

Brackensdale ER Junior School

Walthamstow Drive, Mackworth Estate, Derby, DE22 4BS

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management is good.
- Leaders have used accurate and rigorous monitoring to bring about marked improvements in teaching and achievement. This has ensured that both are now good.
- All groups of pupils currently in the school are making good progress from their starting points. Their achievement has improved rapidly in the short time since the last inspection.
- This is a welcoming and inclusive school that provides excellent support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.
- The support provided for pupils with autism and speech and language disorders in the specially resourced provision, known as the 'Phoenix Suite', is exemplary.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Teachers have fostered good relationships with and between the pupils and pupils conduct themselves well at all times of the day.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of rich opportunities for learning, incorporating innovative and engaging activities that give pupils powerful experiences relevant to life in modern Britain.
- Governance is good. The governing body monitors pupil performance and the improvements the school makes regularly. It holds school leaders to account well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- For the past three years, pupils' attainment overall has been below the national average. Despite the rapid improvements seen in the progress of current pupils, achievement overall is still weaker than it could be.
- Progress in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not consistently give pupils sufficiently precise feedback on what they need to improve their work.
- Teachers monitor pupils' learning in lessons. However, they do not always use this to modify their teaching to accelerate the progress of pupils, particularly the most able.
- Leaders and managers do not analyse the impact on learning of those pupils who have attended several schools before Brackensdale.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 13 lessons taught by 12 teachers.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books, listened to the pupils read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, including those responsible for English and mathematics, the inclusion managers (the teachers who manage special education), members of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority.
- Parents' views were taken into account, including 13 responses to Parent View, two parent governors, a parent who met with an inspector, and parents who spoke to the inspector on the playground.
- Inspectors listened to the views of staff and evaluated the 24 staff questionnaires that were received.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the most recent data on pupils' achievement, and information relating to teaching, behaviour, and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Myers, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Clive Moss

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Bird

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This junior school is a similar size to the average-sized primary school.
- The school offers specially resourced provision, known as 'The Phoenix Suite', for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Currently, there are 17 pupils in the resource. In addition the school has enhanced resource provision for a further 15 pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. The school shares the expertise of the Phoenix Suite and the inclusion managers with other schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average. Overall half of the pupils at the school have autism, or speech and language disorders.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils) is higher than average.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2014; these are minimum expectations, set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the pupils' achievement in writing, in order to match their more-rapid progress in reading and mathematics, by:
 - making sure that pupils develop a better understanding and clearer overview of what they need to do in order to reach higher levels of attainment.
 - enabling pupils to apply their literacy skills consistently in all subjects.
 - marking and providing feedback on writing in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that marking and feedback to the pupils in lessons are specific to the intended learning, correcting pupils' misconceptions and indicating to the pupils what they need to do next.
 - providing opportunities for pupils to act on the marking and feedback in subsequent work.
 - checking on the pupils' progress in lessons and making changes to the lesson as necessary.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management by sharpening and broadening evaluation by;
 - evaluating the impact of multiple school moves on pupils' progress.
 - evaluating the progress of disabled pupils and those with SEN by type of need and severity of need.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, consistently communicate their high expectations for the school and stress the importance of good behaviour and of improving pupils' outcomes.
- The quality of teaching is improving as a result of leaders' accurate monitoring. Leaders make effective use of a number of strategies, including, lesson observations and the analysis of pupil progress data, to pinpoint where teaching can be improved.
- Systems for managing the performance of teachers are effective. Leaders hold all staff to account for the progress their pupils make. This has resulted in improved teaching and in current pupils making good progress.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies suitable priorities for improvement. However, the leaders do not analyse and evaluate widely enough given the complex nature of their cohort. For example they have not analysed the impact on pupils' learning of attending several schools nor have they determined what they should do to address this.
- The development plan sets out effectively the actions that need to be taken and the improvements the school leaders expect as a result. Professional development opportunities for staff are carefully matched to the needs of the school.
- Curriculum leaders are making a positive and effective contribution to promoting improvement particularly in relation to the curriculum. The collective approach to monitoring improvement is developing but it is not yet a fully coherent and consistent system.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of autism and language disorders. For example, the school takes the opportunity to move the teachers from the main school into the Phoenix Suite and vice versa. As a result the staff are able to meet the needs of pupils with autism well in both settings.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. It is carefully planned and provides rich opportunities for learning across all the subjects. The curriculum includes links with industry, employers and the community through projects such as 'Brilliant Communities'. The curriculum also makes links with schools serving communities very different to Brackensdale's that provide the pupils with good opportunities to meet with people from a range of backgrounds. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well, ensures they are well prepared for life in modern Britain and helps them develop positive attitudes to learning.
- The school has used the sports premium effectively to train staff and to increase the number of sports available to the pupils. As a result, pupils' participation in sport has increased and the number of girls who participate has almost doubled.
- The pupil premium is used effectively. Pupils currently at the school, who are eligible for this support, make good progress.
- The school ensures pupils understand the importance of accepting all pupils, whatever their background or individual challenges and needs. They ensure pupils behave well and aspire to do well. This has meant that their' achievement is improving rapidly.
- The school works well with parents. For example, parents receive valuable information from the school about their children's progress and the school responds well to their concerns.
- Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk of harm and in responding appropriately. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.

- Leaders work effectively with other schools to ensure the pupils' smooth transition into and out of the school. For example, the inclusion managers and their colleagues work very effectively with secondary special schools to ensure the smooth and effective transition of pupils with autism.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body challenges senior leaders systematically. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The governing body is now rigorous in its approach to holding the senior leaders to account. Governors review the performance of the school with senior leaders using the school's data and published data. Subsequently the governors contribute to the setting of the school's strategic direction through their role in the school planning and improvement process.
- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of the teaching. Each half term, a member of the governing body reviews the progress of pupils with the headteacher, focussing on any groups of pupils who need to catch up.
- Governors manage the performance management of the headteacher well and set appropriate targets for the performance of the school. They are clear about the arrangements for the performance management of teachers and their role in it. They are also clear about the importance of linking teacher's performance and impact on achievement before deciding if staff are to be rewarded with increases in salary.
- The governing body ensures the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources. It knows about the pupil premium grant and works with the school leaders to determine how the resource is used.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of learning are consistently positive, including when being taught in the main school and in the Phoenix Suite. They are equally good when pupils work as a whole class or on their own, or in small groups. These positive attitudes have a good impact on their progress.
- Pupils respond well to adult's requests and instructions. Lessons start promptly and the pupils are ready to learn. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare. This is a strength given the complex needs of many of the pupils.
- Pupils conduct themselves well and considerately at all different times of day, including at lunchtime. With the exception of a very small minority of persistent absentees, pupils attend regularly.
- Pupils take pride in their work, their appearance and in their school.
- Pupils' good conduct and behaviour reflect the school's inclusive ethos and staff efforts to promote high standards for all. There are marked improvements in behaviour over time for individuals or groups with particular emotional and special education needs. For example, the professional development undertaken by the inclusion managers and their colleagues on attachment is enabling more pupils to take part in lessons and make good progress.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school has good arrangements for dealing with safeguarding concerns. The school works well with external agencies including the Fire and Police services whose officers have visited school to address the pupils on how to stay safe.
- Pupils are safe and all pupils, including those in the special and enhanced resource provision, feel safe all the time.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying. There are few instances of bullying and

pupils, staff and the large majority of parents confirm that any that do occur are dealt with effectively by the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved and is now good. Consequently, most pupils and groups of pupils at the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make expected or better progress from their starting points.
- Adults know the pupils very well. This results in calm classrooms in which pupils learn well because teachers plan lessons carefully, based on a good understanding of the pupils needs and how to meet them.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and have high expectations of the pupils. Lessons are carefully planned. Lessons are taught well, deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons. Relationships are strong and pupils are interested and take part well. There is little evidence of low-level disruptive behaviour.
- Teachers observe and question pupils carefully during lessons. However, teachers do not always take the opportunity to re-shape tasks or explanations in light of these observations to accelerate the pupils' progress in the lesson.
- Overall reading, writing, and mathematics are taught effectively.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress, including disabled pupils and those with special education needs, regularly and accurately. Pupil progress is reviewed with the senior leadership at least termly. Teachers use this information to help plan their lessons effectively.
- Too much of the feedback given to the pupils, both in marking of their work and verbally during lessons, is mostly praise for their attitudes and behaviour. It is not sufficiently precise or focussed on the learning the pupils have done and what they need to learn next.
- Effective teaching strategies, including well-targeted support and intervention, are matched closely to pupils' needs, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who are the most and least able.
- Support assistants know the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational well; they know what the pupils need to learn next and what part they play in enabling the pupils to stay on board in lessons and learn effectively. They are highly valued, integral members of the teaching team and their deployment is highly effective.
- Teaching is exemplary in the Phoenix Suite because the teachers have an expert understanding of autism and speech and language disorders and there is shared desire and willingness to develop and get better. The environment is safe, stimulating and adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. The teachers and support assistants have a good understanding of the pupils and have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and of their achievement. Consequently, the pupils make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- From their starting points on entry to the school, pupils currently at the school make good progress overall, particularly in reading and mathematics. This represents a significant improvement in the short time since the last inspection.
- Some groups of pupils, such as those without special educational needs, have made more than two terms

progress more than would be expected in the last four terms in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Disabled pupils and those with special education needs make good progress. This is because teachers and support assistants know the children well, have good levels of expertise in autism and speech and language disorders. Consequently, they provide learning opportunities for the pupils that meet the pupils' needs and enable them to make good progress.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was below the national average for 2014. However, the attainment of the pupils without special educational needs, who were about 55% of the cohort, was above the national averages for all pupils. The attainment of the pupils without special educational needs was also above the national average for pupils without special educational needs in reading and mathematics but not writing.
- Pupils read often and well. They develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills throughout curriculum and they are each well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The most-able pupils currently at the school make expected progress, but not as much as they are capable of.
- Disadvantaged pupils attained standards that were in line with their classmates in 2014 in reading and mathematics but were one term behind in writing. However, they were behind other pupils nationally by three terms in reading, six terms in writing and four terms in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils are currently making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics; typically one terms progress more than would be expected in the last four terms.

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	112736
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	462024

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Don Parker
Headteacher	David Hall
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2013
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