nursery provision, for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is available on the school's site through the privately run, but local authority funded, 'Sketchley Hill Menphys Nursery' (EY333439). Childcare provision for the school's pupils is also available on the site through the privately run 'Sketchley Hill Out of School Club' (URN 226421). Both of these facilities are inspected separately by Ofsted.
- 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further, and enhance pupils' achievement, by:
 - providing additional opportunities for teachers to share examples of practice that has led to good learning and develop further their effective professional skills, both within the school and with other partner schools
 - ensuring that all marking reflects the school's best practice, and helps pupils to understand and remember better what to improve
 - making sure pupils act on any advice in teachers' marking
 - encouraging pupils to maintain the very best standards of presentation in all their work.
- Strengthen further the leadership and management of the school, by ensuring self-evaluation focuses more specifically on the impact of its work to help the school become outstanding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the Reception classes, with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding which are broadly as expected for their age. Good teaching and provision in the Reception Year enable children to make secure progress. By the time they move on to Year 1, the large majority have reached a good level of development and are ready for the challenges of Key Stage 1.
- Parents commented very positively on the ways a love of learning is established right from their children's first day in school. This makes an important contribution to their achievement through pupils' positive attitudes to learning; it also contributes significantly to the part the pupils play in helping themselves, and each other, to make progress. Discussions with pupils show that they appreciate the ways they are all given an equal chance to succeed; most jump at this.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is particularly successful in both the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes. In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2013, the large majority of pupils reached the expected standard or higher, and above average proportions reached the highest marks. Pupils are developing as confident readers. They tackle new words successfully because they can break them down correctly into their sounds; they are also good at recognising 'real' and 'nonsense' words.
- Attainment by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 has been above average for the last five years. This achievement has proved significantly better than for most pupils nationally. Current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve at least similar results, as their progress to date has been rapid. The school is proving successful in raising pupils' achievement, and accelerating their progress throughout the three years from Reception to Year 2. It has now risen to this challenge in Key Stage 2.
- In the past, the school has not proved successful in maintaining good enough progress throughout Key Stage 2. However, since 2011 there has been a three-year trend of improvement. In the 2013 Year 6 national tests and assessments, pupils attained above average standards for the first time in each of mathematics, reading and writing. Pupils were also successful in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test. Pupils' work suggests equally strong results for the current Year 6.
- Data from the school's latest assessments, checks on pupils' progress and other inspection evidence show that pupils in all the current year groups are now making good progress overall. The proportion of Year 6 pupils exceeding expected levels of progress in reading, writing and mathematics is already higher than that seen nationally in 2013. The school is on its way to establishing a track record of success at Key Stage 2 which matches that gained in Key Stage 1.
- Most pupils are now making more progress than is typical nationally between Years 2 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Those currently supported through the pupil premium have made similarly good progress, but slightly faster in reading and mathematics than in writing. In 2013 the gap in the standards they reached and those reached by classmates was about two terms, less than was typical nationally; school data shows this gap has now closed. Pupils from minority heritage groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, are making similar progress to their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are also making good progress overall, because the pupils' specific needs and starting points are clearly identified and they receive the right support.

- The school also pays good attention to its more able pupils, who are now, typically, starting to make improved progress year-on-year and are currently achieving well. Pupils enjoy the fact that work in almost all lessons now has specific 'challenges' to which they are expected to rise. Some pupils told inspectors, 'There's always something more to do, and extra extension work. You never have nothing to do. We like that!'

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. This results from the effective, and often excellent teamwork between teachers and their teaching assistants in each year group. Staff use and organise their open plan year group bases to advantage. This benefits and meets the needs of the pupils well in giving them enhanced access to a 'team' of teachers. It also broadens pupils' opportunities to share ideas and experiences, and helps accelerate their progress.
- The teamwork approach means that lesson planning is cooperative. There is clear sharing of responsibilities between teachers and their assistants. This supportive approach sets a good example for the pupils, which they follow in the ways they work alongside each other.
- Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Work is matched well to pupils' abilities. The flexibility within the year group teams means teaching assistants are used effectively. At one moment they are seen interacting with pupils who are finding learning more difficult, and the next ensuring more-able pupils are being given that extra element of challenge.
- Working relationships between staff and pupils are good because pupils know that the adults teaching them always have something interesting to offer. Behaviour management is consistent across the school, and the expectations that staff and pupils have of each other are equally high.
- Most teachers are often very good at asking questions of the pupils to get them to think and explain their thoughts and ideas. This not only helps teachers to assess pupils' understanding of the work, and allows them to adapt their lessons but also encourages pupils to respect each other's views and ways of working. Pupils appreciate that they can learn from their 'mistakes'.
- Teachers have shown a thoroughly professional approach in the ways they have worked to improve the overall quality of their teaching since the last inspection. There has been sharing of effective practice, but staff appreciate that there is more they can now do to take this further in order to enable teaching across the school to become outstanding.
- The improvements now required to the teaching mainly involve 'tweaks', principally in ensuring a more consistent application of the school's approach to marking. While good, it is not yet always of the highest quality in giving pupils that extra element of guidance where needed to confirm what it is they should do to improve. In addition, pupils do not always act on advice they are given in marking.
- Pupils say that their teachers make learning fun. This was seen to good effect in Year 4 base mathematics lesson. Pupils made rapid progress, across both classes, when the new 2014 national curriculum work on Roman numerals was introduced for the first time. Pupils moved rapidly from 'decoding' Roman numerals to making up their own problems using the numerals. There was an interesting discussion at the thought that Romans did not have the concept of 'zero'. Some pupils challenged themselves to find out how the Romans wrote one million.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Discussions with parents confirm that the foundations for pupils' good attitudes are laid securely from the children's first day in the Reception classes. All staff play an important part in helping to create a positive atmosphere for learning. The way pupils interact with each other and adults is good; they cooperate well, both at work and at play. Pupils are polite, friendly, and develop into responsible young citizens who reflect thoughtfully on what they do.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is often excellent in some of the ways they show respect for each other. Pupils want to come to school, and attendance rates are above average. Discussions with pupils show that they know they are not angels all of the time, but appreciate that any disruptive behaviour or bullying is rare. School records support this.
- Attitudes to learning are not yet consistently outstanding because, occasionally, the attention of some pupils can slip, particularly in the odd instance when the work does not grab their entire attention. However, this is 'switching out' rather than 'off' and pupils 'switch in' again very quickly when the teachers focus them gently back on task. This sort of situation sometimes leads to pupils not always maintaining the very best standards of presentation in all their work.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know about the implications of bullying. They know that their teachers will act quickly to put things right. Pupils understand how to deal with different types of bullying and any threats they might meet in the wider world.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. They are encouraged and enabled to reflect not only on their learning but also on each other's achievements. The ways pupils celebrate readily their classmates' successes, also reflect their understanding of the school as a community and the character of their social development.
- Teachers' promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sometimes exemplary. In 'celebration assemblies', for example, every class teacher gives a clear explanation as to exactly why each individual pupil deserves their award. Consequently, pupils understand the reasons why they did well, and how they can learn from this to improve.

The leadership and management are good

- In the 15 months since the previous inspection, leaders at all levels, including the senior leadership team, subject leaders and governors, have worked together to ensure that the school's effectiveness has improved. They have been successfully supported through the cooperation and teamwork of all staff, teaching and non-teaching. Effectiveness is now good. Pupils' achievement is good across the school. The weaknesses in Key Stage 2 have been resolved.
- Like inspectors, the local authority no longer considers this school to be requiring improvement. The local authority has been monitoring and supporting the school regularly, particularly in checking on the improvements in the quality of teaching and in confirming the accuracy of teachers' assessments of its pupils.
- A major improvement over the past year has involved the much sharper use of the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress. Senior leaders are expert in this, and subject leaders have become adept at using data to identify quickly any underperformance and devise successful action plans to resolve this. In this school, 'underachievement' is simply not accepted; pupils are considered to be 'underperforming' if they are on track to make only nationally expected

progress. The school's commitment to ensuring equality of the best opportunity for all its pupils is strong.

- The high expectations staff have of themselves has rubbed off on the pupils; the school as a community is poised well to help itself move from being good to becoming outstanding. Inevitably, the school has focused on the practical ways it can improve learning and teaching. It has not looked for 'quick fixes' but has focused well on designing long-term solutions to help the pupils, and the school, grow and progress. Its self-evaluation has proved accurate and improvement strategies secure.
- The school focuses effectively on reviewing the quality of teaching and the processes it has put in place to secure improvement. Shared lesson observations show that the headteacher and deputy headteacher evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of teaching accurately. Discussions with staff and governors show that they appreciate that the time has come for additional reflection on the successes achieved.
- The school is now looking to shift its focus and place more of an emphasis on analysing the actual impact of its work to improve pupils' learning. This to explore exactly why its actions have led to good outcomes for the pupils. The school knows it is on the right track, and is placed well to use this next step to help it become outstanding.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body contribute substantially to the school, both personally and professionally. They use their skills and expertise effectively not only to support the school practically but also to challenge it helpfully and constructively.
- The governing body knows well how the school is performing in relation to others nationally, and works closely with staff to promote continued improvement. Governors undertake regular training, and are well informed about their roles and responsibilities.
- The governing body places a clear priority on ensuring the school's legal requirements are met, including those for safeguarding. Together with the headteacher and the school's business manager, governors ensure the finances of the school are managed prudently.
- Governors check that pupil premium funding has a good impact on the achievement of eligible pupils. Such monies are being used well not only on specialist staffing and resources to provide extra tuition but also to ensure no pupils are disadvantaged. In addition, good use of the primary school sports funding. This is enhancing well the opportunities for pupils to participate and do well in sports and physical education; as a result, more pupils are leading healthier lifestyles, an important part of the 2012 Olympic legacy.
- The governing body has ensured that there are clear guidelines for staff as to how salaries are linked to pupils' progress, teaching quality and National Teaching Standards. They know how good teaching is, and how it is being improved.

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	119986
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	441960

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Danny Banks
Headteacher	Scott Fewster
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2013
Telephone number	01455 238640
Fax number	01455 614201
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