

Calow CofE VC Primary School

North Road, Calow, Chesterfield, S44 5BD

Inspection dates

18–19 February 2015

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

- Although teaching has improved, it is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make the sustained progress needed to achieve well.
- The work teachers set in some lessons is not challenging enough, particularly that set for the most-able pupils.
- Some questioning by teachers does not make pupils think hard.
- Pupils are not challenged enough to produce work that is well presented and grammatically correct.
- Teachers do not make sure that pupils follow the advice given through marking on how they can improve their work and so learn from their mistakes.
- Weaknesses in pupils' ability to apply basic calculation skills in problem solving slow progress in mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's effective leadership has improved the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' progress and achievement are rapidly improving this year.
- As a result of good provision, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly and make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The school provides a calm and nurturing environment in which pupils are kept very safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are particularly good. Pupils develop a good understanding of British values and of religious and cultural diversity in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons. Several lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors observed two assemblies and made a number of short visits to classrooms.
- Pupils were observed at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- The inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire and 42 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also met with some parents at the start of the school day and during the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. Inspectors also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gary Walker

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below average-sized primary school. There is one part-time class in the Nursery and one class in each of the other years from the Reception to Year 6.
- Most pupils are White British. A very small minority come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.
- Fewer pupils than average speak English as an additional language.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are supported through the pupil premium. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is close to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that:
 - pupils capable of reaching higher levels are given work that makes them think and work hard
 - questioning is used more effectively to extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding
 - the school's marking policy is implemented consistently and that errors are picked up and corrected
 - teachers ensure that pupils follow the advice given through marking on how their work can be improved so that they learn from their mistakes.
- Accelerate progress in English and mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their basic calculation skills in solving mathematical problems
 - ensuring that attention is given to the accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar in all subjects
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills in a wider range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the full support of other senior leaders and staff, is the driving force behind the school's increasing effectiveness. He has the deserved respect of staff, parents and pupils, and provides an excellent role model for all. The school at the heart of the local community and parents value highly all that the school provides.
- Staff feel valued and work together as an effective team. Firm action has been taken to eradicate inadequate teaching and, as a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are now rapidly improving. This was reflected in the results of the 2014 year 1 phonics check, which improved on those of the previous year. In addition, more pupils are now making better than expected progress, particularly in reading. The school shows good capacity to continue its improvement.
- The school improvement plan is based on systematic reviews of the school's work and identifies the correct areas for improvement. Through classroom observations, checks on pupils' work and walks around the school, areas where improvement is needed are identified and appropriate support provided to develop teachers' skills. Challenging targets are set for teachers and salary increases are linked to the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- Regular checks on pupils' progress, attainment and behaviour are used effectively to identify pupils who need extra help. These checks are also used well to make sure that any additional support provided for pupils is having a positive effect. Following the removal of National Curriculum levels, the school is working closely with other local schools to agree common assessment procedures.
- Subject coordinators and others with leadership roles are well supported in developing their leadership and management skills. Through checks on the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility, they have a clear understanding of where improvement is needed and are well placed to support the drive for continued improvement.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a rich and diverse range of experiences. The range of subjects taught provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their creative potential and the impact is seen in many impressive displays of their work in corridors and classrooms. The promotion of British values features strongly throughout the school. Through, for example, elections for positions of responsibility, talks from visiting speakers and visits to the Houses of Parliament, pupils are well informed about the democratic process and well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through, for example, art, music and the belief in mutual respect and tolerance. All staff are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils are taught about the main world religions and, through visiting speakers and visits to diverse places of worship, encouraged to understand and to respect the views and beliefs of others.
- The additional funding received through the pupil premium is used well to provide additional staffing and resources to support pupils for whom this funding is intended, primarily in literacy and numeracy.
- Good use has been made of the primary sports funding to enhance the school's previous good provision for physical activity and sport. Specialist sports coaches are used to enhance the skills of teachers and to broaden the range of sporting activities available. The school checks to ensure that the numbers of pupils participating in physical activity are increasing.
- Recent support from the local authority has been helpful in improving the quality of teaching. Regular visits from an Improvement Partner provide an objective evaluation of the school's performance.

■ The governance of the school:

- The school benefits from the support of an effective governing body. Governors are diligent in

evaluating the quality of their own work and engage in regular training to enhance their impact on the school's performance.

- Governors have a good understanding of how pupils' attainment and progress compare with performance in other schools. They set, and review conscientiously, the headteacher's targets for improving the school.
- Through regular visits, governors gain first-hand information on the quality of teaching and the school's performance. They know the targets that are set for teachers to improve their work and apply the link between teachers' pay and pupils' progress.
- Governors ensure that all legal requirements, including those relating to child protection and safeguarding, are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are courteous and considerate to each other and to adults. Virtually all parents who completed the online Parent View questionnaire indicated that they thought behaviour is good. This view was strongly endorsed by the many parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection.
- From the time children start in the Nursery and Reception classes, they quickly learn that they are part of a safe, secure and caring community. They learn to accept the school's expectations of behaviour and show respect for other children and adults alike.
- The school is a calm and orderly place where teachers can teach and pupils can learn. Occasionally, when pupils are given tasks which do not interest them or are not challenging enough, their attention wanders and they lose concentration. However, pupils reported and school records show, that it is rare for learning to be disrupted by inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils behave sensibly and responsibly. Play and lunchtimes are happy occasions when pupils of all ages play well together and look out for one another. In the dining hall, pupils are expected to show good table manners and to tidy away after eating.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they are safe in school all the time. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils are very clear about the steps they should take if they have any concerns. All know that there are supportive adults they can turn to at any time.
- Through the work of the E-safety committee, which is made up of pupils, parents and governors, and looks at all matters relating to the use of the internet, safe use of the internet is given a high profile in the school. Pupils are aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying and those spoken to said that they were not aware of any instances of such behaviour.
- Because pupils enjoy school and parents are highly supportive, attendance is above average and rising, and pupils are punctual at the start of the day. Very few pupils are persistently absent because the school monitors attendance diligently and any unexplained absence is immediately followed up.
- Parents and governors spoken to during the inspection stressed that the school is harmonious and welcoming, and are confident that children are kept safe.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Previous weaknesses in teaching meant that while most pupils made the progress expected of them, too few made the accelerated progress that is needed to raise standards. While inadequate teaching has been tackled, and there is now more good and better practice, a few inconsistencies in the teaching of literacy and numeracy remain across Key Stages 1 and 2.

- Teaching over time requires improvement because activities are not well matched to the different abilities of pupils. This means some pupils find the work too difficult and others complete tasks very quickly when they could tackle more demanding work. When this occurs, pupils do not work at the right level to secure faster rates of progress, particularly pupils capable of reaching higher levels.
- Teachers do not always make enough use of questioning to stimulate pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. Questioning is at times directed too closely to drawing out an expected answer and learning moved quickly on without checking that all understand.
- There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. In some instances the expectations teachers communicate through marking are not high enough. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not always checked, and poorly presented work is sometimes accepted without challenge. Where pupils are given guidance on how their work can be improved, teachers do not always follow this through and check that pupils have learnt by correcting their mistakes.
- The effective teaching of phonics provides the basis for the improving performance seen in the Year 1 phonics screening check. This lays the basis for pupils' increasing confidence in reading as they move through the school. Reading records show that most pupils read daily and, as a result, are able to read for purpose and pleasure by the time they leave school.
- Where teachers plan work that is suitably challenging for all ability levels, good progress is made. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 6 pupils. Pupils made rapid progress in developing their understanding of the relationship of patterns to formula-based problem solving. Because the work was at the right level of difficulty, pupils' enthusiasm was captured and the teacher skillfully questioned pupils to challenge and extend their thinking.
- Teaching assistants work well in partnership with teachers to ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective support. They provide good individual and small-group support because they are well informed about pupils' specific learning needs and what pupils will be expected to do. A link governor provides the governing body with up-to-date information about the impact of this provision on pupils' progress. Teaching assistants also contribute well to the teaching of phonics.
- Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to supplement teaching support and resources for pupils for whom the funding is intended. This helps to make sure that these pupils' progress is at least comparable to others in English and mathematics.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are not as high as they could be, and too few pupils achieve well.
- Although standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were broadly average, variability in pupils' progress has contributed to a slight decline in standards over recent years. While the proportions of pupils who made the expected rate of progress during Key Stage 2 were close to the national figures, the proportions making good progress were below national comparisons. Standards in mathematics have generally been close to average. However, progress in mathematics in 2014 was weak and this was also the case in 2013.
- Reviews of pupils' work in English, mathematics and other subjects, show that the expectations of the progress pupils can make are not consistently high enough and this slows their rates of progress. Progress in writing is slowed because there is not enough emphasis on the development of pupils' writing skills and spelling, punctuation and grammar in subjects other than English. Progress in mathematics is slowed because of weaknesses in the application of basic calculation skills in problem solving. Pupils are also not given enough opportunity to apply and develop their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics.

- The most-able pupils generally make the progress expected of them. However, the work set for these pupils is sometimes too easy to enable them to make rapid progress. In 2014, for example, all of the pupils who were at Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 reached the expected Level 5 in these subjects at the end of Year 6, but very few reached the higher Level 6.
- Improvements in teaching are beginning to improve pupils' progress, particularly in Year 6, where teaching is consistently good and better. However, these improvements are too recent for the full impact to be seen in pupils' achievement.
- Successful action to improve the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has raised pupils' performance in the Year 1 phonics screening check. In 2013, pupils did not perform as well as other pupils nationally in the check; however, in 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard increased to match the national figure.
- There are too few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium to comment on their attainment without identifying them. In general, the support that is provided for these pupils is securing good progress in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive appropriately targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants, both in lessons and in individual and small-group sessions. They make at least the progress they should in relation to their various starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start in the Nursery and Reception classes with levels of skill and knowledge that are generally typical for their age in most areas of learning. However, many have weaknesses in communication and language, and in personal and social development. From these starting points, children make good progress and most reach a good level of development and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because good leadership and management ensure that teaching is consistently good and meets well the children's particular learning needs.
- Strong links with parents help children to settle quickly. High expectations and the consistent reinforcement of daily routines help to establish a firm base for children's good behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Assessment information is used effectively to plan activities that extend children's learning experiences. In stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments, children are provided with an engaging range of learning activities and an interesting variety of resources. These capture their imaginations and help them to develop and build on what they learn.
- The setting provides good-quality care. Adults ensure that children are kept safe and healthy so that they are able to enjoy their learning. Positive relationships and a strong emphasis on developing the children's personal skills ensure that they become more confident as they move to Year 1.

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	112876
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	455985

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Winter
Headteacher	Martin Thacker
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2012
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