

# Normanton Altofts Junior School

Ash Tree Gardens, Altofts, Normanton, West Yorkshire, WF6 2NF

**Inspection dates** 14–15 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent and so pupils do not learn well enough in every lesson.
- From their starting points, most pupils make the progress expected of them but too few make better progress than this.
- Some boys do not improve the quality of their writing fast enough. Attainment in writing is broadly average and lags behind reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' pace of learning is not always fast enough in some lessons because too much time is wasted.
- Teachers do not always check what pupils know and understand well enough during a lesson. This means pupils' work is sometimes too hard and sometimes too easy for them.
- Teachers do not always receive clear enough guidance on how well their teaching is helping pupils to learn in lessons and so school leaders have not been able to ensure that teaching is consistently good.
- Senior leaders and governors have not been precise enough in their planning. Targets for pupils' achievement and their attendance are not always clear enough or checked regularly enough. This has meant that the pace of school improvement has been steady rather than good.

### The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have a clear view of the school's effectiveness.
- Attainment in mathematics has risen significantly since the previous inspection.
- Teaching is improving and some teaching is good, especially in mathematics where more pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils are polite and well behaved. They say they feel safe and well supported.
- Pupils enjoy a good range of exciting clubs, residential visits and enriching activities. For example, the school orchestra is thriving. Parents say that 'Inspire' mornings, when they take part in joint creative activities with their children, are 'great fun'!

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons and made several other short visits to lessons to observe teaching and learning.
- They scrutinised pupils' work, observed break times and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school staff, senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A number of documents were examined. These included the school's view of its own performance, records of the checks made on teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses on the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of correspondence received from parents.

## Inspection team

Fiona Gowers, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lyn Field

Additional Inspector

Pauline Pitman

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This junior school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, come from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching to good or outstanding so that pupils achieve well by:
  - checking what pupils know and understand during a lesson and ensuring learning tasks help them extend their learning further
  - ensuring that no learning time is wasted in every lesson in order to increase how quickly pupils learn.
- Improve achievement in writing for all pupils, and particularly rapidly raise the attainment of boys' writing by:
  - ensuring an increased proportion of pupils make better than expected progress
  - providing clearer guidance to boys, in particular, on how to improve the grammar, punctuation and spelling in their written work.
- Accelerate the pace of school improvement and strengthen how well leaders and managers, including governors, are improving the school by:
  - ensuring leaders provide teachers with regular, clear and detailed guidance on how well their teaching is helping pupils to learn in lessons
  - planning the school's priorities more precisely and ensuring all leaders and governors check more regularly that the school's priorities have been met, particularly with regards to pupils' achievement and their attendance.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- By the end of Year 6 attainment in writing is broadly average overall and remains lower than in reading and mathematics. Boys' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are poorer than that of girls in school and poorer than those typically found among boys' nationally. Boys generally make slower progress than girls in writing.
- The proportion of the more-able boys reaching the higher levels of attainment in writing is in line with the national proportion. However, some of the average- and lower-ability boys do not do as well as expected. Analysis of recent test results and scrutiny of pupils' books indicate that the gap in the attainment between boys and girls in writing is starting to close and more pupils are now making expected rates of progress than previously. However, boys' attainment in writing is not rising rapidly enough.
- When pupils start school there is a wide spread of ability; however, their attainment is typically above that expected for their age, although pupils in upper Key Stage 2 had slightly lower starting points in writing.
- Attainment in reading is above average and most pupils make at least the progress expected of them.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now above average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels has increased and an increased proportion are making better than expected progress. A more careful analysis of pupils' learning needs and a greater emphasis on problem-solving activities is helping to accelerate pupils' progress particularly of the more-able pupils.
- School leaders endeavour to promote equality of opportunity for all pupils and are focused on closing gaps in achievement, tackling discrimination and preventing pupils from falling behind in their learning. Although there have been some successes, more is to be done to successfully close the gaps in achievement, particularly between boys and girls in writing and among pupils who do not attend school as regularly as others, such as some pupils with special educational needs and some pupils in receipt of the pupil premium.
- The school identified that the small numbers of pupils in receipt of the additional pupil premium funding have very differing needs and consequently provide a range of support strategies. For example, the funding has been used to provide one-to-one support, which is tailored to pupils' individual needs, as well as helping ensure pupils are able to participate in some extra-curricular activities. Many of these pupils are starting to make better progress relative to their individual starting points and their attainment overall is slightly above similar pupils nationally.
- Most pupils with special educational needs make the progress expected of them and some pupils are starting to make better progress than this, particularly those pupils with more complex needs. 'Targets books' provide very regular checks of pupils' development needs and help promote liaison between all adults involved in supporting an individual pupil.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because pupils do not always receive good enough teaching to help them make better than expected progress relative to their starting points.
- Teachers do not always check what pupils know and understand during a lesson well enough. As a result pupils are sometimes faced with work that does not get the best out of them. In such lessons the pace of learning slows and learning time is wasted. Some pupils sometimes have to sit and wait for too long for other pupils to complete their work while other pupils struggle because they find their work too complicated to understand without adult support.
- The progress of some lower- and average-ability boys', in particular, is hampered because they do not always receive clear enough guidance on how to improve the grammar, punctuation and spelling in their written work.

- Teaching is improving and some teaching is good. As a result more pupils are starting to make faster progress. In better lessons, teachers ask pupils searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have understood. More opportunities to work actively and independently means less learning time is wasted and so pupils build on what they already know at a faster pace.
- The quality of marking has improved and pupils have clearer guidance on how to improve their work.
- More opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing are starting to raise attainment in writing overall. For example, boys and girls alike enjoyed writing letters to persuade 'Willy Wonka' to incorporate a room they had designed into his factory. As the lesson progressed, pupils of differing abilities received useful guidance on how to improve their writing further. Pupils got on well with their work, motivated by their own forthcoming school trip to a real chocolate factory!
- Teaching in mathematics is improving. In an effective mathematics lesson the teacher regularly checked pupils' level of understanding, quickly identified and supported those pupils who were struggling to understand, and swiftly increased the level of difficulty as soon as pupils grasped the new concept.
- Pupils say they are enjoying reading in school more now, because there is a better selection of books in the library and they like having the opportunity to listen to different books and stories. Once a week adults in school choose a book to read out aloud and then pupils enjoy choosing which book they would like to listen to.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are welcoming and courteous. They interact well with adults and with each other.
- Pupils respond promptly to instructions from all staff, whatever their role, so the school runs smoothly.
- In lessons where teaching is more effective pupils work very hard and are enthusiastic. They continue to behave well when lessons are less interesting, but then make fewer efforts to contribute their own ideas.
- The very few incidents of poorer behaviour are continuing to reduce as a result of regular monitoring.
- Pupils say bullying is uncommon and pupils are confident in how staff deal with issues
- Most pupils say they feel safe in school and are happy to talk to members of staff if they have any problems. This view was supported by the vast majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire. Indeed, most of these parents said they would recommend the school to other parents.
- Pupils are taught about the dangers and risks of social networking sites and understand the importance of safe internet use.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, pupils are encouraged to 'put themselves in another person's shoes' and are able to discuss maturely why someone might act in a certain way.
- Residential visits are geared to build a team spirit and to enable pupils to work as a school community.
- The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time. Attendance remains broadly average. The school keeps a check on the overall attendance trend. However, school's strategies to improve attendance have had limited impact because there has been little analysis of the attendance rates of different groups of learners and the resulting impact on their level of achievement.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- School leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Plans for

improvement focus on the right issues, but school priorities are not always precise or clear enough. This has slowed the pace of school improvement because it has made it difficult for senior leaders and governors to check that the planned actions are helping to improve pupils' achievement and attendance quickly enough.

- Variations in the quality of teaching remain. Senior leaders accurately identify elements of stronger and weaker teaching when observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work. However, sometimes they do not provide teachers with regular clear and detailed guidance on how well their teaching is helping pupils to learn in lessons.
- Nevertheless, the school has continued to improve in several key areas. Many middle leaders have enhanced their skills through additional training. This has helped improve the leadership of mathematics and the provision for pupils with special educational needs, in particular.
- The school is working more closely with other local schools. Staff have benefitted from joint training and improved partnerships have helped new pupils settle into school quickly.
- Improvements to the curriculum are helping to improve pupils' achievement. School leaders have responded to the need to improve writing and pupils are increasingly having more opportunities to write in different subjects.
- The new primary school sports funding is motivating pupils to keep fit and active, by having a go at some different physical activities, such as Zumba and Street Dance. In addition the funding is being used to improve the teaching of gymnastics and dance through further staff training.
- The local authority provides effective support and has particularly supported the school in enhancing its own self-evaluation
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Through additional training the governing body has developed a clearer view of pupils' achievement and the effectiveness of the leadership of teaching and learning. They are aware that teaching and leadership require improvement. Further training has been scheduled to help governors evaluate the effectiveness of their role so they can make a stronger contribution to increasing the pace of school improvement.
  - Governors regularly support the school and are increasingly checking aspects of the school's work, such as the appropriate deployment of pupil premium funding.
  - Governors are involved in the leadership of teaching and learning. They are aware that the focus of performance management is closely linked to pupils' achievement.
  - The governing body makes sure the school meets current safeguarding requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108208
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	429570

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

<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>	272
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Simpson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracey Peacock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 302430
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