

# Norton Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106685
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	377447
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ronald Cohen

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Fellows
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Campsall Balk Norton Doncaster DN6 9DG
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Ronald Cohen  
Anthony Kingston

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 15 part-lessons taught by eleven teachers, of which three were observed jointly either with the headteacher or with the assistant headteacher. Inspectors spent a little over nine hours in these observations. Discussions were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at monitoring information, improvement plans, analysis and tracking of pupils' progress, and records of classroom observations. They also sampled pupils' work, listened to pupils reading and checked attendance. Inspectors analysed questionnaires submitted by 25 staff, 103 pupils, and 55 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized junior school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with few who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported at School Action Plus and those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has national Healthy Schools status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because pupils' progress and attainment in reading and mathematics are not as good as in writing, particularly at the higher levels. Moreover, despite the fact that, for both boys and girls, attainment continues to rise, the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is closing only slowly.
- Attainment at Year 6 is above average overall and this represents good progress for almost all pupils. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. No groups of pupils do less well than their peers nationally.
- Teaching is good overall, but it ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. In most lessons, the teacher's enthusiasm inspires pupils to work hard. Lessons are stimulating and, as a result, almost all pupils make good progress. In a few lessons, teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to be actively involved in their own learning. This slows learning, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- The behaviour and safety of the pupils is outstanding. They respond to high expectations in school and are extremely courteous to each other and to adults. The 'buddy system' supports the younger pupils, while giving older pupils a strong sense of responsibility and pride.
- The good leadership and governance of the school ensure that areas for development are identified and addressed successfully. School leaders have created a blend of reflective, caring, yet practical attitudes, which are reflected in the school's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education and ethos. This is underpinned by an exciting, creative, yet practical and inspirational curriculum, which impacts favourably on pupils' educational and personal development. Leadership of teaching and the management of performance include monitoring and the provision of courses of appropriate professional development. This and the implementation of the curriculum are strengths of the school.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the standards in reading and mathematics are brought up to the level of those in writing by increasing:
  - provision of opportunities for pupils to read aloud and discuss a range of materials, from adventure stories to detailed and complex instructional texts, in order to acquire higher-level skills for use across all subjects
  - encouragement of pupils in mathematics lessons to hone their higher-level problem-solving skills, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT).
  
- Ensure that all teaching is as successful as the best, by encouraging teachers to:
  - plan activities in all lessons which meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more-able
  - plan and implement activities which give pupils more control of, and independent involvement in, their own learning.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers, rightly, feel that their children make good progress in the school. Owing to staffing difficulties, there had been a dip in attainment in 2010, when, for the first time in many years, attainment was only average overall. However, by the end of Year 6, in 2011, pupils' attainment levels had been restored to above average overall, and were well above average in writing. This represents good progress from their average standards when they entered the school. In lessons, the standards attained by the current Year 6 in writing remain particularly strong and the school has had notable success in boys' writing, which, though still behind girls' exceptionally strong writing, is, nevertheless, better than boys' writing nationally. Pupils achieve high standards in writing because writing skills are reinforced systematically across all areas of the curriculum, both in school and in homework. Pupils' creative writing is imaginative and increasingly they use words to express in writing their ideas and feelings. Boys continue to make good progress, especially in writing, and are slightly better than girls in mathematics, but girls' prowess in reading and writing means that the gap between them and the boys is closing only slowly.

However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in writing is not replicated in reading or in mathematics. In reading, the acquisition of the higher-level levels is fractionally greater than that nationally. This is borne out by the above-average skills exhibited by pupils. Pupils read confidently, fluently and with enjoyment. In mathematics, however, fewer pupils reach the higher levels than nationally. Opportunities are sometimes missed in mathematics lessons for pupils to hone their higher-level problem-solving skills, including through the use of ICT.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. This is because of the good in-class support they get, together with clearly targeted and effective intervention work.

## Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall. Three quarters of all lessons seen were good or outstanding. In those lessons, teachers enthused, excited and challenged the pupils with activities which engaged them as active participants in their own learning. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson on the absorption potential of various materials, the pupils were totally involved in independent and group work from the beginning of the lesson, not least because the items they were measuring were of some interest, as they all came from members of staff, including the headteacher's socks! The teacher used appropriately timed interventions and questioning to check the pupils' learning and progress. Teachers' awareness of the importance of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education is often demonstrated throughout the curriculum. Some fine examples of this were seen in a Year 5 class on the five pillars of Islam and in a Year 3 class discussing the feelings of victims of unfair actions.

Less-able pupils are well-supported. Intervention in classes and in withdrawal groups is planned for and implemented well. In the most successful lessons, extension work kept pupils on appropriate tasks.

Pupils say that they enjoy the practical tasks particularly, such as constructing model buildings. They, also, feel that they benefit from a homework policy which allows them to choose what projects they will complete and when they will hand them in. As one pupil said 'It makes you feel you can really put your heart and soul into it because it's yours over a number of days or weeks.'

Parents and carers, generally, feel that their children are taught well, but a small number feels that the children are not always challenged fully. Inspectors observed mostly good or outstanding lessons. In a few lessons, however, teachers talked too much and activities did not always challenge some of the more-able pupils. Pace was slow and questioning was not sufficiently challenging for all pupils. Pupils were passive recipients, rather than active participants in their own learning and, consequently, their concentration waned a little and their progress slowed. Opportunities were missed occasionally for pupils to read aloud and discuss a range of materials.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

A small number of parents and carers believe that behaviour is not as good as it should be. A large majority, however, feels that their children are very safe at school and that behaviour is good. Nearly all pupils feel that behaviour is good, both in class and around the school. They know that one or two children have some behaviour management problems, but 'They try to do their best to behave and, if they get out of hand, there is always the teacher there to make sure it is sorted out.' The sentiments and views of the pupils and of the majority of parents and carers are consistent with inspection findings. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and often exemplary both around the school and in class, where they demonstrate exceptionally positive attitudes towards learning as they stay engaged on their tasks and work hard, both independently and co-operatively.

Older pupils take on many responsibilities, such as running the tuck shop and the toast round, where they sell toast at break on a non-profit basis. Pupils say their involvement in the buddying system, where older pupils take responsibility for the welfare of the younger ones, acts as a great barrier to any potential bullying. Older pupils are remarkably mature

in these aspects, are proud of their work, and speak with pride of their roles as members of the school council or being head boy and girl. They feel particularly proud of their understanding and promotion of the school's restorative justice procedures.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and they understand safe and unsafe practices and situations, including those associated with the internet. They recognise different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and know how to respond to them.

The vast majority of pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and attendance for all groups of pupils is above average. Pupils are punctual and all lessons start on time.

## **Leadership and management**

Under the quiet, reflective, yet strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher, the senior leadership team has a clear view of the strengths and areas for development within the school. Data are used efficiently to track pupils' progress and the leadership team has identified the need to raise standards in reading and mathematics to the level of those in writing. Initiatives, such as linking mathematical learning more to real-life situations, are beginning to have an effect. As a result, progress is accelerating.

Governance is effective. The knowledgeable and involved governing body challenges and holds the school to account through its coherent strategy for monitoring progress and ensuring that improvement targets are met.

The school is actively building sustainability by developing the skills of all staff, including middle leaders and classroom assistants. A comprehensive programme of professional development and management of performance, including mentoring and support, is rapidly enhancing the skills appropriate to the roles and the staff's growing confidence and competence is shown in the achievement of the pupils. The purposeful leadership, together with the growing confidence of middle managers, and an active and knowledgeable governing body, give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The planned curriculum is excellent because it is creative, exciting and stimulating. The school, successfully, runs programmes associated with the Children's University's Creative Curriculum. The programme raises self-esteem and promotes achievement and learning through a range of academic and practical activities. The activities range from script-writing classes to Forest School, which promotes pupils' understanding of the natural world through practical activities, such as problem-solving. The 'cap and gown' graduation ceremony at the end of their studies is a great fillip to both pupils and their parents and carers. Further enrichment programmes include such diverse activities as construction, and football coaching, with the local professional football club.

The way pupils conduct themselves around school is testament to the strong influence of the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education. Opportunities to reflect on moral issues in lessons and assemblies are seized with enthusiasm. Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures.

Arrangements for safeguarding comply fully with current requirements. Robust and appropriate policies and procedures are in place and records are maintained scrupulously. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination. All pupils have equal opportunities

for success and the school provides good support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

Although some parents and carers feel that communications between school and home could be improved, most feel that the school keeps them well-informed. The inspection found that newsletters and an interactive website, together with progress evenings, keep parents and carers well-informed about the progress of their children.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

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## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Norton Junior School, Doncaster, DN6 9DG**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. You were polite, helpful and told us a lot about the interesting things you do in school. You told us that you think the school is good and we agree with you. You play an important part in making it such a good school, as your behaviour is excellent both in lessons and around school.

We found that you achieve very well in writing, but that you are not quite up to the same standards in reading and mathematics. Also, we heard from you that you like lessons best where you are very involved and where the teachers ask you to do things for yourselves. We think, too, that this is a good way to learn. So we have asked your teachers to do a few things which will help you learn more and bring all your skills and knowledge to the highest levels possible. We have asked them to:

- give you more opportunities to read aloud in class, especially concentrating on passages which are complicated, but also interesting
- make sure that problems in mathematics make you think hard and give you opportunities to use computers, if needed, to help you solve them
- ensure that you get into activities in class quickly, either on your own or with your friends, in order to get the best results in an active and exciting way

You can play your part by making sure you follow your teachers' guidance on how to improve your work. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Cohen  
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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