

Owler Brook Primary School

Wensley Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S4 8HQ

Inspection dates 10–11 December 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.

- Effective leadership and management have resulted in all pupils achieving well in a happy, harmonious environment where they and their families feel valued and well supported.
- Children make rapid progress in the early years because provision for them is outstanding. Bilingual support is highly effective for those who speak English as an additional language.
- From their often lower than is typical starting points, pupils achieve well. Many pupils have not spent all of their primary education in the school and many newcomers have limited skills in speaking English. All make good progress. Those pupils who are at the school long enough, attain standards that are close to average at the end of Year 2 and are broadly average in Year 6.
- Teaching throughout the school is now good and improving strongly. Teachers and support staff are particularly effective in ensuring all pupils have timely support, especially in learning to speak English, to help them make good progress.
- Pupils attend regularly and enjoy learning. They are looked after well and say they feel safe in school. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.
- Regular checks on the school's performance by leaders and governors identify the correct areas for further improvement. The headteacher and senior leaders put actions in place and drive improvement in teaching and achievement effectively. The school has improved since the previous inspection and continues to do so.
- The curriculum takes very good account of the needs of different groups of pupils and enriches their learning and experiences effectively. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about the wide range of cultures and languages represented in the school and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Most parents are very satisfied with the thorough care arrangements in the school and the good progress their children make.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the work teachers set pupils, particularly the most able, is not at the right level to enable them to make as much progress as possible.
- Marking is not yet consistently good in subjects other than mathematics and English.
- Pupils do not always read enough and so do not understand fully what they have read.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching throughout the school, including numerous shared observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils’ workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, and middle leaders including subject leaders. Inspectors also had a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s evaluation of its own performance, current data on pupils’ progress, planning and monitoring documentation. Financial management was reviewed including the spending of funding for disadvantaged pupils and the primary school sports funding. Records relating to behaviour and attendance, as well as documents relating to safeguarding were also taken into consideration.
- There were very few responses to Ofsted’s parent questionnaires, (Parent View) so inspectors took account of the school’s own parent survey from October 2014, and spoke with over 30 parents during the inspection to consider their views.
- Inspectors also talked to staff during the inspection about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Julia Foulger	Additional Inspector
Melvyn Hemmings	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than the average sized primary school.
- Children in the nursery attend part time until they enter the Reception class.
- Almost all pupils are from a number of minority ethnic groups. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. A high and increasing number of pupils are from a Roma /Slovak heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils deemed disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium is well above average. These pupils include those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school has had a high number of staff changes since the previous inspection, including changes at middle and senior leadership level.
- This is the first year the school has had a Year 6 group since becoming a primary school for pupils aged 3-11 years old in September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring pupils' work always challenges them appropriately, particularly the most able pupils
 - marking work so that pupils have sufficient guidance as to how to improve their work further
 - checking pupils apply their skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately in all their work.
- Raise standards in reading by making sure pupils read regularly and that they have sufficient opportunities to extend their skills and show they understand what they are reading.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high expectations of all staff and her supportive yet challenging leadership has brought about rapid improvements since the previous inspection. A strong leadership team has been established. All staff share the school's high commitment to and regard for the local community and the immense challenges that pupils and their families' experience. Community leaders speak highly of the school and all that it does to promote community cohesion among its diverse population.
- Strong teamwork among all leaders is effective in bringing about change. Immediate action is taken where improvements are needed. Teaching is better, achievement is now good for all groups of pupils, and attendance has improved significantly. Aspirations to make the school even better are high. The school's capacity to improve is good.
- The provision for the early years is outstanding. The early years team is extremely well organised because leadership and management are outstanding. Children of all backgrounds and starting points make outstanding progress and make a flying start to their education.
- All leaders, including subject leaders are effective in their monitoring of teaching and learning. Where teaching is not yet consistently good in its impact on pupils' achievement, appropriate support and training is available. However, there are occasions when weaker aspects have not been fully resolved. Pupils' work is not always matching their needs closely enough and marking does not make it clear how pupils can improve.
- Performance management is used effectively and teachers have targets that are focused on the school's priorities to raise standards. Staff, including support staff, know that pay awards are linked to their achieving targets that they have agreed and know that they will be held to account for the progress their pupils make.
- Systems to check pupils' progress are robust. Leaders, including governors, check individual pupil's progress closely and initiate appropriate support so that all pupils have timely access to all that the school offers. Particular attention is given to supporting the many pupils who join the school part-way through their education, often with little or no English and with limited experience of prior learning. Skilled bilingual staff work with these pupils and their families to speed up learning and progress. A number of parents choose the school because it is particularly effective in supporting pupils of Roma/Slovak heritage. This is a strong testament to the school's caring approaches to supporting its pupils and confirms its commitment to ensure every pupil has an equal opportunity to achieve.
- The curriculum is well planned with themes that enrich pupils' experiences and activities that make learning purposeful and effective. For example, pupils learn about other countries and cultures so that they gain a more informed insight into the lives of the communities represented in the local area. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy through other subjects such as science, history and mathematics. While pupils have regular opportunities to read in school, teachers do not check that pupils read enough and that they understand fully what they are reading and so become more confident readers. Pupils' experiences are enhanced by many visits and visitors, including members of the local community and from the public services, to enrich their learning.
- There is a strong focus on the teaching of religious education and exploring other faiths and cultures. Through assemblies and numerous religious festivals, and for example, work on Remembrance Day, pupils extend their sense of faith and tolerance and respect for different communities so that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. This also prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school is implementing new assessments procedures to replace the previous National Curriculum levels and the initial indications are that teachers are applying these procedures well.
- The school uses its primary school sports funding effectively to increase sporting activities in the school. Staff have more opportunities to develop their skills and extend pupils' experiences so that pupils enjoy more clubs and competitive events with other schools. Provision for swimming particularly has been extended so that pupils leave the school able to swim.
- The pupil premium is used very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Staffing levels and staff expertise have been improved. The learning mentors and bilingual teaching assistants have had significant impact in helping these pupils make better progress than some of their classmates.
- The local authority provides good support to the school, for example to support training for staff and governors to help them fulfil their responsibilities more effectively and to secure good pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors want the best for the pupils and the local community. They work hard to foster good

relationships between the different communities the school serves and parents find the school most welcoming and staff very approachable. Governors ensure that parents are kept fully informed on school matters, for example care arrangements and revisions to the curriculum and their views are sought through regular parent surveys.

- Further training since the previous inspection has enabled governors to understand the information they need to question pupil progress data and to hold staff to account for pupils' achievements. Governors are frequent visitors to the school and know that the headteacher and senior leaders are working hard to improve teaching and learning. They come in regularly to ask questions about the quality of teaching and see for themselves that changes are having the expected impact on raising standards. Governors know that the pupil premium spending has been used effectively to close the gap in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others. Governors have supported the headteacher in making new appointments to secure good teaching and to eradicate less acceptable teaching. They ensure that pay awards are linked to teachers' performance.
- Governors check that all safeguarding requirements are met fully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils know that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and most behave well in lessons and generally around the school including lunchtimes. The school is a busy environment but nevertheless it is calm and orderly and pupils enjoy being at school.
- Children in the early years develop excellent work habits quickly because they enjoy learning. Guidance in languages other than English is of particular advantage to those who do not speak English. This starts early and is effective throughout the school in ensuring pupils needing help to speak English settle well and follow the rules for their behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are kind and supportive of each other and work together well in lessons. The occasional lapses, mainly in the playground, are managed effectively so that there is a strong sense of mutual respect for others. Play leaders organise play equipment and activities sensibly so that all pupils enjoy their time to socialise with others.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, learning and their work are good and this has a positive impact on their progress. Pupils value education highly and most try their best. Occasionally, when teaching is not interesting or tasks not set at the correct level, a few sometimes become distracted and less engaged, and so do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and have high regard for all the adults that work with them. Older pupils are mindful of their responsibility to help younger ones and do so effectively particularly at lunchtimes. Pupils who join the school part-way through the year are befriended quickly, with pupils sometimes translating instructions for classmates new to learning English so that everyone can participate in effectively.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Parents are particularly appreciative of the good care arrangements for those who have special educational needs or are particularly vulnerable or disadvantaged. As one parent said, 'All the staff are so approachable; nothing is too much trouble. My child loves school and says it is better than being at home.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including the dangers posed by social media sites and prejudice based bullying, including homophobic name calling. They say that it is wrong to call people unkind names because 'everyone is different but special'. Pupils say that bullying is rare and are confident that if it did occur staff would deal with immediately.
- The school has worked successfully with parents to improve attendance. As a result, attendance rates are now average. Most pupils attend regularly and are punctual because they do not want to be late. The breakfast club is a valuable incentive for some. Learning mentors and other staff work hard with specific pupils and their families so attendance improves further.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good. It is not yet outstanding because progress is not consistently good in every class and every subject. However, there is generally a very calm, productive atmosphere in most lessons as pupils settle to work and want to learn.
- In most lessons, a check list of steps to success helps pupils know what success looks like and they are encouraged to assess their work against these steps.
- Routines are well established in most classes and pupils know what is expected of them regarding the quality of work they should produce. Most respond well, but teachers do not always provide work that is matched accurately to pupils' needs, some pupils find the work too easy and so wait for harder work and others find the work too challenging and so do not achieve as well as they should. Particularly for the most able pupils, expectations are not always high enough to ensure they consistently make rapid progress.
- Questioning skills are used effectively to increase understanding and identify when pupils need extra help. Teachers make very good use of teaching assistants to help pupils access learning and talk about their work and clarify their understanding. On occasions, there is a tendency for pupils to rely too heavily on this support at the expense of thinking for themselves.
- Pupils particularly enjoy activities that encourage them to ask questions that deepen their understanding. For example, pupils in a Year 4 class enjoyed calculating time spans for scheduling television programmes and how to provide a more varied programme that might suit a wider audience
- Teachers identify the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs early and provide good support to help them achieve well. Their progress is checked closely and carefully planned activities ensure that these pupils make up any lost ground quickly.
- Bilingual teaching and well-planned activities help pupils new to learning English integrate as quickly as possible with their classmates. These pupils receive high quality support no matter how late in their primary education they join the school. Most make good progress because their aspirations are very high and they want to do well. A considerable number have extensive gaps in their learning because they have not attended schools regularly enough previously but staff plan for individual needs effectively, and once confident in their learning, these pupils make rapid gains.
- The teaching of writing is good and pupils generally apply their skills well in other subjects, for example, to learn about animals of the Amazon rainforest and to consider the challenges faced by space travellers. Teachers do not always insist that pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, always apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills accurately in their writing.
- While the teaching of reading is good in the early years and Key Stage 1 and pupils have a firm foundation to extend their reading skills, teachers do not always ensure that pupils read enough, especially at Key Stage 2. Pupils' technical reading skills are taught well but not enough opportunities are provided to ensure pupils fully understand what they have read.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. The consistent approaches across the school to developing number skills result in pupils become progressively more confident, as they learn to work methodically and more quickly when carrying out complex calculations involving more than one step.
- Relationships are a real strength and give pupils the confidence to try hard. They are encouraged to have a go even if they are unsure, but some are reluctant to make errors so tend to wait for help. Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to respond so that pupils can progress confidently. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise that most use effectively to plan work that is matched to pupils' abilities.
- Marking is often good, especially in pupils' literacy and numeracy work but not consistently so in other subjects. Occasionally, marking does not give sufficient advice to pupils as to how effectively they have met their targets or how to improve their work further. Teachers do not always point out errors in basic writing skills so that pupils learn from their mistakes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Leaders have worked successfully to improve teaching and as a result progress is accelerating quickly. Expectations of pupils are higher, and against a backdrop of a large number of staffing changes and an increasing number of pupils new to this country and new to learning English joining the school at various ages, all pupils make good progress.
- Progress is the most rapid in the early years where teaching is consistently strong. Given pupils' individual starting points, which for a large proportion are lower than is typical especially in communication, pupils' achievement is good. Attainment figures are distorted by the large number of newcomers who start at

different times during their primary education and often have limited skills in speaking English. Many of these pupils were not regular attenders in their previous schools as so have gaps in their skills and knowledge.

- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, while still below average, have improved steadily and pupils make good progress. Those who have attended this school since starting in the nursery attain standards close to average. Although too few reach the higher levels of attainment, most have narrowed the gap successfully towards attaining what is expected for their age.
- This is the first year the school has had Year 6 pupils, so there is no external data for Year 6. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is below average because a high number have not been in the school long enough to reach the standards expected for their age. Pupils who have been in the school throughout both key stages are working at average levels in writing and mathematics and just below average levels in reading.
- The school's assessments show that irrespective of when they joined, all pupils have made good progress against their starting points and an increasing number are making rapid progress, especially in mathematics and writing.
- The progress of the most able pupils is good, as is evident by the increasing number reaching the higher Level 3 at Key Stage 1 and a good number of Year 6 pupils working at the higher Level 5, particularly in mathematics and writing. However, there are occasions in different years when these pupils are not challenged sufficiently because work is not always hard enough to ensure they make consistently rapid progress.
- Attainment in reading is improving and is close to average at both Key Stages 1 and 2 especially for pupils who are at the school long enough. The good focus on the teaching of phonics (the letters and their sounds) in the early years and Key Stage 1 has resulted in an increased number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national Year 1 screening assessment check in 2014 than previously. Pupils use these skills well to help them read new words and extend their skills. While pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy reading some do not always understand the vocabulary and what they have read and this restricts their progress especially when reading for information.
- Standards in writing are rising as pupils gain in confidence and are challenged more through writing in other subjects. An increasing number are attaining the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 and working at Level 5 in Year 6. Pupils understand how to write in different styles but their spelling, grammar and punctuation are not always accurate.
- In mathematics, development of number skills is good. As pupils' ability to speak English improves, progress accelerates as they move through Key Stage 1. In Year 6, pupils confidently apply their skills to solve multi-step problems, for example. An increasing number who have been at the school for a long time are highly skilled mathematicians working towards the higher levels (Level 6).
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Provision meets their needs successfully because their needs are identified early, support for them is good and they are challenged well. The school works with external agencies where appropriate to ensure pupils have every opportunity to achieve all that they can.
- A high number of pupils in the school are from Traveller families of Roma/Slovak heritage. Many do not speak English and some have little experience of school. The school has forged excellent links with this community and pupils receive good support at school and from their families. Their needs are identified quickly when they join the school and individual learning plans ensure they make good progress.
- Other pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve well because they supported effectively. Once proficient in English, many, especially those who are at the school long enough, make exceptional progress over time.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. There is no external data to make a comparison with the attainment of disadvantaged pupils nationally. Current pupils in Year 6 have closed effectively gaps with non-disadvantaged pupils in school because staff cater for the needs of these pupils very effectively.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children start in the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are lower than is typical for their age with a large proportion having weaker communication skills, especially in speaking English. Almost all children speak English as an additional language with a high number new to learning English.
- Progress is outstanding and staff plan for their individual needs very effectively. At the end of the Reception Year, children have made rapid progress across all areas of learning and particularly in developing their communication skills. Any gaps in performance between areas are closing quickly.

Progress in personal development is also particularly strong. As a result, they are well prepared to start Year 1.

- Staff spend a great deal of time getting to know families and their children before they start school. These early contacts help children settle quickly and happily into school routines. While some children in the Nursery showed some reluctance to talk to inspectors, they were eager to demonstrate their new skills.
- Teaching is outstanding. All staff are involved in planning and leading groups through engaging activities, such as number rhymes and stories. Effective questioning and individual challenges encourage children to try new things and discuss their ideas in any language they can with each other and with adults. For example, children practised their phonics by writing in sand, painting on paper and glass panels and eagerly searched for items with the same initial sounds.
- Children trust the adults they work with and as they gain confidence, they branch out and try things that are new to them. A group of children were delighted when exploring a bowl of jelly and talked about it being, 'squishy' and 'gloopy' and 'slippery and slidey' and 'wibbly-wobbly'.
- Purposeful conversation is used effectively to extend children's speaking skills and their vocabulary. Constant observations check that children try everything and those that are less confident are prompted gently until they feel safe and secure in their investigations. Children have many excellent opportunities to talk through role play activities and learning new songs.
- The extremely effective early years leader has been instrumental in improving the quality of provision. The classrooms and outside areas are imaginatively organised and children move freely but purposefully to new activities because they are eager to learn. The outside area is particularly well designed so that is attractive and safe, even though it is at a raised level.
- Care arrangements are outstanding. Children thrive and flourish in a learning environment that is vibrant, fun and ensures they are very safe.
- Children's progress is recorded meticulously and staff follow up activities to extend children's learning. Children and adults use modern technology well to record activities and staff use these records to talk to children about what they have learnt and enjoyed.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children behave well and share equipment sensibly. As one lively child said when he wanted a particular wheeled toy, 'we must share so everyone can have a turn'.

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	107007
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	452957

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	571
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Anniss
Headteacher	Sue Bridges
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2013
Telephone number	0114 243 8611
Fax number	0114 242 6165
Email address	enquiries@owlerbrook.sheffield.sch.uk

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