

Osbournby Primary School

London Road, Osbournby, Sleaford, NG34 0DG

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Early years provision | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- There has been a decline in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection which has only recently been decisively reversed.
- In 2014, due to staffing changes and variable teaching, the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 did not achieve well. In Year 6, in mathematics and in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test, standards were below average.
- The more-able pupils, and boys, in particular, did not achieve well enough in 2014.
- Pupils' progress has improved but achievement requires improvement because good progress is not yet consistent or sustained.
- Teaching, while rapidly improving, still varies in quality too much to be consistently good.
- Teaching does not always promote the highest standards of writing or English grammar.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use mathematics skills in a range of subjects and this limits their development of fluency in using the calculation methods they learn. Work is occasionally too easy. This restricts the rate of progress pupils can make.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership and management at all levels is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Over the past year, governors, the headteacher and subject leaders have made a significantly positive impact.
- There are few remaining weaknesses and leaders are tackling them effectively through rigorous support and insistence on high-quality teaching.
- While many improvements came too late for the 2014 Year 6 cohort, no pupil currently in school is underachieving.
- The early years setting is good and is well led. Children's good progress continues in Year 1, where pupils do well in the check of standards in phonics (the sounds letters make).
- Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are very eager to learn. Effective strategies have raised attendance rates to above average and keep pupils safe and secure.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the astute spending of additional funding, are very well led. As a result, pupils in these groups make good and sometimes outstanding progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, five of them jointly with the headteacher. In addition, she made a number of short visits to lessons, listened to pupils read, and made a thorough check of work and progress in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and subject and other leaders. The inspector also met with the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation took place with a representative working on behalf of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 36 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The inspector also considered the views expressed in correspondence from parents and the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector looked closely at a range of documentation, including the school's information about the progress of pupils, the school's view of its own performance, recent reports from external sources, monitoring details and records relating to the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and plans for improvement. Records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents concerning safeguarding and child protection, were also considered.

Inspection team

Ruth McFarlane, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Since September 2014, the school has extended its age range to accommodate three year olds. There are currently eight children aged three. A few attend on a full-time basis, but most are part-time.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced changes in staffing and roll, and there have been, variously, three or four mixed-age classes. Currently, there are four: Class 1 is the early years class, for children from three to five years, Class 2 is for Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1), Class 3 is for Years 3 and 4 (lower Key Stage 2) and Class 4 is for Years 5 and 6 (upper Key Stage 2).
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- About one pupil in six is eligible for the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, known as the pupil premium. This is a lower proportion than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs varies widely from year to year but is usually below the average for primary schools. Currently, about one in sixteen of the pupils is supported by school action. This is below the average proportion for primary schools. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, at about one in twenty, is also below the national average. No pupil has an education, health and care plan.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum standards expected at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- Before- and after- school care is provided by the school, in Early Birds, before school, and Nightingales, after school. This provision was included in the inspection.
- Most of the staff with responsibilities were new to their responsibilities a year ago. A new literacy coordinator joined the school in April 2014.
- A new Chair of Governors has been appointed since the previous inspection. Some new governors have this year replaced others on the governing body.
- The school collaborates informally with two other local small schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and make pupils' progress consistently good or better across all classes by:
 - promoting high standards of writing throughout the curriculum so that pupils are enabled to write more frequently and at greater length, using English grammar more fluently and accurately
 - include mathematics in a range of subjects across the curriculum and ensure that tasks stretch and challenge pupils
 - always having more challenging tasks for the more-able pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads her team with determination and skill. She has steered an even keel through rapid and significant changes, strengthened the systems of accountability, made good appointments and provided effective training. This has enabled her to share leadership more widely, improving its effectiveness.
- All staff with management responsibilities work effectively together. Measures taken over the past year ensure that pupils across the school are making faster progress. Their behaviour is managed well and attendance has risen.
- Close checks on teaching are reaping benefits. This is most evident in the early years. Here, good leadership monitors closely the progress of each individual child. 'Learning Journeys' eloquently describe children's progress, illustrated with apt photographs. This helps forge good partnerships with parents and enables children to shine. Reading records, homework books and communication books underpin the strong partnership with parents throughout the school. Most parents would recommend the school to others.
- Leaders are fully aware that, although improving, achievement is not yet consistently good. Well thought-out plans to tackle this and ensure all teaching is at least good are fully in hand. A study of work and school progress data show that the proportion of good teaching is rising. Teachers recognise they are accountable for pupils' progress. Their performance is managed closely.
- All pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed and there is no discrimination for any reason. Boys had been lagging behind in the Year 6 group that has now left the school. There is no evidence of any difference now. The school accurately identifies the requirements of disadvantaged pupils and spends the pupil premium funding wisely. The extra tuition and additional support has clearly positive impact.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly and prompt actions are now being taken to ensure that pupils catch up with their learning. The school can point to outstanding achievement for some of its disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs because this group is managed highly effectively. Good relations are fostered; for instance, with outside agencies. These support pupils' learning and attendance. Work for the more able is under review to ensure all achieve well.
- Partnerships are strong with other small schools locally. Joint work is underway to develop a new system of assessment in view of the removal of National Curriculum levels. Joint moderations and checks of each school's assessments ensure that these are accurate.
- The use of the primary sports funding enhances the opportunities pupils have to be involved in sporting activities. For instance, pupils are involved in inter-school sports competitions. Specialist knowledge is being shared among staff. These opportunities have improved pupils' skills and their well-being, and are influencing their enjoyment of school.
- The school has received good-quality external support from a local headteacher working on behalf of the local authority. This has helped manage the improvements evident in governance, staffing, teaching and learning.
- Policies and procedures to keep pupils safe meet requirements. All staff are checked before being appointed. Training to keep pupils safe is up to date.
- The curriculum has been reviewed to bring it in line with new requirements. It captures pupils' imaginations. Care provided in Early Birds and Nightingales is well organised and provides good extension to the school day. Opportunities to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are woven through all aspects of school life. In their preparations for 'Greek Day', pupils talked of Greek

gods and myths, and could explain and reflect on some of the differences and similarities of ancient Greek traditions compared with British democracy. Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' for early years children. These activities promote pupils' growing sense of responsibility, understanding and tolerance of difference, preparing them well for life in modern Britain.

- The improvements evident in school data and in pupils' books show that leaders' work over the past year has improved many aspects of the school and reversed the decline. However, the school is aware that teaching is still not consistently good. Planning to promote the highest standards of literacy and mathematics is not yet fully effective because there are too few opportunities for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills beyond English and mathematics lessons.

■ The governance of the school:

- Changes in governance have enabled governors to demonstrate effective support and challenge for the school this year. Meetings focus sharply on raising standards and on the school's action plan. Governors' knowledge about all aspects of the school has improved through training. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and they are now sufficiently skilled to enable them to ask the necessary searching questions. They are precise about the school's ongoing weaknesses and areas of strength. They have a secure understanding of published data about the school's performance and are fully involved in planning for improvement. There is an understanding of how the performance of teachers is managed. Governors make certain that performance links clearly with progression through the pay scale. They are appropriately involved in actions taken to manage underperformance. Governors know how funding is spent and ensure that adequate funds are made available to support pupils. They ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils work and play harmoniously in the early years and through the school. They know the school 'code of conduct' and say the school is like 'one big family'.
- Around school, pupils behave well. They relish the award of 'Bobby Bear' in assembly, for care and consideration for others. They enjoy coming to school and are thoroughly involved. They take on responsibility well; for instance, as school councillors. Pupils appointed as 'Games Experts' are proud to develop playground provision and to support fellow pupils to develop games skills during breaks.
- Attendance is above average. The school has developed a wide range of strategies, including raffles and rewards, to encourage pupils to be punctual and attend well.
- In class, pupils readily share ideas about their work. Their eagerness to learn is already leading to good progress because pupils are responding very positively to leaders' initiatives to improve their achievement. Themed work, such as the recent 'Health and Well-being Day' and the forthcoming 'Greek Day', maintains pupils' interest. Classrooms are set out with something to do at all times and are mostly bright and welcoming. Only when there is a lack of challenge in the activities, as sometimes happens, does interest falter. Then, the standard of behaviour declines.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are taught from the earliest age about personal safety through assemblies and the personal, social and health education programme, including keeping safe on the internet. They are taught how to keep safe outside school; for instance, in bicycle safety sessions. Local police come into school regularly to work with the pupils on safety matters.
- Pupils know about some of the types of bullying that children of their age might encounter, and they are taught what to do if they encounter any unkind behaviour. Pupils say that there is no bullying in school and that, if it does arise, they are confident that staff will sort it out. Records confirmed their views.
- All parents who expressed a view in the online questionnaire confirmed that the school keeps their children safe. In school, most staff implement policies thoroughly and keep up to date with requirements.

Some minor administrative errors in the way the required record of staff checks is maintained were corrected during the inspection.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, teaching has varied and has sometimes been weak. This led to a decline in pupils' achievement.
- Not all the teachers provide enough motivation and challenge for those pupils who are learning quickly and who are ready for harder work. Some books showed that there are occasions when tasks allocated for the more-able pupils in mathematics are easier than the tasks for average-ability pupils. When this happens, it limits learning. Teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to use and develop their mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Teachers mostly foster and maintain pupils' interest in writing but the promotion of high standards in literacy is hampered by a lack of sufficient opportunities for longer pieces of writing. This holds back writing fluency and progress, and the chances to practice the grammar constructions learned. This is one reason why the teaching of English grammar is also not consistently well developed, adversely affecting pupils' performance in this subject.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Activities are planned that maintain children's enthusiasm and interest. Work is carefully assessed. In the rest of the school, pupils' work is marked regularly and there is often good guidance for pupils to reflect on the progress they have made, which leads to improvements in work.
- The teaching of reading is effective. The early years leader provided training for teaching assistants and this has ensured that phonics teaching is consistently effective. Older pupils read with interest and expression. Dictionaries and thesaurus use is frequent in class, from an early age.
- Throughout the school, staff build caring relationships with pupils. This is assisted by the effective deployment of other adults to support pupils in class and in special group activities. The additional adults help to assess pupils' progress and encourage pupils to check that they are learning and understanding what is being taught.
- Teaching of vulnerable pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and disadvantaged pupils, is particularly successful. It is very well planned by the special educational needs coordinator to meet each pupil's individual learning needs. Consequently, staff are all well aware of pupils' targets and ensure they all work together to ensure that these are met. As a result, some of these pupils make outstanding progress.
- Staff provide pupils with an exciting environment and most classrooms offer excellent stimulation to learn. For instance, in Key Stage 1, pupils much enjoyed linking their work on the human skeleton to work on the story of Florence Nightingale. In upper Key Stage 2, pupils have great fun responding to their frequently changing wall display involving sorting letters into the longest word they can think of, against the clock, and using numbers to make a given total. These exciting elements of the school's curriculum contribute to pupils' eagerness to come to school.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Progress in each year group is too variable for achievement to be judged good. At the end of each key stage it declined over the most recent three years. Although attainment in most subjects was average in 2014, attainment in mathematics was below average at both key stages. Performance in the Year 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling test was also below average.
- This meant the progress of pupils in Year 6 last year was inadequate, from their starting points in Year 3.

Boys performed worse than girls. Leaders' prompt actions have ensured that pupils' progress has accelerated and gaps are rapidly closing, but sustained good progress is not yet fully secure across the school, in writing or mathematics, because there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise these skills in a range of subjects.

- In writing and grammar in Key Stage 2, while there is no underachievement evident now, progress is sometimes held back. Pupils often spend too long writing short sentences to illustrate one particular grammatical construction. Often, in class, those who have finished wait for all to finish before following the next whole-class instruction. This slows learning and holds up progress in using the grammar points in broader pieces of writing.
- The more-able pupils at both key stages did not do well in 2014 at Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2. Fewer pupils than average reached the higher levels, and no pupils reached the highest level in Year 6. Leaders had already identified and were dealing with weaknesses and took further steps to eliminate weaker teaching through training. They have raised teachers' expectations of what the more able are capable of, although, just occasionally, work set is still too easy and teachers do not set extra challenges.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' achievement has reaped greatest benefits in the early years. Good progress there continues into Year 1, so that the proportion of Year 1 pupils attaining the expected standard in the screening check in phonics exceeds the national average. In the rest of Key Stage 1, improved teaching ensures that pupils make at least the progress expected for their age.
- Progress for year groups other than Year 6 was at least in line with pupils' ages in 2014. There is evidence that some progress was good. In reading, currently, pupils make good progress. They build on the good start they receive in phonics and the frequent practice in reference books in class. They read widely for research and pleasure by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils are achieving well in other subjects, such as sports, history and personal education, brought about by the lively curriculum.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs typically make good progress and some make outstanding progress. Staff respond very sensitively to pupils who have been reluctant learners in the past, and coax them successfully into making great gains, both in their personal skills and in their work.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils to comment on their attainment without potentially identifying individuals. They make good and sometimes outstanding progress because the school identifies their requirements accurately and quickly puts in place effective support.

The early years provision is good

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. They are focused on helping the children to make good progress in their learning and development, as well as promoting their safety and welfare effectively. The inclusion of younger children is being managed well. Leaders have created a stimulating, well-resourced indoor and outdoor environment which has a positive impact on children's learning.
- Children start school with skills that are typical for their age in all aspects of learning. The proportion achieving a good level of development is above average. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- The staff promote warm relationships and secure children's well-being. They ensure that children behave well, enjoy school and learn well. Children are kept safe. They settle quickly in school because learning is fun and they receive good care. Resources are used well by staff to plan enjoyable activities that cover the areas of learning. The three-year-olds much enjoyed their walk in the outdoor classroom, banging rhythm sticks on various surfaces to hear the difference in sounds. This proved to be good preparation for later listening out for different letter sounds. Children mix well, learn to share, follow routines well and tidy things away sensibly.
- Children make good progress because they are well taught. There is a rich variety of learning activities. Reception children beamed with delight at the activity to make 'fireworks' using chocolate fingers, jam and

sprinkles. They recalled their work afterwards, writing, 'Dip it in the jam'. Adults encourage children to share their ideas and develop their speaking skills.

- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are included fully. They enjoy talking and playing with other children, and are well supported so that they make at least good progress. All the children's development is carefully monitored by staff, and parents are kept closely informed about the progress their child is making through both informal daily exchanges, regular meetings with staff and the thoroughly documented shared records.

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

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| Unique reference number | 120386 |
| Local authority | Lincolnshire |
| Inspection number | 449304 |

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

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|--|---------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 97 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Steve Thomas |
| Headteacher | Bridgette Burn |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 May 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01529 455375 |
| Fax number | N/A |
| Email address | enquiries@osbournby.lins.sch.uk |

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