

# Lynncroft Primary and Nursery School

Lynncroft, Eastwood, Nottingham, NG16 3FZ

## Inspection dates

4–5 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- The teaching is improving but is not always ambitious enough. Teachers do not always provide work or plan tasks for pupils that extend their learning or that offer the right level of challenge.
- Pupils' achievement is also improving but should be better in Years 1 to 6. Gaps remain between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others across the school. The most-able pupils are not always reaching high enough standards in English and mathematics.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics requires improvement. Pupils do not get enough opportunities to apply their number skills effectively enough.
- Pupils do not always get enough guidance, or are asked the right questions in lessons to deepen their understanding and knowledge. This slows learning and prevents pupils from mastering higher levels of understanding.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing is improving but they do not always edit their writing accurately and make too many unnecessary spelling errors. Reading has been given a higher profile recently but pupils are not reading widely or often enough.
- Pupils are usually well-behaved and attentive in lessons. However, some go off task or lose interest when the teaching is not challenging enough or fails to engage their interest.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and governors provide strong leadership. They are moving the school forward after coming through difficult times of unstable staffing and what was previously poor teaching. There are now robust systems in place to check pupils' progress and teachers' performance.
- Standards are rising. Leaders, governors and staff show the capacity for sustained improvement. Staff morale is high and the school is now well placed to secure more improvements to teaching.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start and make good progress in their development of early literacy and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps are narrowing between their achievement and that of other pupils.
- There are good relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. Pupils are effectively taught British values of respect and tolerance of all faiths, religions, customs and cultures.
- There are good arrangements in place to keep pupils safe in school. This is confirmed by the views expressed by both pupils and parents.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 parts of lessons. A number of these were observed jointly with the headteacher. An inspector observed a school assembly.
- An intervention group was observed and a scrutiny of some case studies was undertaken to evaluate the impact that teaching and support are having on the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs.
- In addition to lesson observations, inspectors reviewed pupils' work; listened to a group of pupils reading; and observed pupils' behaviour in the playground and around the school between lessons.
- Meetings were held with the senior leadership team and staff responsible for managing subjects or phases of the school. A meeting also took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority's education improvement adviser.
- An inspector spoke informally to a number of parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the 30 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View.
- Questionnaire responses from 16 members of staff were reviewed.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and senior leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness and teachers' performance.
- Information about pupils' achievement, progress and performance was scrutinised with the headteacher.
- An inspector looked at minutes of meetings, including those involving senior leaders and the governing body, and information related to teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding was inspected.
- The school has received four monitoring inspections since the inspection in October 2013 which placed it in special measures. All previous monitoring inspections reported that the school had made reasonable progress towards the removal from special measures.

## Inspection team

Charalambos Loizou, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michael Miller

Additional Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery class for three-year-old children who attend either part-time or full-time, and one Reception class for four-year-olds who all attend full-time. Both Nursery and Reception children are taught and cared for together for most of each day.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very low proportion compared with the national average come from minority ethnic groups and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is above average (this is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school is part of a group of schools, the Raising Achievement Network (RAN) and the Redhill Alliance, which is a group of both primary and secondary schools. Both of these partnerships provide opportunities for joint staff training and professional development for leaders and staff.
- The school is due to become a sponsor-led academy during the summer term 2015.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that, in all classes, pupils are offered the right level of challenge and support by making sure that:
  - teachers plan more work specifically for the most-able pupils to extend their learning
  - teachers and support staff check more often that pupils are sustaining their learning throughout lessons, particularly those eligible for the pupil premium to narrow then close the gap between their achievement and other pupils
  - lessons engage, challenge and interest pupils so there is no off-task behaviour
  - all teachers and support staff improve their mathematics subject knowledge
  - teachers and support staff have more opportunities to see and share best practice.
- As a result of monitoring and support for teachers, make sure that in all lessons, teachers and support staff check that pupils fully understand what they are learning; adapt tasks or activities to meet pupils' needs and abilities; and ask questions that extend pupils' knowledge and understanding so that pupils are clear about the next steps towards their attainment targets.
- Build on the work already being done to sustain the rise in pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by giving pupils:
  - more opportunities to write at length with enough time to edit and improve their writing accurately
  - more effective methods to help them improve the accuracy of their spelling
  - more varied and interesting books to read, making sure that teachers and support staff check more frequently that pupils are improving their reading skills and that they read widely and often
  - opportunities to develop and improve their problem-solving skills in mathematics lessons
  - opportunities to explain their calculation methods when solving mathematical problems in all classes.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and governing body have skilfully kept the school on a sustained course of improvement despite the many difficult staffing issues the school faced after it went into special measures in October 2013. New appointments and effective training and staff development have strengthened both the teaching and increased the school's leadership capacity. Those responsible for managing core subjects and phases of the school are good teachers who are increasingly sharing their expertise and influencing the work of other staff across the school.
- The systems used to assess learning are robust and the information available to check pupils' progress is accurate and accessible to staff and governors. This is helping to identify and target pupils early who may be at risk of underachieving, enabling leaders to plan timely interventions and accelerate pupils' progress. This, in particular, is helping those pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs. Nonetheless, leaders have not yet focused enough on the early identification of the most-able pupils in order to plan the right programmes and interventions for pupils to reach the highest levels, particularly in mathematics.
- The school's improvement plan sets out clear measures of success from which to monitor and gauge how well teachers and pupils are doing. There is a good range of monitoring that includes lesson visits, scrutiny of pupils' work and, regular half-termly reviews of pupils' progress. Class teachers are accountable for their performance and the progress of the pupils they teach. There is now an expectation that all teachers analyse pupil performance data and prepare lessons that challenge all pupils. However, monitoring and visits to lessons do not always pick up inconsistencies in lessons where the teaching requires most improvement, such as teachers' questioning or the way pupils follow up errors in their writing and mathematics work.
- The staff team and the school's curriculum make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This results in mainly good behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons. However, in some lessons where expectations are not as high as they should be, pupils do not behave well enough for them to sustain their learning.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths, customs and traditions through religious education, the arts, music, themed topics such as anti-bullying week, and educational visits. The school is successful in promoting a strong emphasis on tolerance and equality which prepares pupils well for life in a modern democratic Britain.
- The primary school physical education sports funding is used well to provide after-school sports coaching. In addition to regular physical education lessons, these after-school sessions provide good opportunities for pupils to engage in team games, sports events and activities that promote healthy and active lifestyles.
- The headteacher is working with the local schools to arrive at consistent procedures for assessing pupils now that, from September 2015, the National Curriculum will not use prescribed attainment levels. In the meantime, staff are using levels to assess pupils' work and progress, and leaders have stepped up the intensity and improved the accuracy of pupil progress reviews.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school's leaders and staff, including the use of effective partnership working with a good local primary school.
- Staff are vigilant and effective in keeping pupils safe. Parents are very positive about the school and are pleased with the way that leaders and staff are committed to pupils' well-being and safety. Staff vetting and safeguarding procedures are robust and fully meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good and effective. It has improved very well since the first monitoring inspection after the school's October 2013 inspection. The governing body now consists of a relatively small team of highly skilled governors. This enables the Chair and other key governors to keep in regular touch with the headteacher to hold leaders and staff to account for the standards achieved and staff performance.

- Governors have been diligent and effective in recruiting strong leaders and they work with the school's leadership team to develop and continually improve the performance and effectiveness of teaching and support staff.
- The performance of all staff is clearly linked to pay progression and management responsibilities. Governors receive regular updates about pupils' progress and achievement. The data shared is accurate and enables them to challenge underperformance. This includes the achievement of disadvantaged pupils where there remain significant gaps between their attainment and progress and that of other pupils nationally.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness through its reviews of local authority visits and when undertaking focused monitoring and meetings with leaders in all phases of the school.
- Governors have a clear enough understanding of the most important priorities related to pupils' achievement and progress, although greater emphasis is now needed to increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher than age-related standards.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### requires improvement

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Parents, pupils and staff agree. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, listen carefully to the adults and are keen to learn new things. They are polite and friendly. Pupils try hard and usually persevere when working independently, although some pupils do not produce as much work as they should if expectations are not high enough. This sometimes leads to off-task behaviour such as looking for rubbers or pencils, spending too much time setting out a page before writing, or general chatter.
- The pupils spoken to during lessons and break times said that it is easy to make friends and that everyone treats each other with kindness. The staff are very caring and look out for pupils' welfare, helping new arrivals to settle in and when supervising pupils at break and lunchtimes. All pupils know the school rules well and are aware of how to behave appropriately. They have good manners, are polite, and generally show respect for others' feelings. They are helpful and courteous to adults and visitors.
- Leaders keep records and monitor patterns of absence well. Staff have worked well with parents to encourage pupils to attend regularly and to come to school on time. As a result, attendance has improved and is broadly average. The governing body is considering making the use of fixed-penalty notices to deter persistent absence. The school is currently adopting effective measures by working with families to improve attendance rates and persistent absence rates are falling.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All pupils who spoke with inspectors said that school is a safe and secure place to play and learn. Pupils trust the adults to sort out squabbles when they arise and look after them if they get hurt.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when walking to school, playing outside and when using the internet. During this inspection and previous monitoring inspections, pupils were able to explain the precautions they need to take when using computers, including the use of online messaging websites. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. Pupils confirmed that the few incidents, like name-calling or teasing, are dealt with very well by leaders, teachers and support staff.
- Pupils learn a lot about staying safe and healthy. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying, and are clear what to do if they have any concerns. Older pupils care for younger ones at break times. The school council, together with opportunities for pupils to become prefects, enables pupils to contribute and support other pupils as well as contribute to improving and caring for their school community.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The headteacher and senior leaders have done a great deal to transform the quality of teaching over the

last sixteen months. Leaders and staff recognise that there is still much to be done to increase the amount of good teaching and reduce that which still requires improvement. The large majority of responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and most of the parents spoken to during the inspection are pleased with the teaching. Inspection findings confirm that teaching is clearly having a positive impact on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement.

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not yet led to consistently good achievement for all pupils. There is not enough consistently good teaching and leaders have not yet addressed teachers' lack of subject knowledge in mathematics where the greatest inconsistencies of practice still exist. Teachers' questioning requires improvement, as in some lessons teachers do not probe or extend pupils' learning enough, nor do they always expect pupils to go over mistakes or errors while these are fresh in pupils' minds.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved in the early years and Key Stage 1. This is now leading to much improved reading results by the end of Year 2. Teachers and support staff have also improved the way they teach writing as pupils are able to write at length with increasing accuracy. Nonetheless, pupils make unnecessary spelling errors and use limited vocabulary when extending sentences during independent writing. This is because too many pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, do not read often or widely enough to extend their use and knowledge of vocabulary.
- Lower-ability pupils are heard to read on an individual basis and pupils with special educational needs are being supported well each day to improve their confidence and fluency in reading and writing. In lessons, teachers provide some good opportunities for pupils to re-write and edit their writing, but this is not being done consistently well to avoid pupils making unnecessary spelling errors.
- Teachers have improved the consistency of marking in pupils' books. There are good examples in the marking of pupils' work where suggestions on how pupils might improve are made. In all year groups, samples of pupils' work show that these have been corrected with care and pupils were provided with ideas to make their work even better. However, some writing books still have too many spelling errors and, in mathematics books, pupils are not always setting out their calculations clearly enough to show that they understand how they have solved each problem.
- The teaching of mathematics is a relative weakness and has been for some time because many teachers do not have secure subject knowledge. The leadership of the subject has been strengthened recently and this is starting to lead to improved teaching and learning. However, in some lessons, pupils and particularly the most able, are not building on what they already know about numbers and operations to solve more complex problems logically and systematically. In some cases, pupils are either guessing or trying to work out problems through inefficient trial and error methods. Some pupils copy what their partner or table group is doing without thinking logically or being taught to reason things through before tackling each problem.
- Most lessons are well structured, pupils are managed well and positive relationships are developed. In the most effective lessons where pupils achieve well, there is good behaviour and pupils show keen attitudes to work that contribute well to their learning. They sustain their concentration and interest for lengthy periods, particularly when involved in solving open-ended problems in mathematics. Displays around the school are bright and reflect the wide range of opportunities on offer to the pupils as well as the good contribution that the school's planned curriculum makes to pupils' social and personal development.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Pupils' achievement is improving even though attainment in English and mathematics remains below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 has improved year-on-year for the last three years and is edging closer to the national average.
- The large majority of three- and four-year-old children start school with skills and abilities that are well below those typical for their age, particularly in personal and social development and in language and communication.

- Current pupils from Year 1 to Year 6, including the small number of new arrivals who speak English as an additional language, make broadly expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Although improving, too few pupils are making faster than the expected progress rates compared to pupils nationally. Pupils do not routinely exceed the expected rate of progress because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in too many lessons the work is not demanding enough of all pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in Year 6 because of consistently good teaching. There is also some good teaching in Year 2, and although this is not as consistent, is resulting in an uplift in national assessment results for the last few years by the end of Year 2. Pupils do well in lessons when teachers and support staff successfully build on what pupils know and can do, and have a good understanding of how to teach reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers and support staff do not always correct errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar well enough, so pupils continue to make the same mistakes. However, pupils have developed a neat style of joined handwriting because all teachers insist on good presentation and handwriting is being taught as a matter of routine each day.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants make sure they provide these pupils with the support they need to complete their work. The gap between the achievement of these pupils and others is closing. The school benefits from some skilled teaching assistants, one of whom also works with the inclusion manager to manage effectively the assessment and tracking of pupils who have special educational needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for pupil premium funding) make expected progress. The gap between these pupils and other pupils in the school is showing very early signs of narrowing, although current attainment information shows that they are approximately one term behind their classmates in most year groups and two terms behind in the current Years 5 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to all pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils are two terms behind in reading and writing and around three terms behind in mathematics.
- The most-able pupils make expected progress but do not always reach the standards of which they are capable, particularly in reading and mathematics where too few pupils gain the higher Levels 3 and 5 (Key Stages 1 and 2 respectively). Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving but the most able should be doing better and reaching higher standards.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified that there is still work to do to sustain improved achievement in all classes and for all pupils, particularly in mathematics. In response to this, teachers are increasingly planning activities which interest all pupils. Visits to classrooms during the inspection indicated that teachers are planning more problem-solving work and pupils are rising to the increased challenges with enthusiasm and resilience.

### **The early years provision**

**is good**

- Good teaching and strong pastoral support for both children and families in the Nursery and Reception years are getting the youngest children off to a good start. The leader with responsibility for the early years has a very good understanding of this phase of education and has built strong working relationships with children and their families. All staff have a well-developed knowledge of the early years assessment requirements.
- The youngest children have settled well into the routines of the Nursery. Adults know and look after their children well and set them tasks that are usually interesting and linked to their own experiences. Children are kept safe at all times.
- There are good systems in place for staff to check on the progress made by children. Assessments are accurate so that teachers and support staff have a clear understanding of the needs of all children and a firm basis for planning children's learning.

- The teaching is consistent and effective across the Nursery and Reception classes. There are daily opportunities for wet play and experimenting with the effects of different textures and materials such as sand and water. The children explore colour using different media, such as sponge printing, which support the children's creative development well.
- Children, whatever their starting points or backgrounds, make good progress in early reading and writing. Teachers and support staff are good at linking the teaching of early reading with that of early writing. From a very early stage, the staff insist that children form letters correctly when they teach the sounds that letters make. Together with a strong emphasis placed on speaking and listening, the teaching provides strong foundations for the children's development of early language and literacy. There are regular opportunities each day for children to count objects and identify patterns in shapes and numbers. This too is providing firm foundations for the children's development of early mathematics.
- Both Nursery and Reception children are encouraged to handle and read books every day. The books are closely matched to the children's early development of phonics as they come across letters and sounds and start to recognise familiar words in stories and texts. Reception children are increasingly developing their understanding of letters and sounds to break down component sounds in unfamiliar words. This is an improvement as there used to be inconsistencies of practice in the teaching of phonics which resulted in poor test results in the national phonic screening check last year for Year 1 pupils.
- The children's communication skills are less well developed than their skills in other areas of learning when they join the school. Despite this, teachers and leaders make sure that all adults working with children ask questions which encourage extended responses. In this way the children grow in confidence when they explain what they mean in full and talk about what they are doing.
- The children are well behaved and attentive. Children are looked after well and are encouraged to play and work together with other children sensibly. Adults successfully encourage children to co-operate and take turns. Children quickly learn to treat each other with respect and kindness. Their attitudes are good and they show a growing willingness and enthusiasm to work hard and do their best.
- Leaders continually strive to achieve a consistent approach to teaching and learning across both Nursery and Reception years. This is the first year in which the two year groups have been taught together. This has resulted in improved consistency of practice and a rise in children's attainment and progress. The gap between the proportion of children reaching a good level of development compared with national figures is closing rapidly. Although children join Year 1 below national levels, assessments and children's work and progress show that this is improving well because of good teaching and strong leadership in the early years provision.

## 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>	122571
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	454408

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clare Colmore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma McGrenaghan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2013
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