

Balby Central Primary School

Littlemoor Lane, Balby, Doncaster, DN4 0LL

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Teaching is good throughout the school. The vast majority of lessons are characterised by good relationships between all adults and pupils, and by pupils' positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils achieve well. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and overall through the school.
- Pupils make good progress overall especially in upper Key Stage 2. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English, although lower in writing than in reading. Standards in mathematics are above average.
- Strong and trusting relationships underpin pupils' good behaviour. Pupils are punctual and attendance is rising and is now average. They know how to keep safe and care for the well-being of others.
- Leadership and management are good with a strong team including members of the governing body. All are clear about the school's strengths and what needs attention.
- Leaders have had a positive impact on improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. This is an improving school.
- The strong moral code promoted throughout the school is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- The quality of teachers' feedback in pupils' books does not consistently tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work, so that they can make even better progress.
- At times teaching can be too teacher led and this does not always allow for pupils to take control of their own learning.

Information about the inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 24 lessons taught by 15 teachers. Two joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a few other visits to classes, looked at pupils' books and listened to a number of children read across the school.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, senior and middle leaders and a representative of the local authority was contacted.
- Inspectors took account of the eight responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and feedback from a large number of parents interviewed at the school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Michael Wintle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Ronald Cohen	Additional Inspector
Jane Alexander	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average size primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is well above national comparisons. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The number of pupils who join the school part way through Key Stage 2 is higher than would be expected.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher has been in post for two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in writing so that they match those in reading and mathematics by:
 - having more examples of high quality writing displayed in classrooms so that pupils can learn from the best practice
 - making sure pupils understand their precise learning targets and how to attain them developing pupils' writing skills in other subjects.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - improving marking so that all teachers tell pupils how well they are improving
 - providing pupils with more detailed guidance and increasing the opportunities for them to assess their own work
 - ensuring all teachers allow pupils time to work out things for themselves and learn from each other.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress especially in reading and mathematics. However pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding because their progress in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are lower than expected for their age, particularly in their social development. They are keen to learn and their early communication and number skills develop quickly and children apply them well. As a result, their progress is now good and their overall skills are getting close to those expected for age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress from Year 1 to Year 6 accelerating at the later stages of Key Stage 2. Historically, pupils have left the school with attainment well below that expected nationally. Since the last inspection, much has been done to increase pupils' achievement and attainment is now broadly average.
- Improvements in mathematics are reaping more success and standards are above the national average with the proportion of pupils attaining better than expected standards for age is increasing.
- Progress in reading is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to recognise letters and the sounds they make and use these skills successfully to tackle new words. Reading standards are generally average for most pupils by the end of Year 6, but there is a trend of rising standards for all pupils, including the more able. Many now read with expression and use their reading skills to research information.
- Progress in writing is not as strong as in reading because pupils are not receiving enough opportunity to write across the curriculum and many pupils are uncertain about their writing targets.
- In the best lessons, pupils make most progress when they are fully involved in their own learning by taking part in group work, discussions and working in teams. They start to take ownership of their own learning. Correspondingly, they respond with good behaviour.
- In one such Key Stage 1 lesson in mathematics, the questioning skills and the high expectations of the teacher supported good progress because it engaged all pupils.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is generally similar to that of other pupils because the school deploys its resources very well to support their needs. Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because specialist support is identified where pupils have specific needs in order to ensure they achieve successfully.

The quality of teaching is good

- The overall quality of teaching is good across the school with some examples of excellent practice. Its quality is not yet outstanding overall because some teachers do not allow pupils enough time to work out things for themselves or learn from each other, and the quality of marking is inconsistent across the school.
- Close monitoring by the headteacher and senior leadership team have improved teaching very effectively. Good teaching was observed in all year groups and because of this, pupils across the school make up for previous underachievement and make good progress.
- In mathematics lessons, the pace of learning is brisk, teachers' questioning is good, enabling pupils to learn very effectively.
- Lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to use their reading and mathematical skills throughout the curriculum. The teaching of reading is strong and skills are systematically taught and practised in many subjects. This is less so in writing, where not enough emphasis is placed on writing across the whole curriculum. Although displays in class are attractive they do

not always include enough examples of high quality writing so that pupils can compare their own work and pick out ways to improve.

- The quality of marking is inconsistent across the school. In some classes, it is exemplary and helps pupils make progress. In other instances, it fails to challenge pupils' thinking and rarely links with pupils' targets for improvement.
- Where teaching is good or better, relationships are excellent, pupils show positive attitudes to their learning, and teachers focus on the individual learning taking place. In one outstanding Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils worked at a fast pace on a history topic. Pupils were encouraged to work independently on aspects of the Holocaust and confidently talked about their learning. Work was extremely challenging and opportunities for speaking and listening extensive.
- Parents are wholly positive about the quality of teaching in the school and pupils also say they enjoy their learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and results in lessons that are often fast paced.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good because the headteacher has worked very effectively to establish a harmonious atmosphere with strictly followed rules and routines. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning. Most pupils the inspection team spoke with were very proud of their school.
- The vast majority of parents and pupils feel the school is safe and secure. Nearly all parents felt that bullying issues are dealt with effectively. The inspection team agree with this judgement. One pupil expressed it a little more candidly when asked if teachers take bullying seriously. His response was 'They always sort it out!' Pupils are well aware of the different kinds of bullying and have a good understanding of safety.
- Pupils say that they are happy coming to school and enjoy learning. They demonstrate this through their attendance, which has improved over time and is now broadly average. The school gives clear messages to pupils and parents about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and governors provide effective leadership to a very committed staff. The headteacher provides good leadership and a determination that no child will underachieve. This reflects the school's strong promotion of equality of opportunity and with rising attainment and better teaching, and clear evidence of the ability to sustain improvement.
- The school's judgements about its own performance are accurate and lead to actions which have improved pupils' outcomes and the overall quality of teaching. Still in need of improvement are pupils' writing and the quality of marking. Systems to support staff with training and performance management are effective as they link directly to individual and the school's needs. This is evident in the good improvements made to pupils' achievement in reading and in mathematics.
- Finances are managed wisely with the pupil premium funding effectively used. Those pupils supported by this funding benefit from extra adult support and good interventions which enable them to make good progress.
- Leaders have succeeded in developing a broad and balanced curriculum that effectively matches the needs of all pupils. While the curriculum is effective in supporting pupils' progress, it lacks enough opportunities for pupils to write across all subjects. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school has a very positive relationship with most groups of parents, who say that they find school staff approachable and very helpful. One parent commented that 'the school cares about my child as a learner and as a human being'. The school is a very cohesive community

and pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well together.

- Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being meet requirements. A careful watch is kept over pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.
- The local authority provides a well-designed system of support for the school to match its needs. This has been welcomed by the school and has resulted in good outcomes in reading and mathematics attainment and progress and in the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body is very supportive of the school and governors as a group challenge the school and especially the headteacher in all decisions.
 - Relationships are strong between governors, staff and pupils and they are fully involved in school life.
 - Governors play an important part in planning the future direction of the school and their impact is good.

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	106732
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	405051

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	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr I Scotting
Headteacher	Mr P McGuigan
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2011
Telephone number	01302 321914
Fax number	01302 739418
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