

# Muskham Primary School

Main Street, North Muskham, Newark, NG23 6HD

**Inspection dates** 15–16 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils' achievement has fallen significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils do not make enough progress in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is inadequate. Work set for pupils does not build effectively on what they already know.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate. It does not lead to prompt improvements.
- Too little attention is paid to ensuring pupils learn to spell correctly, with accurate grammar and punctuation, and write legibly.
- The work for the average-ability pupils and the most able does not get the best out of them. In particular, mathematical work is often unchallenging.
- Pupils' behaviour is inadequate. In class it deteriorates when learning does not inspire them. Books are often untidy. In the playground there is sometimes rough play.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. Some pupils say they do not always feel free from bullying.
- Governance is inadequate because most governors have not been aware of the slide in standards. School leaders and staff have therefore not been held sufficiently to account for pupils' achievement.
- Ineffective teamwork between governors, leaders and staff has hampered effective leadership of teaching and learning and held back improvements. School data on how well pupils are doing is not checked for accuracy.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly with caring staff and make a good start to their learning.
- Pupils participate in a good range of music, drama and sports activities that help promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teaching assistants offer good care for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 lessons, a number of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Seven hours in total were spent carrying out a thorough work scrutiny covering work for all year groups. This included all the work completed for the whole year in literacy and numeracy for Year 2 and Year 6. The headteacher also spent time joining in with this scrutiny. In addition, pupils of all ages were heard reading.
- Discussions were held with other staff with leadership responsibilities, teachers, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, separate discussions with two other governors at their request, and two representatives, separately, from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account the 47 responses to the online Parent View survey, discussions with parents at the start of the school day, letters and emails sent directly to the inspection team and an interview requested by a parent.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to attendance, and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour.

## Inspection team

Ruth McFarlane, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Neil Spencelayh

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- This primary school is smaller than average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. The proportion supported at school action is just below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those that are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher joined the school shortly after the previous inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that all teachers:
  - take account of what pupils already know and can do, especially average-ability and more-able pupils, to ensure pupils make best progress
  - have high expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve and the quality and quantity of work that they produce
  - ensure that guidance to pupils on how to improve their work leads to improvement.
- Raise pupils' achievement in English and mathematics by insisting that teachers:
  - teach pupils how to spell correctly, use grammar and punctuation appropriately and write legibly
  - expect pupils to solve harder mathematical problems with improved accuracy and always have something more challenging to go on to.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to learning by:
  - encouraging pupils to sustain good learning behaviour in class by ensuring they concentrate fully on their learning, insisting on high quality presentation of work.
- Improve the impact of leadership by:
  - improving teamwork across the different tiers of leadership and management and among governors
  - ensuring that safeguarding and health and safety requirements are met and that pupils are kept safe while in the school's care

- improving the management and supervision of pupils’ behaviour in the playground
- ensuring that assessments of pupils’ learning are accurate
- ensuring that the school development plan quantifies more precisely how success will be measured
- making sure that governors develop their skills so that they can hold leaders and managers to account more robustly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Pupils' progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is inadequate. This includes that of the most-able pupils as well as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- At the time of the previous inspection, national test data indicated that the rate of progress between Year 2 and Year 6 placed the school in the top 4% of all schools nationally. In 2013, pupils' achievement had deteriorated to place the school in the bottom 10% of schools nationally.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have fluctuated recently, from significantly above average in 2012 to significantly below in 2013. Pupils' starting points had been similar for both years. A much lower proportion of middle - and higher-ability pupils than average made the progress they should in 2013.
- In 2012 and 2013, standards at the end of Year 6 (Key Stage 2) were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils entered the key stage with above average standards, so their progress and achievement had gone down and was inadequate. In 2013, boys (nearly half of the cohort) were about a year behind the girls overall, and nearly two years' behind in reading.
- The unvalidated 2014 test results in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and current school data for most year groups show improvement. However, the data are not replicated in pupils' books, either in their writing across a range of subjects, or, especially, in mathematics. Pupils' written work is often marred by poor, uncorrected spelling, punctuation and use of grammar. Books are often untidy and show a lack of care in presentation. In some year groups, the presentation and standard of work has deteriorated through the year.
- Work set for the more able is often too easy to get the best out of them. In some classes, they were asked to copy out the same writing work on a computer, or wait for everyone else to finish the same mathematics problem. This limits progress.
- Pupils in Year 6 supported by the pupil premium funding were about half a term ahead of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics overall, in 2013. Currently, the work scrutinised shows that this group of pupils across the school makes similar progress to others in their class.
- Reading standards are broadly in line with pupils' age in Year 6 and there is little gender difference in this year's cohort. While achievement in reading is still inadequate over time, the impact of whole-school target setting, which focused on reading, incorporating phonics (the sounds letters make) and reading comprehension, has been positive. Performance in the Year 1 phonics check has improved to above average and pupils can therefore decipher words more easily using their improved phonic knowledge.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is starting to improve because the leadership of this group has recently strengthened. Consequently, poor performance is reducing, helped by caring support from teaching assistants.
- Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with typical skills and abilities for their age, and

for some, starting skills are at a higher level. They settle well in a caring environment. A higher than average proportion achieve the Early Learning Goals expected for their age, preparing them well for the start of Year 1.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **is inadequate**

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are too low. Pupils produce too little work, limiting their progress. Many do not write neatly in books. In some books there are periods of several weeks when no work has been recorded.
- The comments that teachers make on pupils' work are not helping them to improve. Much of the written marking is cursory, especially in mathematics, where in one case, twenty books had a pie chart ticked by the teacher but none was correct. Even when marking is more helpful, where teachers have adopted a new approach of 'bubble and block' to indicate strengths and weaknesses of pupils' work, most teachers do not write sufficiently legibly, or check that the advice has been heeded in future work, so that the same errors continually recur and hold back pupils' progress.
- Attention to ensuring that pupils spell correctly, write legibly and use correct punctuation and grammar is inconsistent and overall, has resulted in inaccuracies and a lack of understanding of rules such as spelling conventions.
- In mathematics, pupils rarely are made to think hard, for instance by trying to solve difficult problems. This prevents them from deepening their understanding and limits their progress.
- Work set is often too easy for middle-ability and more-able pupils. Often, activities do not build on what pupils have learned before. This slows progress and causes gaps in pupils' understanding.
- From work scrutiny undertaken by inspectors, and from observation, a generous amount of time is spent by pupils gluing worksheets into their workbooks rather than on learning.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for learning, because they are often well directed. Consequently, appropriate support is being given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is often a buzz of interest and learning from the range of activities available both inside and outside. The inclusion of all the pupils in whole-school special events days, such as the Guerrilla Grounds Day during the inspection, promotes children's spiritual and social development well, enabling them to work with and cooperate in a range of exciting activities. They much enjoyed working with adults and older pupils in the grounds, making spiders' webs and wind chimes.
- Teachers use questioning as an effective tool for learning. For instance, probing questions enabled pupils in Year 6 to learn well, thinking critically about the role of women in World War 1. They were helped to discuss war policies and their impact in an unbiased political manner. This promoted good social, moral and cultural awareness.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **are inadequate**

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.

- Too many pupils have poor attitudes to learning. In some classes, many pupils' books are littered with crossings out and a few have graffiti. Too little attention is paid to neatness and pride of presentation, including precision in drawing mathematical diagrams, and English accuracy.
- In the classroom, some pupils lose concentration and display a lack of interest, especially when activities are uninspiring. This slows their learning and occasionally leads to disruption of other pupils' learning. Sometimes, pupils obediently complete the too-easy task required and then sit and wait for others to finish, limiting their learning. Some are content to sit passively when they do not understand, rather than ask questions to deepen their understanding.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils are keen to come to school to take part in music and drama activities and the frequent 'events days'. Pupils conduct themselves well in assemblies.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. The school does not meet statutory safeguarding requirements. There is a lack of awareness about the importance of training. The training of the designated senior lead for safeguarding is out of date. Although the school says staff are trained in paediatric first aid, staff could produce no certification to this effect. The school says it has carried out risk assessments to ensure pupils' health and safety, but none were able to be produced during the inspection.
- Records are inadequate. Pupils report that bullying occurs but staff could not produce any recent records. Inspectors agree with the majority of parents who expressed a view, that bullying is not dealt with well.
- Some outside areas are hazardous. Levels of supervision during playtimes are inadequate. This was identified a month ago as an issue by the local authority, who observed pupils throwing clothes into trees unchecked and some rough play. Pupils say there is some naughtiness and bullying outside because staff on duty do not see it. Pupils do not feel confident that incidents will be dealt with. On four separate occasions during the inspection, even after alerting the headteacher, supervision remained inadequate, with two members of staff on duty chatting together rather than being placed at hazardous points, for instance, where fencing is inadequate, and where pupils cannot be seen.
- Pupils are aware of what is an unsafe situation. They know how to keep themselves and others safe in some situations such as when using the internet. They understand about the types of bullying they might encounter.

### **The leadership and management** are inadequate

- The work of the school's leaders, at all levels, and in all aspects, has not ensured that the school's previous outstanding performance has been maintained and has not convincingly arrested the decline in achievement.
- There has been insufficient teamwork between the headteacher and staff. Consequently, improvements, where evident, are fragile and can be traced to external support. This means that the school is not demonstrating the capacity to improve. Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.
- Leaders collect a range of information about pupils' achievement. However, there is lack of rigour in checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments in the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as through the school. This has contributed to an overly positive self-evaluation and a generous view of how well pupils are doing overall and how effective the teaching has been.

- Staff performance checks are carried out regularly but despite a positive impact recently on reading standards, have not led to improvement in the overall quality of teaching. There is an appropriate link between pay and performance.
- Senior leaders meet regularly with staff to discuss the actions that need to be taken to help individual pupils make faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they do not check that agreed actions are implemented and make a difference to pupils' achievement.
- School development plans lack rigour because they are too vague in quantifying success. For instance, 'pupils' progress improves' is not measurable because it does not indicate by how much.
- Subject leaders are keen to make an impact, but a lack of effective overall leadership impedes progress in ensuring that monitoring turns into pupil improvement. The school's curriculum (the subjects taught) includes numerous sporting and musical enrichment activities that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The performance of *'The Wizard of Oz'* during the inspection was much enjoyed by pupils and parents and enabled many pupils to shine. Themed events are frequent and enthuse pupils. However, the school does not provide an appropriately balanced curriculum. This limits the progress that pupils are able to make across the range of academic subjects.
- The school uses additional funding appropriately. It makes suitable additional provision for individual pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding. The primary sports funding has been used to provide regular input from coaches in tennis, golf, cricket and dance and to establish a link with a local sports association and a former professional footballer. The Year 3 and 4 age group won a local football competition recently.
- The local authority is aware of the school's declining standards and the teamwork difficulties among staff and governors. It has provided astute advice, including a recent frank review of school effectiveness, together with a plan for action and support from partner schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are very keen to do a good job, but most have not benefited from sufficient training or expert information that could ensure that they understand how their role in the governance of the school might be improved.
  - Parents benefit from the improved communication instigated recently by the Chair of the Governing Body. However, a minority of those parents who expressed an opinion, through the online questionnaire and correspondence, have recognised the weaknesses in the school's effectiveness. About a third would not recommend the school to others.
  - Governors as a whole are not aware of the quality of teaching. They did not know until recently that the school's performance and pupils' achievement had deteriorated.
  - The Chair of the Governing Body attends pupils' progress meetings with staff and has therefore begun to hold staff more accountable and ensure that pay is related to teachers' and the headteacher's performance. While the Chair is now aware of what is being done to tackle underperformance, other governors are not so aware.
  - The Chair of the Governing Body has put in a number of good measures to ensure that pupils are safeguarded and behaviour is acceptable but has not checked thoroughly enough that these are implemented effectively. Other governors have not been made aware of the shortcomings for this aspect of their corporate responsibilities.
  - Governors know that the school receives funding for the pupil premium and primary sports and how it is spent, but have not made checks on the impact this is having.



## 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>	122663
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	444118

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susie Chambers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Greatwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01636 702254
<b>Fax number</b>	01636 702254
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