

Whitwell Primary School

Southfield Lane, Whitwell, Worksop, S80 4NR

Inspection dates 23–24 June 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders have quickly and successfully tackled the priorities for improvement since taking up post, particularly the teaching and pupils' improved standards.
- The governing body has responded well to the identified areas for improvement at the time of the previous inspection and are now actively involved in checking the performance of the school.
- Standards and progress improved significantly in 2014 in writing and in mathematics.
- Teachers have revised the curriculum so that it motivates the pupils and makes them eager to learn.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. They are well prepared for starting in Year 1.
- The good progress has been maintained across all the year groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make particularly good progress.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to do well.
- Behaviour is good and often exemplary in lessons and around the school. The pupils value and enjoy the rewards systems for good behaviour and good work.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Parents agree that their children are safe and secure because there are systems in place to protect them and adults care for the pupils well.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education because test results show that pupils reach above the expected levels by the time they leave, particularly in writing and mathematics.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment and progress in reading is not as good as it is in writing and mathematics, although the school leaders have introduced new initiatives to address this.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils on how to improve their work is not always having the desired impact.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures is not sufficiently developed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 17 lessons and also observed pupils working in smaller groups. They observed two of the lessons jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and checked their reading records.
- The inspection team held meetings with some members of the teaching staff.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, who was the chair of the school improvement committee.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the local authority’s school improvement adviser.
- Many discussions took place with pupils, both formally in groups and informally in lessons and at lunchtimes.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 17 parents from Ofsted’s online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors held conversations with parents at the start and end of the day. The inspectors also analysed the 12 responses to the questionnaire for staff.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included: the school’s own data on pupils’ recent and current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; reports on the quality of teaching over time; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the school’s improvement plan; documents relating to safeguarding; and the minutes of various meetings, including those of the governing body.

Inspection team

Nigel Grimshaw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elaine Hamilton	Additional Inspector
Caroline Evans	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school has a similar number of pupils on roll to the average-sized primary school. The number on roll at the school is increasing and has done so over the last few years.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about one in six of the school's population, which is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is just below a quarter of the total number of pupils on roll, which is in line with the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to schools for the education of looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language and this is well below the national average.
- The number of pupils arriving and leaving the school other than at the usual times, is very low compared to other schools.
- Children of Nursery age attend school on a part-time basis and attend Reception full time.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2014 and has reorganised the senior leadership team since that time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in reading, especially for the most able pupils, so that it is more in line with their standards in writing and mathematics by:
 - making sure that the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is consistently effective in raising standards
 - providing more opportunities for the most able pupils to extend their reading skills as part of their research for their topic work.
- Make sure that teachers' feedback to pupils on how to improve their work is consistently followed up by the pupils thereby improving their learning and improving standards
- Develop a more consistent approach to extending pupils' spiritual and cultural development, particularly their knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the new senior leadership team made a quick and accurate assessment of the priorities for the school and put action plans in place to make improvements. As a result, there have been major improvements in the early years' provision and much improved resources and staff training opportunities to improve reading across the school. An analysis of the current pupils' data shows early signs of improvement in reading but there has not been sufficient time for the full positive impact of the actions introduced.
- Senior leaders have rightly focused on more rigorously monitoring the effectiveness of classroom practice and the quality of teaching over time has certainly improved. This is evident from an analysis of the school's own records and the joint working reports from the local authority.
- The attainment and progress of the pupils have improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection in reading, writing and mathematics. There have also been good improvements in the results in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests over the last two years since their introduction. One parent commented, 'The school is a much more positive place since the arrival of the new Headteacher.'
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are being well supported by the middle and subject leadership team. This team has a varied breadth of experience but has been closely involved in the implementation of an effective programme for checking on practice and on the outcomes for pupils.
- Since the previous inspection the school has received a good range of support from the local authority's school improvement adviser and consultants. Joint working on improving teaching and learning and good support for the new senior leadership and governors have led to clear school improvement. As a result the school is now deemed by the local authority to have made sufficient improvement to be entitled to just the core support of a termly visit.
- The pupil premium is mainly used on well-trained staff providing small group and individual support for the disadvantaged pupils. This has proved effective and the latest validated figures show that every disadvantaged pupil made at least expected progress in writing and mathematics and nearly all in reading. Between a third and half of these pupils made better than expected progress and gaps in attainment compared to their peers narrowed as a result.
- The school is using the primary sports funding effectively. The school has been awarded the Sports Kitemark; the school team has won the area Kwik Cricket competition and represented the area at County level. A new tennis club has been introduced and residential trips take place that are geared to outdoor pursuits. Take up of attending school sports clubs is very pleasing. Pupils have also gained a good understanding of how to live their lives more healthily and the importance of a healthy diet.
- Checks on the performance of individual teachers are fully in place and records are kept in line with the national 'Teachers' Standards'. Staff say that they appreciate the more rigorous checks and value the fact that it links with their own professional development.
- School leaders have reviewed the way that subjects are taught across the school in line with the new National Curriculum. Information for parents on the work being undertaken has been made available on the school's website. Teachers plan work that excites and motivates the pupils and consequently they are engaged in their work in the lessons. However, the most able pupils do not extend their reading skills by researching for their topic work and thereby adding a clear purpose to their reading.
- A planned programme of personal and social education, coupled with displays around the school, are promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. As a result pupils work and play together co-operatively and harmoniously and they show respect to others. They are polite and courteous and keen to take on additional responsibilities, like playground buddies. In these respects they are well-prepared for life in modern Britain and have a good understanding of British values. However, pupils have not

developed a depth of knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures through visits and visitors, and through the wider appreciation of art and music.

- Senior leaders and governors have worked together to make sure that the school's provision promotes equal opportunities for all pupils and that any rare incidents of discrimination are tackled promptly and effectively.
- The school fosters particularly strong relationships with parents. From the responses on Parent View and from discussions with parents during the inspection, it is very evident that they are pleased with the school and the education being provided for their children. 100% of the parents who completed Parent View would recommend this school to other parents. One parent typically said, 'Staff are friendly and helpful and very quick to deal with any questions or concerns.'
- The arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are effective. Checks on members of staff and other people working in school are rigorous and fully up to date. Checks on the safety and security of the school site and risk assessments for school visits are completed regularly. Statutory requirements are fully met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body responded promptly and positively to the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. A new committee structure was introduced that focuses closely on the performance of staff and pupils and also on the current school priorities. The governors took up a training and support programme provided by the local authority conscientiously. As a result governors now have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are able to identify the key priorities likely to be faced by the school over the next few years. They understand the pupil performance data and the quality of teaching and learning across the school. There are good links with staff, who regularly contribute presentations at governing body meetings. Governors have a good understanding of the links between classroom performance and the teachers' incremental salary rises. They now undertake school visits with more regularity and with a clear focus and report back to the governing body as a whole, particularly on progress through the school improvement plan.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils and all of the parents who commented during the inspection agreed that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have mature attitudes and take responsibility for their own behaviour and need very little supervision. Pupils show respect for each other and for adults. Their manners are excellent and they show courtesy at all times. Pupils like the school reward systems for good behaviour and take great delight in achieving 'Wellians', which can be used for in-school treats and visits outside school.
- Behaviour is almost invariably good in lessons and sometimes exemplary. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and a positive climate for learning is created in lessons. Occasionally there is some low level disruption to learning when pupils are not fully engaged in their work but this is only in a small minority of lessons.
- Attendance has improved significantly over time and is now generally above the national average. The school has taken firm steps to reduce very successfully the levels of persistent absence and these are now very low indeed compared to the national figures.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Again, pupils and all the parents who commented during the inspection agreed that this is the case.
- From the school's records and from discussions with pupils, bullying is rare and the pupils say that they have every confidence that staff will help them if the need arises and will resolve any issues. Anti-bullying

work within school has been a contributory factor in making sure that pupils feel safe and secure. The large majority of the pupils spoken with during the inspection have a good understanding of the various forms of bullying.

- Pupils have a good understanding of the safe use of computers and the internet through work they have undertaken in school. They have also been given good advice on how to stay safe outside school in the wider community.
- Health and safety documentation in school is comprehensive but needs to be organised more efficiently so it is readily available if needed. However, it does meet statutory requirements in all aspects.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's records and the outcomes of joint working with the local authority's school adviser show that the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. The analysis of pupils' progress in every year group, the evidence in pupils' books and the lesson observations indicate that teaching is now consistently good and occasionally outstanding in some areas. The impact of teaching on learning and achievement in literacy, reading and mathematics is reflected in pupils' higher attainment.
- Teachers plan lessons that motivate the pupils and pupils say that they enjoy their work in school. In a Year 5/6 lesson the teacher introduced the planned work on George Stephenson with a video clip that immediately grabbed the pupils' attention and interest. Clear instructions from the teacher and clear expectations for pupils, outlined in printed success criteria in their books, made sure that the pupils knew what was expected of them and allowed them to check on their own progress.
- The good subject knowledge of many of the staff has led to some excellent developments in computing, with pupils creating their own video clips and saving them through the use of coding methods. This allows instant access to their work by clicking on the codes on the classroom displays with their iPads.
- The school leaders recognised the need to improve attainment in reading and introduced extended phonics and guided reading sessions in the mornings. Staff training has made sure that the lessons are being delivered more effectively but the new programme has only been in place for just over a term and has yet to have full impact on the reading outcomes for pupils.
- The teachers have reviewed the way subjects are taught in the light of the new National Curriculum. In literacy there is a greater focus on punctuation and grammar and this was observed in the lesson observations during the inspection and was evident when inspectors looked through the pupils' books.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in mathematics because teachers' expectations have been raised, especially with the planned work now being in line with the standards expected in the new National Curriculum. Pupils are therefore consistently challenged and respond well to this.
- Teachers and teaching assistants very occasionally miss opportunities to check on the pupils' work and therefore some errors and misconceptions are not always addressed immediately.
- Marking has improved during this academic year as a result of staff training and guidance. The quality of marking is now more consistent and teachers are giving clearer advice to pupils on how to improve their work. In some classes time is now usefully allocated at the start of the school day for pupils to check on their teacher's comments. However, not all teachers are consistently checking that the pupils are following up on the advice and thereby improving their work.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school in Nursery or Reception with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematical aspects.

- Since the last inspection there have been good improvements in the early years provision and consequently the children make good progress. The percentage of children making a good level of development has doubled in the last two years and is now on track in 2015 to be in line with or above the national averages.
- This good progress is now more consistent across the rest of the school and last year all year groups were making progress that was in line with or above national expectations. As a result the pupils left school with standards of attainment one year ahead of the national averages in writing, half a year ahead in the English Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test, and two terms ahead in mathematics. Reading was in line with the national average which is why the school leaders addressed this as an immediate priority.
- Results at the expected Level 4 when pupils leave the school are well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Level 5 and Level 6, the most able pupils are also achieving well above the national averages in writing, the 'grammar, punctuation and spelling' test, and in mathematics but not so in reading.
- From the school's own records on pupils' attainment and progress, results in writing may dip in 2015 but, because checks are made regularly on the data, the school leaders have action plans in place to address this.
- The attainment of the disadvantaged pupils remains a year below that of their peers in reading and writing but is in line with their peers in mathematics. However, their results are above those of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Last year every disadvantaged pupil made at least expected progress in writing and mathematics and all but one in reading. A third of the disadvantaged pupils made better than expected progress in reading and writing and half made better than expected progress in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are identified as soon as possible after entering the school and are given good quality support from well-trained staff. As a result, these pupils make good and often outstanding progress, which is often better than their peers. One parent specifically commented, 'My children have special educational needs and they receive fantastic support from their teachers and the teaching assistants.'

The early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders have rightly focused on developing the children's speaking and listening skills and their literacy knowledge as the priorities because of the low levels on entering the school.
- The Nursery and Reception areas are well-resourced and the staff have created attractive and stimulating learning environments that support the children's learning and also celebrate the children's work, especially their developing writing skills. However, the presentation of children's work on displays in the classrooms could be improved in the Reception classes to demonstrate that their work is valued.
- Children settle very quickly into the life of the school. The routines and expectations are soon learnt and the children develop very positive attitudes to learning which they take with them throughout the whole school.
- The children behave well and they quickly develop their social skills and learn to work and play together co-operatively. The classroom and outdoor areas are safe and secure. Safeguarding procedures are in place and staff have undertaken all the appropriate training on child protection and first aid for children of this age.
- The activities planned by the teachers are motivational for the children. Teachers and teaching assistants know the children well and, through checking regularly on their progress, are able to plan work that is

meeting the next steps in each child's development.

- The progress made by the children from their starting points has improved year on year since the previous inspection and is now good. The percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development has doubled in the last two years and the outcomes already in 2015 are above the 2014 national average. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education in 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	112649
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	461627

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Munro
Headteacher	Lisa Duncan
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2012
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