

Priory Lane Community School

Priory Lane, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN17 1HE

Inspection dates 3–4 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The new acting leadership team are effectively developing the skills of teachers and challenging underperformance robustly. However, they know that more needs to be done if they are to secure good progress for all pupils.
- Although keen to make improvement middle leaders do not all have the skills they need to drive change in a way that impacts directly on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Teaching is improving but inconsistency means in a few classes teachers do not expect pupils to work hard enough or quickly enough and this slows the progress pupils make.
- Teachers plan activities that generally interest pupils. Sometimes the purpose of learning activities are overly complicated and too numerous to ensure that pupils are clear about what they are learning.
- While there is some good practice, marking does not always help pupils improve or correct their work.
- Although rates of progress are improving there is some variability and some pupils do not always make as much progress as they could. In particular, the most able and least able pupils are not always set work which is at just the right level. As a result, some pupils do not reach the standards they are capable of, particularly in Year 2 in their writing.
- The basic skills of writing and handwriting are not taught systematically.
- Behaviour requires improvement because pupils too readily wait for adults to help and at times, adults provide answers too quickly. Pupils do not make enough effort to work hard and grapple with challenging tasks without adult help.
- Although there are some strengths, overall, the early years provision requires improvement because of some inconsistencies in teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- The Acting Executive Headteacher, supported by leaders from Westcliffe Primary School, has been instrumental in driving improvement where it was needed most.
- Effective support and guidance for teachers has helped to improve the quality of their work. This is helping to improve progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils are polite and courteous around the school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Members of the Interim Executive Board have an accurate understanding of where the school needs to improve further and have been a key factor in bringing about improvements over the past six months.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons, including two that were seen jointly with the acting executive headteacher and two with the acting head of school. Inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and observed small groups of pupils taught by teachers and teaching assistants. The inspectors also listened to some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to them.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, with two members of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and two representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 33 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They talked to parents in the morning and at the end of the day when they collected their children from school. Inspectors considered eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including: the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress; the school's evaluation of its performance; school improvement planning; documentation relating to teachers' performance; and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Amraz Ali, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Lunn

Her Majesty's Inspector

Derek Pattinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- When this larger than average-sized primary school was inspected in February 2014 it was judged to have serious weaknesses.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. An above average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- In 2014, the school failed to meet the government's current floor standard that sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there has been considerable change at the school. Following a building programme, the whole school is now located on one site. No alternative provision is used. The headteacher left the school and other members of the leadership team have been absent. The governing body has been replaced by an Interim Executive Board (IEB).
- The school receives intensive support from staff at Westcliffe Primary School. The headteacher of Westcliffe Primary School is the acting executive headteacher of Priory Lane Primary School and a member of staff from Westcliffe Primary School is the Acting Head of School.
- The IEB and the governing body of Westcliffe Primary School have begun a formal consultation on a proposal to federate the two schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress by improving the quality of teaching across the school, including in the early years, so that more is consistently good or better by ensuring:
 - the purpose of planned activities are clear and simple
 - teachers have the highest expectation of pupils in terms of the quality and quantity of work produced
 - teachers use what they know about pupils' attainment to set work that challenges all ability levels, particularly the most and least able
 - marking is used to help pupils to improve both current and future pieces of work
 - the basic skills of writing and handwriting are taught consistently and systematically.
- Improve leadership and management so that leaders at the school, particularly middle leaders, have the skills and knowledge required to judge and influence the work of others so that there is maximum impact on improving pupils' learning.
- Improve pupils' learning behaviour and resilience by reducing their dependency on additional adults.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Strong direction from the acting executive headteacher and leaders from the partner school has resulted in secure improvements to teaching. However, some teaching remains less effective despite on-going support and guidance for individual teachers.
- The intensive support for leaders from the partner school has improved the accuracy of assessment and tracking. This is helping teachers to identify gaps in pupils' learning but has not led to good achievement or teaching, especially for the most able pupils.
- A priority for leaders was to improve learning, progress and attainment for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Inspection evidence confirms that this has been effective and attainment is rising. However, standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 have not risen significantly, particularly in writing.
- Previously progress was not fast enough in mathematics for pupils and this was reflected in the 2014 national test results. Recent developments mean that there have been some improvements to the teaching of mathematics so that overall pupils make expected progress. Teaching in mathematics has been improved through training which has extending teachers' knowledge.
- Following significant changes in staffing, weaknesses in teaching are being tackled. Teachers are receiving appropriate support and guidance and underperformance is challenged. Professional support, challenge and guidance have improved the quality of teaching and led to rising standards.
- The review of the use of pupil premium funding has led to a sharper link between its use and the impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress.
- Leaders, along with the IEB, demonstrate their capacity to improve further because of the recent improved evaluation of performance of the school and improvements in teaching which are helping to improve achievement.
- Although there are differences in the attainment of disadvantaged and other pupils, equality of opportunity and a commitment to tackling discrimination are reflected in the improving rates of progress made by most groups of pupils.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of subjects and experiences for pupils. Literacy and numeracy skills are emphasised and focused upon, especially in English and mathematics lessons, although there is some inconsistency in the teaching of the basic skills of writing and handwriting.
- The management of behaviour is largely effective in ensuring that pupils behave well around the school. Pupils say that most pupils behave well in school and any 'fall-outs' are dealt with quickly. A reminder of the school's approach to managing behaviour and the use of 'Do-Jos' has helped to ensure that the school is safe, calm and orderly.
- Performance management arrangements have been reviewed. These now more closely link the evaluation of teaching to work scrutiny and the progress of pupils.
- The school is making good use of the primary sport funding. Many pupils say that physical education is their favourite lesson and there is a good selection of after school sports activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by leaders and pupils' courtesy, along with their appreciation of diversity and British values, prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements. All appropriate checks are conducted on staff before they take up appointment and all staff have received the appropriate training on child protection. More importantly, staff respond well to any concerns they have about any pupils' safety and concerns are well documented and shared beyond the school as appropriate.
- The local authority has been instrumental in establishing the IEB and in establishing the relationship between this school and a better performing school. This has effectively led to improvement.
- Although not all of the parents responding to the online questionnaire (Parent View) are positive and some indicate concern about the school, all of the parents that spoke to inspectors valued the improvements that have been made in the last six months.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the IEB are keen for the school to improve. Regular meetings ensure that they have a detailed knowledge of the work of the school so that they know where there are strengths and where improvement is needed. Consequently, they have a good overview of the quality of teaching. They have high aspirations for the school and for pupils to do well. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions of the acting leaders and this has helped to steer the school through a period of turbulence. The IEB members are knowledgeable about the performance of the school, including an understanding of the school's data, and the use of performance management to challenge and reward performance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- On the whole, pupils behave well around the school and they say they get on well with each other. However, pupils' behaviour in lessons is not always conducive to good learning. There is some low level disruption in classrooms, which impacts on the learning of other pupils and some pupils are over-reliant on additional adults to tell them how to tackle tasks.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are often positive but where teaching is less than good activities do not always interest pupils and this leads to pupils' lack of engagement.
- Exclusions are above national average. This reflects the recently increased expectations of pupils' behaviour and behaviour logs indicate that more recently exclusion rates are reducing.
- Pupils say that they are happy and enjoy school. Consequently, attendance is above average and most pupils arrive at school punctually and ready to learn.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- Safeguarding meets requirements. However, some of the paperwork associated with the risk assessments for the site do not fully reflect all of the identified risks and controls that keep pupils safe. Additionally, these are not always reviewed regularly by senior leaders.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying. They say that bullying is rare and if any does occur it is dealt with effectively by the teachers.
- Parents state they are confident that their children are kept safe. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. They know who to talk to if they have any concerns and they speak fondly of the learning mentor.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection, and achievement is improving as a result. However, there is sometimes marked variability in the quality of teaching. Teachers generally manage classes well. Teachers question pupils, to check on and extend their learning and understanding.
- Appropriate attention is paid to the teaching of reading. For example, the youngest pupils benefit from regular phonics lessons to teach them the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. Pupils read individually and in groups. Across the school pupils say they enjoy reading and value the improved opportunity to take home a reading book.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always as high as they could be. Consequently, sometimes work is incomplete and some work is not always of a good quality. Teachers are accepting of untidy work and work that includes misspelt common words.
- The teaching of writing is variable and letter formation and handwriting are not taught systematically in all classes. Consequently, across the school letter formation and handwriting are sometimes poor and this leads to poor presentation.
- In mathematics lessons teachers explain ideas clearly, often using practical materials or the interactive whiteboard effectively to clarify key points of learning. However, sometimes the tasks do not always challenge all pupils.
- Teachers plan activities that interest and engage pupils, as well as developing their skills and understanding. However, sometimes the learning intentions, which are typically shared with pupils early in a lesson or the steps to help pupils achieve the learning objectives, are overly complicated and there are sometimes too many to be helpful.
- Teachers develop pupils' social skills and their speaking and listening abilities well. This means that pupils are usually enthusiastic about their work.
- Assessments are regular and the accuracy has recently improved. Teachers are beginning to use what they know about pupils' learning to set work that is neither too easy nor too hard for different groups, so that pupils make good progress. However, in a small number of cases this is not always evident. Consequently, the most able are not always challenged and are sometimes allowed to 'coast' and are not always moved on to the harder work they are capable of. Similarly work is sometimes too difficult for the least able. Additionally, on some occasions, teachers' expectations of the quantity and quality of pupils' work are not as high as they could be.
- The quality of the marking of pupils' work has improved but there remains some variability in its impact.

All teachers acknowledge and praise what has been done well. In the best examples, pupils are given clear guidance for improving their next piece of work or are directed to correct or improve the current piece of work. However, this is not always apparent and comments are sometimes repeated on more than one occasion without any evidence of improvement to the current or next piece of work.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' learning and progress are improving. Typically where teaching is good pupils learn well and make expected and better than expected progress. However, this is not always the case and there remains some variability from class-to-class and between subjects.
- In 2014, standards at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 were below average. Improvements from January 2015, including focused small group teaching in Year 6 means that the current Year 6 group are being better prepared for their next stage of education.
- When pupils join Year 1 their attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Although improving across the Key Stage 1 and 2, progress in reading, writing and mathematics are variable. The presentation of pupils' work is very variable in both mathematics and writing with some work untidy and poorly presented.
- A legacy of weak teaching and staffing disruption means that there are pockets of underachievement evident across the school despite current achievement being better. Improved assessment is helping teachers to identify gaps in pupils' learning but some teachers are more effective at spotting and dealing with these gaps than others.
- The most able pupils make at least expected progress. However, too few of the most able pupils make better than expected progress because some teachers' expectations are not high enough to help them to achieve well. Too few pupils attain the higher levels in end of Year 2 and Year 6 statutory assessments.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make progress that is similar to other pupils.
- Between 2013 and 2014 the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils at the school reduced. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 left school with standards that were two terms behind other pupils in the school and similar disadvantaged pupils nationally, in reading, writing and mathematics. Although the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving their standards and progress still lag behind similar disadvantaged pupils nationally and other pupils in the school.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Although the early years classes have a number of strengths this area of the school requires improvement because children are not always effectively prepared for entering Year 1. Shortcomings in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics mean that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception is below average.
- Leaders and managers have overseen the relocation to the new buildings and created a welcoming learning environment, where children are happy and safe. However, the leadership and management require improvement because some aspects of teaching and assessment are not used to develop children's basic skills effectively.
- The teaching of basic skills is not always systematic and some children are not able to write letters correctly or write their names accurately. Standards in writing are below expectation, in part because teachers' expectations of children are not always high enough.
- On a more positive note, the gap between disadvantaged children and other children is reducing because staff have made a concerted effort to identify and support these children in their learning.
- Positive relationships between children and adults help the children develop confidence and positive attitudes to learning. All staff regularly praise children for their efforts. Children are happy at school and their parents value the positive relationship between home and school. Parents regularly contribute to their children's learning and home reading logs are completed regularly by most parents. Teachers deal quickly and effectively with any inappropriate behaviour.
- Children join Reception with skills that are usually below what is typical for their age. Although assessments of children's development are regular they do not always provide enough evidence to afford a clear picture of each child's progress.
- A recent improvement has been to the teaching of phonics, where children are taught about letters and their sounds. Children enjoy these sessions and improving progress is evident in reading.

- The new building provides a safe and interesting learning environment. However, the organisation of the room and resources means that children are reliant on adults to provide activities outside and on tables. This limits the development of their independence.
- Displays around the room show the curriculum is appropriate. For example, the children particularly enjoyed retelling the story of The Little Red Hen, using the story map effectively. However, some modelling of punctuation, both on wall displays and photograph books, is not accurate.
- Staff work hard to ensure that children are prepared for joining the Reception class. For example, during the inspection the school was hosting visits for children who will join in September. They were all made very welcome and staff found time to talk to each one.

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	117756
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	462624

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Hesketh
Headteacher	Kate Buckley
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2014
Telephone number	01724 844812
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