

Thornbury Primary School

Dick Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD3 7AU

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- Standards in all subjects are too low at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and the most able do not make as much progress as they should in Key Stage 1.
- Some children make slow progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In Year 5, pupils make slow progress in writing.
- Teaching has not been consistently good enough for pupils to make the good progress necessary to raise standards more quickly.
- Some teaching assistants are not as effective as others in helping individuals and small groups of pupils to gain in confidence and to succeed in their learning.
- Teachers do not always draw pupils' attention to incorrect spellings or to poor presentation in their work.
- During some activities, pupils are not clear about what it is they are meant to be learning.
- Pupils are not always encouraged to move on to a higher level of work when they are ready to do so.
- Pupils are not always given time to respond to the written advice given by teachers on work that has been marked. Therefore, opportunities to improve their learning are missed.
- Many middle leaders and some governors are relatively new in post and have not yet had time to become fully effective in improving teaching and raising achievement. So, although senior leaders have accurately identified key areas for improvement and have been successful in tackling some of them, progress in other areas has been too slow.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils eligible to receive the pupil premium funding achieve in line with others.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. There are good relationships between adults and pupils. Behaviour around school is good.
- Pupils learn through a wide range of topics and the provision for their moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Attendance is rising and is now above average.
- Senior leaders and governors know exactly what needs to be done to increase the rate of progress made by pupils. Actions taken in recent months, in particular by the new headteacher, have already started to have an impact on teaching and achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons or parts of lessons. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' books and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with three groups of children, senior and middle leaders, three members of the governing body, teachers and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, monitoring files, the tracking information used to check on pupils' progress, and safeguarding arrangements. They also looked at reports of visits undertaken by the local authority achievement officer.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to use but they took into consideration the responses to the school's own parental survey and the comments made by parents who brought their children to school at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took into account 27 responses to staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Allen

Additional Inspector

David Halford

Additional Inspector

Ian Young

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of girls is above the average for a primary school.
- There are only a very small proportion of children who are of White British heritage.
- A large proportion of children speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- A much higher than average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for pupils looked after by the local authority, and those known to be eligible for free school meals .
- There have been three headteachers since 2011. The current headteacher and one of the deputy headteachers were appointed to their positions in September 2013. The second deputy headteacher joined the school in January 2014. They have worked alongside the governing body to identify and address areas for improvement.
- There has been a high turnover of staff since April 2013, so many staff are relatively new in post and there have been a number of changes to leadership positions throughout the school.
- The current governing body has worked alongside an interim executive board for several months and is due to take over from this board completely in September 2014.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good and raise standards in all subjects by making sure that pupils in all years make rapid progress in their learning by:
 - ensuring that all teaching assistants, particularly those in the Early Years Foundation Stage and those supporting children who have special educational needs in Key Stage 1, are as effective as the best in helping individuals and small groups of children to gain in confidence and to succeed in their learning
 - ensuring that, in all of their classes, pupils know exactly what they are meant to be learning and when they are ready to move on to a higher level of work and that teachers provide enough opportunities, and give them the confidence, to do so
 - ensuring that teachers draw pupils' attention to spelling mistakes and encourage pupils to present their work neatly
 - ensuring that pupils in Year 5 get the same opportunities to improve their writing as they do in other years, in all of their subjects
 - ensuring that the most able, particularly in Key Stage 1, are encouraged to reach higher levels
 - providing time for pupils to respond to the advice given to them by teachers about how they can improve their work.
- Strengthening leadership, including governance, in order to improve teaching and raise achievement more rapidly by:
 - ensuring that middle leaders' roles and responsibilities are clear and fully developed
 - prioritising the training needed to enable all teaching assistants to be fully effective.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Over time, pupils' progress has varied too much across the school to enable pupils to reach high enough standards by the time they reach the end of Year 6. While recent changes are clearly contributing to better progress for many pupils in Years 1 to 6, progress is still not consistently good and therefore requires further improvement.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs have typically made inconsistent, and sometimes limited, progress. Much has been done this year to improve the way these pupils are catered for. As a result, their current progress is improving, particularly in Years 3 to 6. However, some teaching assistants in Years 1 and 2, and in the early years, are not yet providing exactly the right support to enable these pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average. Current school data suggest that, since September 2013, many pupils have made good progress from very low starting points. However, some of the most able pupils are not making enough progress because the work they are given does not challenge them to reach the higher levels.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 was well below average in 2013 in reading and mathematics. Standards have risen this year because pupils are making better progress in these subjects.
- In 2013, standards in writing were below average and have fallen slightly this year because pupils are not making as much progress in writing as they are in reading and mathematics, particularly in Year 5. The school has identified this and has put in place actions to boost achievement in writing.
- In 2013, the proportion of Year 1 pupils attaining the expected standard in the screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) was below the national average. Effective teaching of phonics is contributing to improved reading skills and the proportion of pupils in the current Year 1 who are expected to reach the required standard is much higher.
- Pupils who enter the school with little or no English are well supported. Over time, they make progress in line with others because this support matches their individual needs.
- Children join Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are much lower than typically found, in most areas of learning, particularly in speech and communication. Over time, they have not made good progress in these classes because adults' assessments of children's knowledge and skills have not been accurate enough and because there has not been enough training for teaching assistants. This has been acknowledged by the school and measures have now been put in place to address this.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium funding, including those eligible for free school meals, make the same progress and reach similar standards to others. In 2013, in Year 6 these pupils reached standards above those of their classmates in all subjects. Eligible pupils benefit from well-focused support which is closely checked by leaders.
- The early indications are that the use of the additional funding for sport is helping to raise pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and increase their participation in a range of physical activities. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the range of sporting activities and facilities provided to them.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Weaker teaching in the past has affected learning and progress. The headteacher and deputy headteachers have acted resolutely to tackle weak teaching and it is now more effective. However, inconsistencies remain across year groups and classes and not all pupils are making the progress they should.
- Not all teaching assistants are as effective as others in providing the right kind of support for individuals and small groups. For example, during one activity, a small group of pupils were having great fun competing to finish mental arithmetic questions in as short a time as possible.

The teaching assistant, while praising them for having finished the questions quickly, was not checking the accuracy of pupils' answers before moving on to the next set of questions.

- Expectations are not always high enough. Pupils are not clear about what they are meant to be learning and at what particular level a task is pitched. Pupils understand what levels are and that they have to be secure in one level before moving on to the next, but pupils are not always encouraged to move on swiftly to more difficult work. Pupils are often too reliant on the teacher to tell them when they are ready to move on instead of making the decision for themselves.
- Pupils' written work is sometimes untidy and of poor quality and spelling mistakes often go unchecked.
- The quality of marking has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' work is regularly marked and advice is provided to pupils about what they should do to improve the quality of their work. However, pupils are not routinely given time to respond to this advice to improve their learning.
- Teachers do not always use the information available to consistently set tasks that will challenge all pupils, particularly the most able in Key Stage 1.
- The Nursery and Reception areas are well organised, bright and well resourced with a wide range of equipment intended to promote learning in different ways and contexts. There is a good ratio of adults to children, and adults are effective in encouraging children to learn how to behave appropriately. Not all adults are sufficiently skilled, however, and sometimes their time is not spent as effectively as it might be in support of children's learning. For example, in one session a teaching assistant was seen sitting observing children in the mathematics area, making no attempt to intervene or question children, so opportunities to enhance their learning were lost.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and behaviour is well managed. Clear expectations for behaviour in the classroom are established and pupils follow these. Pupils understand what will happen if they do not behave appropriately and they appreciate the rewards they are given for trying hard in lessons or for producing high-quality work.
- When all pupils are fully interested in their work and inspired to do the best they can, pupils' progress speeds up. For example, during a literacy activity where pupils were learning to produce a descriptive opening paragraph for a story, pupils worked well in groups or pairs, according to their ability and supporting one another. There was appropriate support from both the teacher and the teaching assistant for low ability pupils and those with special educational needs, which helped them to gain in confidence as the activity progressed. All pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activity and made good progress from their different starting points.
- Classroom and corridor displays and other resources are attractive and used to celebrate pupils' achievement and to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, along the Key Stage 2 corridor, the content of displays included pirate poems linked to Salvador Dali images, Ancient Egyptians, science key words and processes, and safety using the internet.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour had improved, particularly since this headteacher had arrived at the school. Pupils understand the consequences of their actions and they say that when teachers say they will do something, they do! This is because all teachers apply the behaviour policy consistently. They are enthusiastic about the positive recognition they receive when they attend well, behave well or when their work is of a high standard and they enjoy the celebration assemblies.
- Pupils behave well in class and follow instructions quickly which means little time is wasted during and between lessons.
- Classrooms are bright and welcoming. Teachers have worked hard to create positive and welcoming places for pupils to learn which are kept tidy and free from litter. Pupils say they are proud of their school and they wear their uniform with pride.
- Attendance has improved steadily over the past two years and is now above average. The

number of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen. Leaders have worked closely with families to reduce the number of children who are absent because of extended holidays. Attendance is now above average for all groups of pupils.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils report they feel safe and parents agree. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about various ways in which to stay safe.
- This is a school where great emphasis is placed on children being in school if they are going to learn well and the number of exclusions has fallen this year. The headteacher has developed a range of alternative opportunities in school aimed at modifying pupil behaviour and securing better opportunities for learning including the appointment of pastoral and year group leaders.
- There are effective arrangements in place to support children whose needs are sometimes complex, and which make them potentially vulnerable. Daily mentoring, nurturing support and guidance all help these children to grow in confidence and make good progress.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, say that bullying rarely occurs and that if it does occur, they are confident that their teachers will deal with it.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to take on jobs and responsibilities within the school, for example as school council representatives, reading monitors, 'Lunchtime Angels' or part of the charity fund-raising team. Pupils presented the new Mayor and Mayoress of Bradford with their robes, following their election to office, and Year 6 pupils have confidently put forward their views to members of the governing body.
- Adults ensure that children begin to develop their personal and physical skills from the moment they enter nursery. They learn to play together, share toys and equipment, to consider one another's feelings and to respond appropriately to instructions.
- The school works in partnership with local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils as they prepare to move on to the next stage in their education.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The appointment of the current headteacher followed a period of instability and transition for the school. Since her appointment she has worked hard and has been well supported by governors, and both deputy headteachers, to establish a culture of high expectations. She has taken decisive action in tackling underperformance and secured the commitment of all staff. Staff morale is now high.
- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious and want the best for pupils. They have introduced many innovations to improve behaviour, teaching and learning and to raise achievement. These recent improvements are making a difference, but have not yet had a sustained impact upon pupils' achievement.
- There have been numerous changes of staff, including leaders at all levels. The senior leadership team was restructured this year, and its roles and responsibilities are now established. Several middle leaders, for example year group leaders and subject leaders, are too new to have had a significant impact on improving teaching and learning.
- Recent improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example ensuring that children's skills and knowledge are assessed accurately and externally moderated, have been managed by the deputy headteacher, who joined the school in January 2014. A newly appointed leader for the early years is due to take up her post in September 2014.
- The range of subjects taught in the curriculum meets pupils' needs and is under constant review. Work in literacy and numeracy is appropriately given a high priority, and improving teaching and standards in writing are key areas for development. There is a strong focus on improving pupils' writing and language skills through topic work in history and science. The curriculum is enriched through educational visits, for example to Skipton Castle, and a range of visiting speakers, for example from theatre companies and the Northern Ballet.
- The school is now in a more secure position, particularly in relation to behaviour and attendance, and achievement is improving. Leaders have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching,

based on the checks made of lessons and reviews of pupils' work.

- Following recent improvements, the school's systems for managing staff performance have improved and are now rigorous. Teachers are set more aspirational targets, underpinned by better training. There is now a closer link between teachers' performance and their pay rises and promotion.
- There is also a structured system of appraisal for other staff and they take part in appropriate training and development. The school is aware that some teaching assistants need further development to enable all of them to be equally effective in providing the right kind of challenge and support for pupils.
- The school's view of itself is accurate. Improvement plans identify the correct priorities. Weaknesses are being addressed.
- Leaders and governors are striving to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of race or background and there are early signs that this is reducing the gaps in the performance of groups. However, there are still some gaps where improvements in teaching and provision have not yet had the time to have a full impact.
- Additional teaching is provided in English and mathematics to help any pupils at risk of falling behind. The primary school sports funding is being used appropriately to train staff and give pupils a wider range of activities. As a result, more pupils are now participating in sports.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school during its period of transition.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A new governing body has been constituted since the last inspection; roles and responsibilities have been clarified and governors are undertaking a wide range of training to ensure that they are able to carry out their duties effectively. Governors are very supportive of the school and are keen to ensure that all pupils have equal access to their learning, that they enjoy school and that there is a strong focus on their personal, as well as their academic, development. They bring enthusiasm to their roles and a determination to ensure that weaknesses will be tackled and pupils will have a successful future. They have supported senior leaders through a period when there has been a high turnover of staff and have been involved in making some difficult decisions about tackling underperformance. They are gaining a better understanding of how the school's performance compares with that of other schools and are beginning to ask more challenging questions relating to pupils' achievement.
 - Governors know how much money the school receives through the pupil premium, how it is spent and about the impact the extra spending has on eligible pupils' progress. They have appropriate arrangements to manage the performance of the headteacher. The governing body is involved in discussions relating to managing the performance of staff and makes sure that teachers only get pay rises when their pupils make good progress.

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	107222
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	430590

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	690
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Mawson
Headteacher	Clare Daddy
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2012
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