

Danesholme Infant School

Motala Close, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 9DT

Inspection dates

8–9 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Achievement is inadequate. Pupils do not all make the expected gains in their learning, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment in writing is below average at the end of Year 2. This hinders pupils' progress in all areas and does not prepare them well for their next school.
- Inadequate teaching, learning and assessment mean that pupils in Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 make slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers do not consistently check that pupils understand what they are learning.
- Basic literacy skills, such as letter formation, spelling of simple words and punctuation, are not taught well enough to ensure that pupils' writing skills develop adequately.
- Teachers do not expect enough of their pupils. Learning activities are often not set at the correct level of challenge and as children themselves say, 'activities are too easy'.
- Provision in the Reception classes is inadequate because there is too little teaching and learning that is good.
- Attendance continues to be below average. The school's work to support pupils' personal development, help them to behave well and keep them safe is inadequate.
- The behaviour policy is not consistently followed by staff. A few pupils and parents have concerns about behaviour and safety. Incidents of poor behaviour are not adequately logged. Children leave mess on the floor, which becomes a hazard.
- The headteacher and governors do not have a clear understanding of the weaknesses in teaching and learning. They are not successful in identifying weaknesses and ensuring that they are rectified.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are too slow.
- Middle leaders lack the skills needed to analyse and evaluate provision to bring about improvement.
- Despite recent improvement, governors lack a clear understanding of aspects of their monitoring and evaluation role.

The school has the following strengths

- Children learn well in the Nursery. The school makes sure that pupils are helped to understand British values during assemblies and other activities, for example, when pupils voted during mini-elections.
- Pupils are offered many sporting opportunities and the take-up is high.
- Governors are beginning to be better prepared to support and challenge the school more successfully.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and achievement for all pupil groups, in Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment information to plan activities that are stimulating and challenging for different abilities and needs so that all pupils are fully involved and enjoy their learning
 - intervene regularly to check pupils' learning and understanding
 - focus on showing pupils how to write letters properly, spell simple words correctly and punctuate sentences successfully so that pupils' writing skills develop more quickly.
- Improve children's personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - all staff follow the behaviour policy so that there is a more consistent approach to managing behaviour
 - adults are more vigilant and identify and manage the pupils who do not behave well in the playground
 - incidents of poor behaviour are consistently reported and logged, analysed and acted upon
 - children in Nursery and Reception are taught to keep the classroom environment safe by making sure that they do not leave items littering up the floor space
 - all pupils attend regularly.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the monitoring of teaching has a sharper focus on pupils' learning and that teaching staff are provided with improvement points that are later checked to ensure they have been carried out
 - the skills of middle leaders are developed to enable them to play a full part in securing improvements, especially by analysing and evaluating the performance of individuals and pupil groups within their areas of responsibility
 - governors develop a more in-depth understanding of their monitoring and evaluation role, especially in relation to how different groups are achieving.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to improve this aspect of leadership and management, including a review of pupil premium funding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because, since the previous inspection, improvements have been minimal and much too slow. The monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough and weaknesses in teaching are not identified and acted upon. Consequently, pupils do not make the progress they should.
- There is little evidence of middle leaders being actively and successfully involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and driving improvement, especially in relation to improving teaching, learning and assessment in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders collect considerable performance information on all pupils and identify the performance of different groups of pupils. They do not use this information effectively to support pupils who are falling behind. As a result, the progress pupils make as they move through Reception and Years 1 and 2 is still not rapid enough.
- Parental responses from the online survey show dissatisfaction in all areas despite the school saying that parents are usually positive about the work of the school. Inspection evidence supports almost all of the views of parents.
- The school has received some support from the local authority although the impact is minimal. This was acknowledged by its representative during a telephone call. The local authority has had some impact in supporting the school in establishing a governing body that is beginning to challenge the work of the school.
- The system to monitor and evaluate poor behaviour is inadequate. There is no central log where all behavioural incidents are collected, analysed and evaluated. As a result, no one has a clear picture of behaviour across the school.
- A performance management system is in place and governors understand how it works and so take part in the process. They are developing an understanding of its links to the teachers' pay structure. However, there is little evidence of the impact of this.
- Pupils study different topics within the newly implemented curriculum. Parents are positive about the curriculum topics that are offered and the homework assignments that they are involved with. There is little evidence of leaders evaluating the impact of the curriculum or of the curriculum making a positive difference to pupils' learning during lessons or progress over time.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are adequately promoted. Pupils generally get on reasonably well with each other and most develop into polite and sensible young people. The religious education programme allows pupils to learn about world religions. Pupils also learn about different cultures in this subject and other curriculum areas.
- The sports premium for primary schools has been used to provide greater curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. An external agency has been appointed and a wide range of sporting activities are offered. Physical education resources have been developed and the teaching of physical education has improved for all pupils.
- Pupil premium spending is not consistently allowing all disadvantaged pupils to make the progress expected of them. This is because of weaknesses in teaching in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Activities are offered to pupils that allow them to learn about British values and prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils have had a mini-election to elect their school council. They have also had further class elections to help Northamptonshire Council name its new gritters that make the roads safe in the cold weather.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors do not have a clear understanding of their monitoring and evaluation role, especially in relation to how different groups of pupils are achieving.
 - Governance is now stable and the governors are beginning to develop their understanding of school development planning after receiving support from the local authority on improving the school development plan, as suggested by HMI during a monitoring visit.
 - The governing body now focuses adequately on checking that appropriate policies are in place, ensuring that staff who work in the school are suitably vetted and volunteers are properly supervised.
 - Members are developing their understanding of the spending of the primary physical education and

- sport premium and the funding for disadvantaged pupils and the impact it has on pupils' progress.
- Although there has been a review of governance since the previous inspection, almost all of the current governors are new.
 - The arrangements for safeguarding are generally effective. Staff work well with external agencies and make appropriate referrals in a timely manner. All referrals are recorded, monitored and followed up. Governors have received safeguarding training. A safeguarding governor has been appointed and procedures are in place to monitor safeguarding procedures. Most parents have no concerns about safety. There has been no recent questionnaire sent out to parents to gain their views.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate in Reception and Years 1 and 2. There is too little evidence of good teaching and learning.
- Too many pupils' learning is held back because of weaknesses in the planning and teaching of lessons. Learning activities are not consistently stimulating or challenging and this affects the engagement of some pupils. Pupils speak of activities they are given that are too easy.
- Some pupils finish quickly and waste learning time because learning activities are too easy. Teachers do not consistently use assessment information to match activities accurately to pupils' learning needs. There are too few strategies to support lower attaining pupils. Pupils' behaviour is not always well managed, which leads to the disruption of learning.
- Pupils are not given enough guidance to develop their writing skills. For example, pupils are not consistently taught how to form letters correctly. There is not enough focus on spelling simple words or punctuating sentences correctly.
- Underachievement by a few pupils was observed in most lessons. This affects all pupil groups including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are disadvantaged.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have reading books that are sent home and parents are involved in filling in reading records. Although more able readers in Years 1 and 2 sound out words confidently and show a good understanding of what they read, less-able pupils struggle trying to read simple three- and four-lettered words and have difficulty talking about what they have read.
- Teachers generally follow the marking policy and write comments that are intended to move learning on. However, not all pupils can read the sentences that teachers write and not all act on these comments.
- Although pupils fully understand the school's policy for marking pupils' work and giving comments to enable them to improve, many pupils are unable to read the teachers' comments because teachers use words that are too difficult for them to read.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good in the Nursery.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. Pupils in Year 2 say they do not always feel safe when in the playground because not all pupils know how to behave. They say they know how to respond if they have concerns and that they always tell an adult if anyone is unkind to them but incidents still occur. During an outside, lunchtime observation, inspectors witnessed incidents of poor behaviour which included pushing, hitting and bullying.

- A few parents justifiably replied negatively to Parent View about how well their children are looked after in school and whether their children feel safe in school.
- Pupils spoke about and explained confidently what they have learnt regarding being wary of strangers and clearly explained how to keep safe when using the internet. They know about keeping healthy because, throughout the school, healthy snacks and lunches are promoted each day. Many sporting activities provide pupils with opportunities to keep healthy and these are well attended.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Observations in Reception and Years 1 and 2 show that the behaviour policy is not consistently followed.
- Pupils in Year 2 say that behaviour is not consistently good and that sometimes poor behaviour disrupts their learning. Their concerns about some lunchtime behaviour are not addressed properly by staff. Not all parents think that pupils are well behaved and a few have concerns about bullying.
- Lunchtime staff keep records of incidents of poor behaviour, some of which are related to bullying. However, these have not been collected, analysed or addressed by school leaders.
- The school's behaviour logs do not back up what pupils say. Attendance continues to be below average and this affects the progress of those who do not attend regularly. However, the number of pupils absent from school for lengthy periods of time has declined as a result of the improving strategies to monitor attendance.
- Daily routines are adequately established. For example, pupils generally line up quickly after the whistle at breaks and return quietly to their classrooms.
- Behaviour in the Nursery is good as children play and learn alongside each other in small or larger groups. In all classes, throughout the school, there are pupils who have positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils are respectful towards each other and polite to visitors.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Outcomes for pupils in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 are inadequate. Attainment shows little improvement. By the end of Year 2, most pupils reach standards broadly in line with the national average in reading and mathematics. The standards they reach in writing are below average, which does not prepare them well for their next school. In relation to their starting points, pupils' progress is inadequate.
- The school's most recent performance information showed that in Years 1 and 2, groups of current and past pupils have underachieved in reading, writing or mathematics. This is true of pupils from all groups including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and those identified as speaking English as an additional language.
- Observations during the inspection show that in most lessons, there is evidence of at least a few pupils underachieving because they become distracted and waste time.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn slowly because their needs are not always met. Similarly, weaknesses in teaching affect the outcomes for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Very able pupils make similar progress to their peers but their progress is slowed because they are not sufficiently challenged by teachers.
- School documentation shows that when comparing 2014 and 2015 performance information for reading, writing and mathematics, in Year 2 the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and the others in the school has widened in mathematics. However, the gap has slightly narrowed for reading and writing. Nevertheless, the gap is still worse than that for other pupils nationally.

Early years provision

is inadequate

- Provision is better in the Nursery than in Reception where it is inadequate. Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate in Reception because activities are not consistently planned to make the most of children's learning and cater for their different ability levels. Children either sit and take part in activities where learning is limited or they become distracted and started to wander around. Small groups of children were observed wasting time and learning was minimal. A few boys were observed acting in a silly manner and it took adults too long to notice they were doing so.
- Children in Reception have many opportunities to make marks on paper and start to develop writing skills. However, they are not always given appropriate guidance on how to develop their writing skills. Many children are proud of their efforts as they write their names but most have poor letter formation because they repeatedly write letters incorrectly. Others have cards to copy over a model of their name. Although adults sit with them, they do not give enough guidance on where to start each letter so children copy letters incorrectly and learning is minimal.

- In Reception, children were seen identifying numbers and then drawing around them. Boys and girls worked with obvious enjoyment but not all had the numbers the correct way round. Their confusion was not noticed by the adults and so learning was limited.
- Children in Reception had difficulty concentrating as they developed their reading skills because the adult who was working with them kept stopping to try and redirect children who were restless. Activities were neither challenging nor interesting to the children. Reading skills were not developed effectively and learning was minimal because questioning did not cater for the different abilities within the group and not all children were fully involved.
- During a whole-class reading group in Reception, children were inattentive from the start. Questioning was weak and did not address the range of abilities within the group. Teachers do not reinforce learning adequately; for example, after a child had identified a speech bubble in the text, the adult did not reinforce and develop learning further when speech bubbles appeared on later pages. Too many children did not learn as well as they should.
- Attitudes to learning are sometimes positive in Reception and learning is then effective when activities are accurately designed for the children's needs and ages. For example, children so enjoyed a guided reading session that they promptly got up and said that they wanted to get their reading books out and do some more reading in the book corner. However, this is inconsistent.
- The most recent school performance information for Reception children showed that the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development had increased and was broadly as expected nationally. The gap between the disadvantaged children and the others had widened when compared with the previous year. The additional support that was provided did not prepare all children well for Year 1.
- Adults are not always vigilant enough and the classroom areas are, at times, hazardous for both children and adults as they walk around. For example, in both Nursery and Reception classes, children were seen happily sitting at tables completing activities that involved moulding, rolling and cutting dough or cutting and sticking other materials. However, they were oblivious to the mess they were making as items and materials were pushed onto the floor. Other children played on the floor and bricks and other items were scattered across the floor area.
- The outdoor areas are attractive and used to support learning in all areas.
- In the Nursery, children generally learn well because activities are well planned, interesting and suitable for their ages and stages of development. Children were seen learning effectively and with much excitement as they investigated a large range of vegetables. Language was effectively extended by the adult as children identified the names and what the vegetables felt and smelt like. Others chose activities enthusiastically because they were interesting and supported many areas of learning.
- Behaviour and learning were good as children in the Nursery sat in a large-class group and listened attentively as the teacher expertly told them a story. They were very keen to join in with the story-telling and the teacher enabled this effectively. All adult expectations were high in relation to taking part and behaving properly.
- Parents with children in Nursery and Reception, spoken to during the inspection, stated that they were pleased with the provision their children receive.
- Staff use external agencies adequately when pupils need additional support.
- Leadership and management of the early years are inadequate. Development planning does not clearly identify and address the main weaknesses. Adults do not successfully focus on either improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for all children or the outcomes for different groups, particularly for disadvantaged children, in the Reception classes. Leaders do not focus enough on developing the children's personal development, welfare and safety in the Nursery and Reception, and this seriously affects their readiness for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	121903
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10001812

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	the governing body
Chair	David Partridge
Headteacher	Sandra Hunter
Telephone number	01536 741 732
Website	www.danesholmeinfantschool.ik.org
Email address	head@danesholme-inf.northants-ed.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 September 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a few coming from a number of different ethnic groups.
- Few pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which is the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after, is below average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 parts of lessons, taught by 10 teachers. The headteacher was involved in three observations.
- A range of documents was looked at, including school improvement planning, school self-evaluation, monitoring of teaching documentation, pupils' previous and current work, and safeguarding documents.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and her staff, children, parents, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The responses of parents were considered through short discussions during the inspection, along with the scrutiny of 32 responses on Parent View, the online survey.

Inspection team

Nina Bee, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Vondra Mays	Ofsted Inspector
John Savage	Ofsted Inspector

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