

Sitlington Netherton Junior and Infant School

Netherton Lane, Netherton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF4 4HQ

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure all pupils make good progress. The most able pupils particularly are not always challenged in their learning.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, and the rate of pupils' progress in most lessons is not fast enough to raise standards quickly.
- Most pupils start in Year 1 with skills that are typical for their age. They are currently working at broadly average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- School improvement has not been fast enough to ensure that all teaching is good and that all pupils achieve well.
- Some senior leaders, subject leaders and middle leaders are not yet sufficiently involved in improving teaching and raising standards.
- Leaders promote some aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, but are not doing enough to prepare pupils fully for life in modern Britain today.
- Leaders are not providing parents with enough information about changes in leadership, teaching and school developments. Many parents are concerned that they do not receive enough information about their child's progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make a flying start to their education in the early years because provision is good. They make good progress through the early years and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs are supported well and so make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively and they achieve well.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. Their behaviour is good and they develop good attitudes to learning. Their attendance is above average because they like being at school.
- The two interim headteachers have accurately identified urgent improvement priorities. They are monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress more rigorously and their actions have started to improve pupils' achievement, particularly in reading.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching throughout the school, including numerous shared observations with the interim headteachers and the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and subject leaders. The inspectors also had a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- The 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, and planning and monitoring documentation. Financial management was reviewed, including the spending of the pupil premium (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.
- The inspectors reviewed 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The views of a number of parents the inspectors spoke with during the inspection were also considered, as well as the views of a parent who contacted inspectors by telephone.
- The inspectors also took account of the 31 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaires and talked with staff during the inspection about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Wintle

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- Children in the nursery attend part-time until they enter the Reception class.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils deemed disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children in the care of the local authority.
- The school has had many changes at headteacher level since the previous inspection. The school's substantive headteacher took maternity leave in June 2014. The governing body appointed two interim headteachers to cover this maternity leave.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so pupils' progress increases by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan work that challenges all pupils appropriately, particularly the most able
 - have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in each lesson and encourage pupils to work productively at all times
 - deploy teaching assistants to maximum effect in all lessons to increase the progress for more pupils
 - mark work in sufficient detail in all subjects so pupils understand what they have to do to improve their work and that pupils respond to this guidance in subsequent work.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring:
 - all leaders, including subject leaders and middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching rigorously to make sure all pupils make good progress
 - senior leaders, including governors, check that all staff follow school policies consistently to improve their practice
 - parents have all the information they need regarding their children's progress and are kept fully informed about school developments
 - actions taken to make improvements are swift and effective in raising pupils' achievement in all subjects.
- Do more to promote pupils' awareness and understanding of the diverse faiths and communities in modern Britain today.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils' achievement is not yet good and improvement has not been fast enough since the previous inspection.
- The interim headteachers have made a good start to developing the roles of the deputy headteacher, subject and middle leaders so that they are increasingly involved in leading developments to raise pupils' achievement. Their actions have not yet had sufficient impact on raising standards. In some instances, this has been because leaders have been too slow to identify weaknesses such as ineffective marking and lower expectations in their areas of responsibility, particularly in writing and mathematics. Through the effective teaching of reading, an increasing number of pupils are now making good progress.
- With the on-going changes of headteacher since the previous inspection, senior leaders have not been able to drive school improvement strongly. There is an expectation now, both from staff and governors, that nothing less than good teaching is acceptable. Staff morale is generally strong and teamwork is developing well. Performance management procedures are being applied rigorously; staff know the targets that have been agreed for each class and that any salary increases will be linked to achieving pupils' progress targets.
- Senior leaders are now regularly monitoring pupils' progress and they allocate additional support where any pupils are not achieving as well as they should. Regular meetings about the progress pupils are making identify where teaching and support need to be strengthened. Staff have access to good training opportunities to improve their practice.
- Well-planned topics take into account the new National Curriculum requirements and engage pupils' interests well. Pupils enjoy discussing their ideas and reflect, for example, on what it might have been like for people in Pompeii when Vesuvius erupted and buried the city. While pupils have good opportunities to write in English and in other subjects, teachers do not ensure pupils write enough to extend their writing skills further.
- There are some aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that are promoted well. Leaders provide good opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences and understanding of life in the local area. Through the curriculum for religious education, pupils develop a reasonable understanding of the faiths they study across the globe. However, their awareness and understanding of how these faiths are represented in the diverse communities in Britain today, is less well developed.
- The leadership and management of the early years are good and children make a good start to their learning.
- The primary sports funding is used well to increase teachers' skills in providing a wider range of sporting activities and for specialist instructors to work with pupils in school and at competitive events with other schools. Pupils say they enjoy a range of activities including, athletics and dance and know that 'sport keeps you fit and healthy', but would like more clubs because not everyone can get into school teams.
- The budget for supporting disadvantaged pupils is used well to increase staffing levels and to target relevant support for individual pupils. This has been effective. The leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is improving strongly. Support for these pupils is consistently good and consequently, most achieve well from their starting points. The school is committed to tackling inequality but has not focussed well enough on ensuring that the most able pupils reach their full potential.
- The local authority provides effective support, for example, to help improve provision for mathematics and literacy. It has also supported the governing body through appropriate training, for example, interpreting pupils' progress data to help governors fulfil their responsibilities more effectively.
- Safeguarding procedures, including child protection training, meet all current requirements. Leaders are very aware of the challenges some families face and so work effectively with other agencies to safeguard pupils and their families appropriately if any concerns are raised.
- Some parents expressed concerns about the many changes to leadership in the last two years and about the quality of teaching and the progress their children make. A few feel their views are overlooked by the school and that they do not have enough information regarding school developments. Communication with parents is good in the early years but this is not maintained effectively for parents of older children.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive and keen for all pupils to do well. Having undertaken a review of governance last year, governors have established tighter procedures to monitor their own performance and to challenge school leaders and to hold staff to account for pupils' achievement. They are using their skills effectively to lead developments and to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress regularly.
 - The appointment of new governors has strengthened the governing body. Some governors are in school

regularly to see for themselves if improvements are having an impact on raising standards. Governors know that the pupil premium funding is helping those eligible pupils to make good progress. They are supporting the interim headteachers in taking difficult decisions in tackling weak teaching and ensuring that pay awards are linked to teachers' performance. The governing body have organised performance management for all leaders in the school well.

- Governors are less rigorous in checking that parents have the information they need about their children's progress and are kept fully informed about and involved in any developments in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school sets high standards for behaviour and in most classes pupils respond well, demonstrating high levels of respect and friendliness to adults and classmates. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds work and play together sensibly.
- Pupils generally take pride in their work and develop positive attitudes to learning. They particularly like challenges and tasks that encourage them to think for themselves to extend their learning. Occasionally, a few fail to take heed of the feedback in marking to improve their work nor check for errors in completed work.
- The school has effective behaviour management procedures that pupils understand and most staff adhere to, so behaviour remains good. Lapses do occur occasionally, especially when work is not appropriately challenging. When these lapses are not managed according to the school's guidelines, pupils receive inconsistent messages as to what is acceptable.
- Pupils typically behave well in the playground, in the dining hall and in lessons. They are polite, courteous and show good manners by listening to each other, taking turns and sharing resources. Pupils are proud of their school and speak enthusiastically about the various clubs they can join. A few say that there are not enough places at some clubs, for example, cookery and so not everyone is able to join.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example, helping to collate team points and helping staff generally around the school. Members of the school council value the opportunities to be involved in decision making, for example, to organise fund raising events and in this way develop good citizenship skills.
- Pupils enjoy being at school as is evident in their above average attendance. The school continues to work diligently to promote regular attendance. Winning the weekly accolade for the best class attendance is highly prized by pupils.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that behaviour is good but a number of staff feel that the behaviour of a few could be better if it was always managed consistently.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know how to stay safe out of school. For example, they know the dangers posed by social network sites and cyber bullying and know what to do to avoid such threats. Pupils say that there is no bullying at school and most pupils get on well with each other. Occasional falling out does occur, but this is generally short-lived. The 'chill out' room is a safe haven for any pupils who need more sensitive handling and parents are informed if the school has any concerns.
- Pupils trust teachers and other staff equally and know who to go to if they need support. They know staff will help them if problems arise or if they are worried about anything.
- A few parents, who responded to, Parent View, say that while they are happy with the school's care arrangements, they have concerns about bullying. The inspection finds the school's systems to monitor incidents are thorough and parents are informed immediately if the school or any pupils raise any concerns.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough is good or better. The efforts to secure good teaching across the school have been slow to take effect owing to the numerous changes at senior leadership level. Teaching, however, is beginning to improve because teachers are receiving good support and training and the good practice that exists in the school is being shared through the increased monitoring of teaching and learning. Teaching is strongest in the early years and upper Key Stage 2 where pupils' progress is most rapid.
- Activities are generally planned well to engage all pupils and most pupils work at a good pace. On occasions, however, expectations are not high enough and all pupils start off with the same level of work,

having to complete this before moving on. This results in some pupils finding the work too difficult and there is not enough challenge for the most able pupils. Consequently, progress is not as good as it might be for all.

- At both Key Stages 1 and 2 the amount of work pupils produce over time is not sufficient to ensure good progress. For example, work in pupils' books shows that some have only completed a few lines of writing or very few calculations.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and expertise they generally use effectively to support individual pupils and small groups. However, there are times when teaching assistants are not deployed to maximum effect in order to help more pupils make good progress.
- The good teaching that exists, results in pupils' good progress. For example, the teaching of phonics, (letters and the sounds they make) is consistently of high quality, particularly in the early years, hence standards in reading are rising.
- Where teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress, teachers' expectations are high and pupils know what they have to do to complete work successfully. Questioning to deepen and strengthen pupils' learning is developing reasonably well and because pupils enjoy thinking about their learning, they achieve well when they understand what they are learning and have sufficient time to complete tasks successfully.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving through the revised policy for teaching number and calculation skills and making sure pupils apply these accurately and speedily in their work. Weaknesses in teaching in the past means that there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of number and some struggle to apply what they know confidently when solving complex problems, particularly where they have to interpret information. Pupils do not always work quickly enough nor set their work out well enough so that they can spot errors in their final calculations.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early and receive good support to help them achieve well. Their progress is checked closely and carefully planned activities ensure these pupils make good progress.
- Most teachers follow the school's policy on marking effectively. Where the marking is good, pupils have clear feedback as to what they have done well and how to improve their work. Some teachers insist pupils respond to this feedback, learn from their mistakes and so improve their work subsequently, but this is not routinely the case in every subject and every class.
- Similarly, most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and lessons run smoothly and productively. However, where teaching is less engaging, a few pupils tend to drift off task and become inattentive and fidgety. When not managed appropriately, these pupils sometimes make little progress.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is not yet consistently good across the school. It is good in the early years and increasingly so in Years 5 and 6 where teaching has improved the most.
- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills typical for their age and make a flying start to their learning. Children quickly develop a love of learning and so make good progress, and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are working at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Stronger teaching and well-targeted learning support is helping pupils make more rapid gains over time as they would towards more challenging targets.
- Standards at the end of Year 2, in 2014, were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics and too few pupils attained the higher Level 3 in each subject. Pupils in Year 6 in 2014 made the expected progress in reading and writing but under-performed in mathematics.
- An average number of pupils in 2014 reached the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check on phonics. Attainment in reading is rising at both Key Stages 1 and 2. The good focus on the teaching of phonics in the early years and to a lesser extent in Key Stage 1, has led to an increasing number of pupils now working at above average levels. Pupils use these skills well to help them to read new words, read for pleasure and interest and to extend their skills. Pupils enjoy reading but some do not do so regularly enough to help them achieve more.
- Standards in writing are not rising as quickly as in reading but there has been improvement since 2014. Pupils are now writing regularly in literacy and other subjects, albeit their productivity remains slow in some classes and most pupils are currently working at average levels rather than the higher levels. Pupils understand how to write in different styles. Most have a very good vocabulary and apply their skills of grammar and punctuation well, particularly at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils do not have enough

opportunities to practise their basic skills to become confident and fluent writers.

- In mathematics, progress slows at Key Stage 1 because expectations are not always high enough for pupils to work quickly and accurately to achieve well and often they do not produce enough work to practise their skills sufficiently. By the end of Year 6, the most able pupils apply their skills confidently to solve multi-step problems, for example, and so an increasing number are attaining at the higher levels. Some pupils are being considered this year for the higher Level 6 tests in mathematics.
- The school has increasingly started to challenge the most able pupils this year and hence more of these pupils are beginning to achieve well, particularly at the end of each key stage. However, overall, they are currently making expected progress rather than good progress, other than in reading where progress is accelerating well.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school achieve well against their starting points because they are supported effectively. In Year 6, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in 2014 was in line with the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils achieved similar levels when compared with non-disadvantaged classmates in the school all three subjects. The effective use of the pupil premium funding has helped to successfully close the gap in these pupils' attainment and others in the school and nationally. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because provision for them is good and they are challenged well through the work they do. Individual support, where pupils have specific needs, is planned effectively. Where appropriate, the school works with external specialists to help pupils make the best progress they can.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make a good start to their education in the early years because teaching is consistently good or better. Children enter an area where exciting, fun activities hold their interest and excellent relationships make them feel safe and secure in their learning and play. Children make good progress and are prepared well for Year 1.
- The arrangements to introduce children to school are very good. Regular contact with parents and home visits before children join the school provide good opportunities to foster links with the families and to give staff an insight into the children's abilities and needs at an early stage. This allows staff to quickly develop the activities children need to achieve well.
- There are well-organised activities, vibrant displays, and adults have high expectations that children will behave well at all times. The well-established routines, for example, that children stop to listen and then tidy away their toys and books, ensure that children take responsibility for their learning and work with each other respectfully.
- Teaching is good across all areas of learning and there is high emphasis on speaking and communication skills, so children gain confidence quickly. Children playing in the water tray quickly established that their boat would not float because it was too heavy. They said 'gravity pulls it down', an advanced observation, even if the wrong one! Staff promote children's curiosity well and encourage them to ask questions and explore their ideas by prompting them to try activities that are new to them.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is very good. Children quickly recognise school is important, 'because you have to learn everything before you grow up', and so they persevere, often selecting to read and write when given free choice. Because children in both classes regularly work together, those who are new to the school and so sometimes less sure of themselves, follow the good examples set by older children and learn effectively from them.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength and because staff know children well, they make sure activities are at the right level for each group to achieve successfully. Children enjoy the challenges they are set to recall new sounds they have learnt and 'tricky words' that help them read stories and rhymes that extend their skills.
- All groups of children, including those who are disabled, have special educational needs, or who are disadvantaged make good progress. The most able children are identified and given activities to provide them with challenges they relish.
- Welfare and safeguarding arrangements are good. The outside areas are checked regularly for safety and children are supervised well so accidents are rare.
- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders look for new and exciting ways to make learning fun and check carefully that all children make the best progress they can. Staff assessments of children's learning are accurate and leaders are now beginning to check children continue to make good progress as they move into Key Stage 1.

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	108158
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	442209

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Woodhouse
Headteacher	Georgina Haley
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2013
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