

Grindleford Primary School

Sir William Hill, Grindleford, Hope Valley, S32 2HS

Inspection dates 24–25 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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.

- The school’s leaders manage teachers’ performance well. They do much to improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, teaching is good, pupils achieve well and the school is improving.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in a wide range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reception children are typically well prepared for their work in Year 1. Last year they did especially well because their learning activities were particularly well planned.
- Pupils’ exemplary behaviour and excellent attitudes are major factors in their good achievement and excellent personal development.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They are immensely proud of it and want to be there, as their high levels of attendance show.
- Parents are highly satisfied with what the school does for their children. They all say their children are happy and safe at school, and that the school keeps them safe.
- Pupils are very clear about how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Their computer skills are outstanding.
- The school promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. It also does much to promote British values.
- Pupils leave this school as well-rounded, mature youngsters who have been prepared very well for the next stage of their lives.
- Governors play an effective role in helping the school to improve. They challenge leaders robustly to ensure it is doing its best for the pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as good as in reading or mathematics. Teachers do not help pupils to make the most of their skills when they write in different subjects.
- The school improvement plan is not as useful as it could be. It does not include measurable steps against which progress can be precisely checked.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in parts of six sessions. The headteacher joined the inspector in four of these observations.
- The inspector sampled all of the sessions where phonics (the sounds that letters make) were being taught. She analysed the work in pupils' books, and talked to pupils formally and informally about their work and about school. She also observed pupils' behaviour at play and lunchtimes, and listened to some reading.
- The views of the 45 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, ParentView, were taken into account. The inspector also gained the views of parents at first-hand as they brought their children to school.
- The eight responses to the questionnaire for staff were also considered.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation including the school's data on current pupils' progress, its self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan. Other planning and monitoring documents were also evaluated, including those relating to teaching, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, governors, various members of staff and a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below average. This additional funding is provided to support the education of pupils previously known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Virtually all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The children in Reception attend on a full-time basis. Like the older pupils, they are taught in mixed-age classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement in writing by:
 - encouraging pupils to be mindful of their writing targets when they write in different subjects
 - providing helpful guidance to sharpen pupils' writing skills, wherever they are used.
- Sharpen the school improvement plan by including measurable steps against which progress towards priorities can be more precisely checked.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Effective leadership and management, together with excellent teamwork among the staff, have created a climate of high expectations and a very positive learning environment for the pupils. As a result, teaching and learning are improving, individual pupils get the help they need, and behaviour is exemplary.
- The leadership of teaching is strong. Leaders' evaluations of teaching and learning identify points for improvement, which are then followed up, where necessary, with additional training. Checks are sometimes carried out with a representative from the local authority or another headteacher to ensure they are accurate.
- The performance of the staff is managed well. Their individual targets arise from the school's accurate self-evaluation and the well-considered priorities in its plan for improvement. The steps by which progress towards the school's overall priorities are to be measured do not link closely enough to pupils' progress.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is strong. Staff understand their responsibilities well. They check teaching and learning, provide effective support and guidance for each other, and work closely with other schools to make sure their work is accurate and effective. They ensure that literacy and numeracy skills are built into all learning.
- The leadership of computing is outstanding. The use of computers makes a major contribution to pupils' learning in different subjects. For example, it enables pupils to complete and store work and homework securely. The online dialogues between teachers and pupils provide a forum for effective marking and feedback, to which pupils respond well.
- The school has drawn up and implemented new systems to assess progress within the requirements of the new National Curriculum. It has just completed the first round of assessments and is working with other schools to ensure its evaluations are an accurate reflection of how well pupils are doing.
- Subjects are planned and taught well so that pupils can learn in different ways, often through practical work. For example, work on erosion is explored by visiting the local river. This makes learning meaningful and pupils readily build on what they find by undertaking further research at school and at home.
- A good range of visits and visitors, clubs and other activities, including in sports and the arts, extends and enriches pupils' learning. This small school makes good use of specialist teachers, including the specialisms of its own staff, to enhance pupils' progress. Pupils say all of this enables them to 'get all the teachers at their best' and therefore 'learn better'.
- Pupils' personal development is also made real for them as they explore life in and beyond the village and what it means to live in modern Britain. British values, such as tolerance and respect, are included in work on different faiths, beliefs and cultures, and the importance of getting along with others. The value of living in a free society is developed through learning about how democracy works. Pupils learn about local and national elections and democratically elect school councillors. They learn about local planning requirements as they check how they might get solar panels installed to save electricity.
- The school ensures that pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities have an equal chance to succeed. It teaches pupils the importance of accepting and valuing others and avoiding discrimination of any sort. As a result, pupils develop a strong sense of morality and justice, which they bring to all of their work and play, and which parents praise highly.
- Leaders and governors make sure safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are comprehensive and effective, and fully meet national requirements. Staff are very vigilant in ensuring pupils are safe and cared for well. They pay particular attention to teaching pupils how to use computers and the internet safely, and how to keep themselves safe in and out of school.

- Good leadership of the early years ensures that children in Reception settle quickly and learn well. Due regard is given to the requirements for this age group within the mixed-age class.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding is used well to extend sporting and exercise opportunities, and the impact of the spending is monitored effectively. Good attention is paid to improving the skills of the staff to teach physical education and sport. For example, during the inspection, training started on how to teach gymnastics in a limited space so the school's small hall could be used more effectively to do so.
- The pupil premium is also used effectively. It provides one-to-one or small group support for disadvantaged pupils to enable them to overcome learning or personal issues so that they, too, can make good progress.
- Effective management of the support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs ensures these pupils have the help they need to make good progress. The carefully considered deployment of support staff assists in this, as does the school's close liaison with a range of external agencies.
- Parents are extremely pleased with what the school does for their children. They particularly praise how well all staff know their pupils as individuals and make sure they all do well. The school involves parents effectively in their children's learning through regular newsletters, workshops and parents' evenings.
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support for the school, which it considers to be good with outstanding features. Annual reports are supplemented with a small number of visits during the year to ensure this small school has the support it needs to help pupils learn well. For example, the local authority challenges the school on its data, and ensures the school knows what training is available that could help it reach its priorities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors have a good understanding of performance data and the need to interpret it carefully in a small school. They ask searching questions about individual pupils' progress to check that the school is doing its best for the pupils. They gain much information from their visits to school, and discussions with staff, pupils and parents.
 - Governors play an effective role in leading the school and planning to improve it. They regularly review their own effectiveness and draw up an action plan each year to increase it. They fine-tune their skills by attending carefully selected training.
 - The governors support the headteacher well in making decisions about pay related to teachers' performance. They know all about the quality of teaching in the school and the processes involved in rewarding good teaching and tackling underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This enables lessons to proceed uninterrupted and makes play and lunchtimes happy, social occasions. All parents say their children are happy and safe at school. Pupils echo these views. They thoroughly enjoy learning, persevere and concentrate hard in lessons, and often continue their work at home to help them do even better.
- Pupils have an exceptionally well-developed sense of responsibility for themselves, the environment and the world in which they live. In their roles as school councillors, eco councillors, house captains and play leaders, they make a very valuable contribution to school life. They are immensely proud of their school and what they do there, as are their parents and the staff.
- Pupils are very respectful, caring and accepting of others, but have a strong sense of justice and morality,

readily talking about what is acceptable and what is not. They praise their teachers for being 'sensitive and supportive' and for making them feel good about themselves.

- According to the pupils, 'learning is so much fun', activities are 'cool', and they 'get to learn so much more by doing rather than just listening'. They say their learning is 'constantly challenged and deepened', and they are 'constantly pushed' to do better. They provide telling examples to prove their points.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school. They are highly aware of the dangers associated with using mobile phones and social networking sites.
- Pupils speak proudly of how they create their own safe websites and store them in a 'hidden' area of the school website. They accessed their work to show the inspector without giving away any of their secrets, and understand why it is important to change passwords regularly so that no-one can interfere with their websites.
- Pupils know it is wrong to discriminate against others. They talk of 'not judging people by their looks' or 'particular views', and understand how hurtful name-calling can be, even if in fun. They are alert to the dangers of extremism and are encouraged to discuss their concerns in personal, social and health education sections.
- Pupils understand all about the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that they know of none, and that any untoward behaviour is dealt with well. They say it is like 'being in a court' as staff listen to both sides, and to witnesses, before coming to a decision. They see this approach as fair, but say they mostly manage to stop any falling out before it escalates to staff having to deal with it.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers know their pupils extremely well. They are sensitive to their pupils' individual abilities and interests, and plan work accordingly. Pupils meet their high expectations for work rate and behaviour very well, and are extremely enthusiastic about learning. Teaching assistants provide good support for different ability groups at different times, thereby contributing to the learning of all pupils.
- Teachers involve pupils in determining some of their own learning, assessing it, and choosing the level at which they might work. This does not mean that pupils can choose something that is too easy for them because, in their words, teachers 'always check, and push us to the limit' because 'they want us to do well'. The staff make sure they routinely provide challenging and more difficult work for the most-able pupils, some of whom are working at the highest level.
- The staff teach English, mathematics and communication skills well, and encourage pupils to use these key skills well in different subjects. They teach phonics effectively in all age groups. Older pupils speak positively about how this is helping them with spelling and grammar, and therefore improving the quality of their writing.
- Teachers mark all the work pupils produce and in most cases give them good guidance on how to improve it. Pupils respond well to these comments and suggestions. Teachers mark the writing pupils do in literacy lessons particularly well. In other subjects, they do not encourage pupils effectively to sharpen their writing by making full use of their individual writing targets, for example to include different or more imaginative vocabulary, or write in complex sentences, depending on the context of their writing.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds make good progress. In this small school, standards vary greatly from year to year depending on the range of ability among the pupils involved. Comparisons against national averages in published performance data should be treated with caution. That said,

children generally join Reception with skills and understanding below the levels typical for their age and leave Year 6 with above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and exceptionally well-developed computing skills.

- There were too few pupils in Year 1 last year to comment on standards in the national phonics check. However, it is clear from listening to pupils in Years 1 and 2 reading that they understand how to break words down then put the letters back together again to help them read new words. They do so confidently.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They read widely and readily share their enjoyment with others. This was particularly evident in an assembly led by pupils in Years 5 and 6 where they showed their extensive knowledge of the range of work of an author they enjoyed. In addition, they demonstrated their considerable computing skills in a highly effective slide presentation involving music and sound.
- By Year 6, pupils write well with due regard for audience and purpose. Their story writing is often imaginative, using a good range of emotive language to create suspense and draw the reader into wanting to read more.
- Pupils' mental mathematical skills are well developed. Mathematical learning is rooted in practical, investigative work that requires pupils to think logically and use their skills to solve mathematical problems. This was seen in pupils' books and noted in a lesson where pupils in Years 5 and 6 deepened their understanding of shape as they explored the sum of the angles in triangles and quadrilaterals, and the relationships between the two.
- The school caters well for all ability groups. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support from teachers and well-briefed, well-trained support staff who often work one-to-one with individuals. As a result, they make good progress.
- Additional challenges are also provided for the most-able pupils to help them make the faster progress and reach the higher standards of which they are capable. During the inspection, these pupils undertook work in English and mathematics usually associated with pupils in Year 7.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils in the school to make the usual judgements on their attainment by the end of Year 6 without risk of identifying individuals. Collectively, however, they make the same good progress as all other groups of pupils.
- Pupils make good use of the increased range of sporting and exercise opportunities available to them through the primary school physical education and sport funding. They are enjoying, for example, activities such as fencing and indoor bowling. Almost all the clubs are oversubscribed and more pupils are attending all of them.

The early years provision is good

- Typically, children make good progress in their Reception year and are well prepared for their work in Year 1. Those who started school in 2013 made outstanding progress. This was because the way their progress was tracked and assessed, and the information used to plan the next steps in their learning, had been greatly improved.
- In the absence of the early years leader, the headteacher is overseeing teaching and learning in this age group. Children currently in Reception are making good progress in the activities planned for them, all of which have a clear learning purpose. Staff who work with them in these activities know and understand what each child is capable of. They are skilled at asking leading questions to check the children's understanding and building on their responses.
- Children appreciate the help they receive from the staff. They settle quickly, learn to share and take turns, and say 'teachers are nice and they help us'. They are also eager to talk about their learning. For example,

as they made pancakes in their kitchen, they explained how they had followed a recipe to make pancakes the previous week. They proudly showed their recipe book and read their recipe using a mixture of words and clues from the pictures.

- The staff develop children's early writing and number skills particularly well. When making cards for Chinese New Year, children were excited as they used finger painting to copy Chinese calligraphy. They also learnt the correct way to form letters during a phonics session. Work in their books shows that they are applying these skills well in their written work.
- The children's 'Learning Journeys' and workbooks demonstrate good and sometimes outstanding progress since September. Photographic records of what the children have done also show that all learning areas are covered well. Staff keep secure electronic records of children's progress, which they use on a daily basis to plan new learning.
- Children behave exceptionally well. They enjoy coming to school and they work and play in a safe, secure learning environment, where staff ensure their safety and their physical and emotional well-being. Staff also liaise closely with parents and pre-school providers so that all learning can be taken into account and any issues can be addressed quickly.

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	112550
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	448661

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	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Luscombe
Headteacher	Leonie Hill
Date of previous school inspection	14 December 2009
Telephone number	01433 630528
Email address	headteacher@grindlefordprimaryschool.co.uk

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