

North Clifton Primary School

Church Lane, Newark, NG23 7AP

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Good and sometimes outstanding teaching means that the majority of pupils of all abilities and groups make at least good progress as they move through school.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good overall. Their good behaviour and attitudes to learning are important factors in supporting their good progress.
- Pupils express very positive views of the school. They say that they enjoy their lives at school.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good and pupils say they feel safe in school.
- The curriculum provides a wealth of exciting opportunities that broaden pupils' experiences.
- The senior leadership team work closely together to ensure that pupils are taught well and achieve well.
- Governors provide strong challenge to leaders in the school, holding them firmly to account for the school's performance.
- Strong relationships exist with the vast majority of parents, who value the involvement in the education of their children and life of the school
- Pupils show their whole hearted support for the school through their above average attendance and support for school activities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to drive pupils' progress even faster so that achievement is outstanding. Work is occasionally not sufficiently challenging and pupils are not always encouraged to act on teachers' helpful comments in their books.
- At times, pupils' standard of presentation hinders further improvement and pride in their work.
- Pupils do not have regular chances to practice their mathematical skills in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 8 lessons or part lessons taught by every teacher in the school. Two were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- The inspector spoke to parents as they dropped off their children to school or who came to speak with him at school. He also took account of the 21 responses from the parents online questionnaire (Parent View), letters by parents given to the inspector as well as a detailed questionnaire conducted by the school.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' progress for the previous three years and pupils' work. He looked at the school's checks on how well it is doing and school improvement documentation, assessment information, planning and the school's website. Documentation on teachers' performance, school policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance were also studied. The school's safeguarding procedures were evaluated.
- The inspector carried out an extensive scrutiny of pupils' work in English and mathematics and other subjects.
- The inspector took into account the 13 staff questionnaire responses.
- The inspector talked to pupils, listened to them read and observed them at play during break and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Michael Wintle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-size primary school.
- The proportion supported by school action is higher than average. Currently there are no pupils who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- Nearly all pupils are White British. The proportion from ethnic minority groups or who speak English as an additional language is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children from families who are known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children is much lower than average.
- The school is part of the Tuxford Academy Family of Schools.
- The previous headteacher resigned his post in April 2014. The school is currently lead by two highly experienced acting headteachers who know the school well. A new headteacher will formally take up post in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding and so raise achievement even further by ensuring that:
 - the work pupils are given is always sufficiently challenging to enable them to learn well and make good progress
 - all teachers provide for pupils to respond to high quality feedback about their learning and how they might improve
 - pupils have regular opportunities to practice their mathematical skills in other subjects so that they develop their skills quickly and securely in real life situations
 - pupils improve the presentation of their work

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Due to typically good teaching all groups of pupils make good progress throughout the school. Most parents agree that their children progress well. Achievement is not outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching for pupils to make rapid progress with their learning.
- Children who enter the Early Years Foundation Stage have skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress across most areas of learning and often outstanding progress in their personal and social development and communication and language. This is due to good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage setting and excellent provision established by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has improved strongly since the last inspection. For the last two years pupils have made good progress overall between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and most pupils have achieved more than the expected progress of their age in all subjects and especially in reading. The progress seen in the books of current pupils, shows that this is an improving picture. Overall pupils are on track to attain standards, which are higher at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have been revised. This has resulted in better progress being made by this group, so that across the school the vast majority of these pupils now make at least good progress, with some again making accelerated progress.
- Standards in literacy are above average. Pupils have opportunities to discuss ideas. In a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson identifying key features of a descriptive piece of writing, pupils were fully engaged in debating with their class teacher the merits of understanding and then using powerful adjectives. Writing outcomes were good with all groups showing good understanding.
- Relatively poor presentation seen in pupils' books and in classrooms in different subjects stops pupils from making even faster progress.
- Because work is planned to build well on previous understanding and expectations are high, the most able make good progress, particularly in reading and writing.
- Reading is well taught and a strength of the school so pupils make good progress and acquire skills they need to support their learning in all subjects. Letters and sounds they make (phonics) are taught effectively in Early Years and Key Stage 1, ensuring that early reading skills are developed well. They are well prepared for their next stage in education. When Year 1 were tested on their knowledge of letters and sounds results were in line with national comparisons and current pupils are expected to be above average.
- In lessons, pupils typically make good progress because pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They try very hard to do their best. One Year 6 pupils said, 'We settle very quickly and we are pushed by my teacher to show our best work.'

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good and some outstanding. Teaching is improving because of a concerted drive by the senior leaders, strongly supported by the governing body. Some

teaching is now outstanding.

- Teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage is good and sometimes outstanding. The setting is stimulating and children are looked after well with a number of parents commenting to the inspector that they especially value the strong focus upon developing early literacy skills. In one outdoor activity, children had set up their own garden shop and were using real money to buy flowers and seeds. The high quality provision allowed children to work together and clearly enjoying their learning. Progress in communication and language and working with other children was good as a result.
- Pupils have many chances to practice their reading and writing, and across many subjects. Although pupils get chances to use their mathematical skills in some other lessons, they are far less regular than for English. Pupils' work in mathematics is also far less visible throughout the school than is their work in English.
- The quality of marking has improved since the last inspection and guidance is typically of high quality. However, while there is some excellent practice, not all teachers provide sufficient time for pupils to respond to the advice and to make sure that they understand their errors and so are able to improve their work.
- Letters and sounds (phonics) are taught well during the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Teachers plan work to match different stages of development making good use of well-trained teaching assistants to lead groups so that progress for all pupils is good.
- Where teaching is less effective, small numbers of pupils are given work that is too easy or too hard for them. As a result, pupils' progress is slowed and lesson time wasted as they sometimes wait for others in the class to catch up with them. Occasionally, they are given extra work when they complete a task, which does little to extend their thinking or strengthen their skills.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge means that they link topic work to many different subjects. For example, work in Key Stage 2 on Creation Myths linked religious education, literacy, history and word processing. Written work was mature and showed examples of pupils taking risks with their writing and their descriptive skills. Pupils say they like the way teachers link their work to other subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils very keenly follow the examples of the adults in the school who act as exemplary role model. As a result they are very sensitive to the needs of others and generally show high levels of care and consideration to their friends and classmates.
- Pupils behave well in most lessons and this contributes to the good progress they make in their learning. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and work very cooperatively with one another when given the chance to do so. They show great respect for their class teachers and others in and around school. There are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour in lessons.
- Pupils readily accept responsibility and the opportunity to contribute to the school community, for example as class monitors or members of the school council.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and as a result attendance has improved since the last inspection and is above average.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of most types of bullying and risks they might face in their everyday lives. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe using new technology, including the internet. They say they feel safe in school. Pupils are clear that they have trust and confidence in the adults in the school to keep them safe and deal with any worries they might have.
- Parents express positive views about the way the school cares for the children and supports learning. One parent said that 'I can't believe the progress my children have made at school and with their reading.'

The leadership and management is good

- The leadership has the wholehearted support of staff and governors in promoting an extremely caring setting that reflects the school's values and in effectively setting good standards in behaviour. A number of parents travel some distances to enable their children to attend this school.
- The school is improving rapidly under the leadership of the senior leadership team and governing body. There have been staff changes to the leadership team, but expectations continue to rise so that the needs of the pupils are fully met and drive up their achievement. The success of this is shown in improving attainment in all areas of learning and especially in reading. Staff morale is high.
- Senior leaders check the quality of teaching over time. As a result, the school has a good understanding of the performance of staff. There are good plans in place at both subject and whole school level for bringing about further improvement. Self evaluation is honest and accurate.
- The progress of groups and individuals is tracked and analysed very well. The findings are discussed with teachers at regular termly pupil progress meetings. Pupils' progress is a determining factor in decisions that are made with the governors about teachers' salary progression.
- The curriculum is a real strength of the school as it provides for and meets the needs of the pupils effectively. Lively and engaging topics keep the pupils keen to learn. Trips and visits to places like Eden Camp in North Yorkshire engage young learners with their work. Pupils could talk excitedly about German U Boats and how the people endured the Blitz. There is good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Good use has been made from the additional primary sports funding to improve the quality of sports coaching and a range of other sports for pupils to try. This has resulted in activities, including competitions, which promotes a healthy lifestyle. Examples of the impact of the funding is the school entered a Tag rugby competition and have qualified for the Newark and Sherwood District Tag Finals that were played during the inspection.
- The school is highly effective at promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and ensures that all groups achieve well. Parents appreciate the work of the staff and speak openly about how well their children are being supported.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school. The school has received good support from the local authority and the Federation of schools in checking the accuracy of its judgements about how well it is doing and the rigour of its review processes.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governors have high aspirations for this good school. They understand the information provided about the school's performance and compare with other schools both locally and nationally. The experienced Chair of the Governing Body leads the body effectively. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. One governor said to the inspector that, 'this school is a small gem.' Governors provide robust challenge over pupils' attainment, achievement, teaching and finance, taking part in many visits into the school, observing lessons and supporting events. They have supported well the recent change in school leadership and ensured that the arrangements to check the performance of staff have been used to create meaningful links to salary progression. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

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	122662
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	441968

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	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anabel Skelton
Acting headteachers	Karen Clifton and Jackie Vallance
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2012
Telephone number	01522 778609
Fax number	01522 778609
Email address	office@northclifton.notts.sch.uk

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