

Carsington and Hopton Primary School

Carsington, Matlock, DE4 4DE

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The headteacher and other leaders and managers, including the governors, have ensured that teaching is good and the curriculum is interesting. As a result, achievement is good.
- Children in Reception achieve exceptionally well because activities are very well matched to their interests and needs and promote excellent learning and development.
- Standards vary over time in the very small cohorts. They are average overall and increasing as teaching strengthens.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and round the school.
- Pupils feel safe and secure because the school looks after them well.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through the school's positive atmosphere and its teaching.
- The school is led very strongly and with a very clear focus by the headteacher. His strategies have been carefully considered, resulting in improvements in many areas of the school's work. The school continues to improve.
- The governing body is able to support and challenge the school, and regularly does so. Governors know that teaching and the achievement of pupils have improved, and where the school can improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not have enough regular and carefully planned opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills through other learning.
- Some year groups do not have enough chances to practise their grammatical skills through writing regularly at length.
- The most able pupils do not consistently reach their full potential because work is sometimes not sufficiently challenging and does not ensure they can apply the skills they know, in solving problems.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector watched seven lessons. All of them were observed with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke with pupils while they were in lessons, around the school and in the playground. She observed an assembly, watched pupils being supported in small groups and listened to several pupils reading.
- The inspector held a formal meeting with a group of pupils to find out their views about their school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including information about how well pupils learn, the school's improvement planning, examples of pupils' work, governing body minutes, and the policies to keep the pupils safe.
- The inspector took into account the 17 parental responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) in carrying out the inspection. She spoke with several parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector also checked the nine responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than other primary schools. The number on roll continues to fall. This means that in some year groups there are very few pupils.
- The pupils are taught in two mixed-age, mixed-ability classes, comprising Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils in one class and Key Stage 2 pupils in the other class. Reception pupils attend full-time. No pupil is educated off site.
- All 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 currently less than one in ten, which is broadly average.
- The pupil premium provides support for 6% of the pupils in the school. This is below the national average. The pupil-premium funding is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The school is part of the Anthony Gell cluster of schools. It shares a headteacher with Kirk Ireton Primary School with whom it works closely to strengthen teaching, the curriculum and leadership and management. The headteacher spends an equal time at both schools.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education. He is not offering any support at present.
- There have been several changes in staffing over the last two years. Staffing is now stable.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that progress is outstanding and enables standards to rise, particularly in mathematics, and also in writing, by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils always achieve their potential by having more opportunities to use the skills they have acquired in a range of activities and problem-solving tasks
 - pupils have more frequent chances to write at length
 - topic work and work in all subjects incorporates opportunities for pupils to practise and secure their literacy and numeracy skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides very strong and focused leadership to the school, in which there is a positive feel which encourages learning and good behaviour.
- The headteacher has shown great determination in ensuring that the school improves and can build on its improvements. To do this, he has ensured that information about the progress of all groups of pupils is accurate and checked regularly. The gaps in pupils' learning are therefore being addressed. This has been significant in their good progress from their individual starting points.
- The school has responded to the decline in progress in mathematics and its evidence, backed up by lesson observations, shows that progress has quickened. Extra attention is being given to making sure that pupils practise and develop their grammatical, punctuation and spelling skills. The school is taking advice as to the best way to teach spelling effectively.
- The headteacher has not been afraid of making hard decisions, which are paying off in the improvements made so far in teaching and the good development of the new curriculum. The governors have commented on the positive feel of the school, which is the best they can remember, as one of its improvements.
- Although this is a very small school, leadership is shared well and is helping to strengthen the school's capacity and its improvement. This is particularly important due to the headteacher leading two schools.
- The school uses its partnerships well, including for staff training and development and for joint activities for the pupils.
- The partnership forged by sports funding is providing pupils with a greater awareness of the benefits of keeping fit and many chances to develop their skills and interests, such as in tag rugby and Tai Chi. It has energised them, through, for example, all pupils running a mile a day marathon on the school field for a month. It is enabling the staff to broaden their teaching skills. The money also means that the school can afford transport in order to enable pupils to take part in competitive sports at other schools.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to improve relationships between parents and the school. The high level of satisfaction, portrayed through the on-line questionnaire and the comments made by parents, show their renewed confidence in the school. Pupils and parents like the home-school planners which enable effective communication between home and school. In particular, the 'learning ladders' provide the parents with information about the next steps in their children's learning and the opportunity to record when they listen to their children read. Good transition arrangements for Year 6 pupils, with the partner secondary school, ease the start of their secondary education.
- Teaching continues to be the major focus of the school's development. It is observed regularly and staff are given detailed feedback and areas for improvement, which they are expected to respond to in improved performance. Their performance targets, including those for teaching assistants, reflect the areas they need to strengthen both in teaching and leadership and are measureable and challenging.
- The school knows the pupils well. The special educational needs coordinator, for example, has good systems to identify the specific needs of the disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They are identified quickly and supported accurately so that they develop well.
- The staff have considered carefully the assessment system to match the new national curriculum and have made a strong start to this. Pupils are enjoying the topics introduced as part of the curriculum which motivate them to learn in many ways. However, although the pupils achieve well overall, those capable of reaching higher levels do not always reach their full potential, when work is not planned to really challenge them.

- Activities, lessons and assemblies contribute to the school's very good promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning is broad and incorporates the opportunity for all pupils to learn at least one musical instrument. From Reception the pupils enjoy wider activities such as visits and lunch and after-school clubs.
- The local authority reviews the school's performance regularly and very thoroughly. It has worked with the governing body and diocese to ensure the right appointments to improve teaching and leadership and to ensure the school can continue to move forward.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements and regular checks help to ensure that the pupils remain safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well-organised, with a structure of clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
 - It is determined to improve the school and minutes of meetings confirm a comprehensive coverage of the school's work. Minutes of governing body meetings, for example, show that the governors ask regular questions about a range of issues, including the achievement of pupils. Their training about the interpretation of information about progress is facilitated by this. They know about the dip in results in mathematics and are clear how it is being addressed.
 - The governors find out about several aspects of the school's work for themselves through, for example, surveys of pupils' views and lesson observations.
 - The governors are communicating regularly with parents so that they feel that their views are taken into account and have been instrumental in the positive home-school relationships now enjoyed.
 - The governors check the use and impact of pupil premium funding. They are developing their knowledge of performance management procedures and the link to pay increases.
 - The governors keep a very close eye on the budget because it is their legal responsibility to do so and also because the number of pupils has fallen. Money is spent carefully to provide good value.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and considerate to each other and behave well around the school.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good and that the staff manage it well. They like having house points for good behaviour and work.
- Pupils love coming to school. Teachers' very good relationships with them create a happy school environment. In lessons, pupils are keen to get started because they want to learn. They respond quickly to the teachers' instructions.
- Many pupils always concentrate in every lesson. It is when teaching is occasionally not as interesting to them or does not provide some pupils with appropriately challenging work, that a few pupils get distracted and talk to each other about matters that are irrelevant to the lesson. However, many pupils always keep concentrating and trying to learn as well as they can.
- Most pupils present their work neatly and practise handwriting skills regularly.
- Round the school, in assembly, at lunchtime and in the playground, the pupils mix well together. They learn and play happily together in the mixed-age groups with older pupils being very supportive to the younger ones.
- At playtimes, pupils enjoy taking turns to organise play equipment and support the other children in their activities.

- The displays round the school and the themes in assembly support the school's ethos that all pupils are equal and equally valued. The pupils have understood this and say that, whatever our colour, size or beliefs, we are all of the same worth. The respect they show to visitors and the staff shows their consideration and politeness, epitomising how well they have been taught British values.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good, and the pupils are well cared for.
- There is a lovely sense of security around the school and in lessons, because the pupils trust the staff, like them, and are comfortable in asking questions.
- The pupils say that the school is a safe place and that the staff help to keep them safe.
- Records show that there is no bullying and the pupils say the same. From Reception, the children know it is right to treat others kindly in what they say and do. They know that there are different types of bullying and the school has explained to them that they must use the internet carefully to avoid dangers, including bullying.
- Pupils' excellent attendance and punctuality rates help ensure that they are safe because they are in school and have maximum chances to achieve their potential. Attendance is monitored daily. There is no persistent absenteeism and punctuality to school is good.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved and has led to pupils' accelerating learning and good progress.
- Good quality teaching encourages pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their accelerating progress. Good relationships between staff and pupils and vibrant displays all over the school promote a very positive environment for learning.
- Teaching is organised well in the mixed-age and ability classes. The teachers know their pupils, and the subjects they teach, well. They make the purpose of learning clear and ensure that pupils are keeping to the aims of learning.
- Marking gives clear messages to pupils about what they know well and what they need to do next which also helps pupils to make further progress. Pupils are generally given time to make the improvements the teachers tell them to do, and therefore improve their learning.
- Teaching assistants work closely with the teachers to deliver effective teaching and support to groups of pupils overall. Occasionally, questioning by teachers and teaching assistants is not specifically focused to help all pupils achieve equally well in order to widen their thinking and quicken their progress. This issue is being addressed.
- Teaching is most often delivered in small groups to pupils of similar ability. This works well. However, the work given to the most able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging to enable them to reach the higher levels. They are not given enough chances to test how well they can use their numeracy skills in solving problems.
- There are not enough regular chances for pupils to write at length and to put into practice their increasing knowledge of how to write more powerfully to make better than good progress. While there are numerous examples of pupils' writing on display, they do not have enough regular, specific opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects or in topic work.
- Presentation of work is generally good. Pupils have to show they write neatly enough to be given a 'pen licence'.

- Opportunities are sometimes missed in topic work to enable pupils to practise and apply their numeracy skills to ensure these skills are secure.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Interesting activities and good teaching motivate the pupils and encourage them to learn. In Reception, the children learn and develop very well.
- The standards that the pupils reach by the end of Year 6 vary and can be skewed, because of the size of the cohorts. Over time they are average and improving.
- The proportion of pupils making expected and better than expected progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics is improving. Recent data and predictions for 2015 show that a greater proportion of pupils than nationally are on track to make expected progress and better than expected progress is in line.
- Improvement has been building steadily, due to good teaching, although it was not enough to avoid the lower than expected rates of progress of pupils in last year's Year 6, in mathematics and in grammar, punctuation and spelling. The school attributes this to gaps in pupils' learning in previous years, particularly in mathematics.
- Gaps in pupils' learning from previous years are being addressed rigorously. Progress is good in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's data, samples of pupils' work and observations of teaching confirm good progress of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils also make good progress in other subjects such as geography and science where the new curriculum is encouraging their interest and enthusiasm.
- Nevertheless, the most able pupils are not always challenged equally consistently well to enable them to reach the highest levels possible. This was one of the reasons for the fall in the rates of progress last year. Several strategies are being implemented to put this right, including additional teaching for pupils capable of reaching level 6 which is already seeing standards rise.
- The teaching of reading is good. Pupils like reading. The proportion of pupils reaching the required standards in the Year 1 screening check in phonics (the sounds that letters make), is above average. Pupils practise reading regularly and early readers show good skills in breaking down words into groups of sounds in order to pronounce them accurately.
- Most pupils make similar rates of progress, including boys girls and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The support for disadvantaged pupils is very appropriate for their needs and includes specific support to secure their reading, writing and numeracy skills. However, a very small proportion of pupils are eligible for this funding and so comparisons of the standards that they reach, with those who do not receive the funding, are statistically meaningless. The progress that they make is similarly good compared to all other groups of pupils.

The early years provision is outstanding

- The levels of knowledge and skills of the very small numbers of children who join Reception are typical for their age. Very good links with parents ensure that the children settle quickly.
- The children make rapid progress in all of the seven areas of learning with an above average proportion reaching a good level of development. This is because teaching and leadership are very effective. All children reached at least the expected levels in reading and writing in 2014. They have individual teaching to ensure their needs are met, including for the most able.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also achieve very well, helped by early identification of their needs and a good understanding of how to support them.
- The children feel safe and know how to keep safe. They behave exceptionally well because this is what the staff expect them to do. They learn quickly to take turns, be thoughtful and to share, including in the outdoor area, which gives them many other activities to help them learn and grow.
- Activities are very carefully considered to extend children's learning. The children show curiosity, and a desire to explore and investigate. They are fascinated by the topic about the moon. The textured moon display made children want to find 'moon rock', which in turn meant they discovered letters and numbers, textures and how they can change.
- The children develop quickly their understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) because it is taught exceptionally clearly. A strength is in the questioning and the high level of expectation of what the children will achieve. Learning about sounds leads to the accurate pronunciation of letters and the spelling of simple words. Key words are introduced in all learning to aid the children's literacy development.
- By the end of Reception, most children are ready for the challenges of Year 1 learning. If any are not, they continue to be supported towards the early learning goals.

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	112878
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	448990

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adam Summerhayes
Headteacher	Peter Johnston
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2012
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