

Sutton-on-Trent Primary School

Church Street, Sutton-on-Trent, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 6PD

Inspection dates	3–4 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good in all classes. This uneven progress results in some pupils not achieving their full potential by the end of Year 6.
- In some classes, teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, can do are not high enough.
- Too few pupils make better than expected progress in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' extended writing is not as good as their spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Calculation in mathematics is better taught than problem solving.
- Questions that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding are not routine in every lesson.
- The effectiveness of teaching and the use of assessment are too variable. Not enough of it is good or outstanding to secure higher outcomes for pupils.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is not as effective as the leadership of pupils' personal development and welfare.
- Not enough attention has been paid by leaders to using data to compare the performance of the school with others and to check that enough is being expected.
- Although leaders have a very clear view of which aspects of the school are working well, monitoring and evaluation does not always result in weaker aspects of learning and teaching being quickly spotted and fully addressed.

The school has the following strengths

- Parents hold the school in high regard. The quality of personal care for pupils is strong. Relationships are good and pupils attend regularly and feel very happy and safe at school. Pupils behave well.
- The acting headteacher has brought about a number of important changes since September and the school is improving. All leaders, including middle leaders, now show a greater determination to improve achievement and rates of progress are accelerating in some classes.
- In the early years, because leadership and management and the quality of teaching are consistently good or better, children make very good progress and are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Daily teaching of letters and sounds to younger pupils and daily guided reading are helping accelerate pupils' progress in reading.
- Governance is much improved and the governing body has begun to take a key lead in raising expectations and in making the school better.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more pupils make better than expected progress and improve attainment in writing and mathematics by:
 - challenging the most-able pupils sufficiently so that they can achieve higher levels in their learning
 - ensuring that pupils develop a clear understanding of the writing process and have the skills and stamina to write at length
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and develop the writing skills they learn in English lessons in other subjects such as history, geography and science.

- Improve the quality of teaching and the use of assessment by:
 - improving teachers' use of ongoing assessments in lessons to help pupils to overcome particular difficulties or misunderstandings that become apparent
 - ensuring that staff routinely ask probing questions about their learning in order to deepen pupils' understanding and help them to overcome misconceptions
 - ensuring that, in all classes, pupils develop a clear idea of where and how to improve particular aspects of their writing and mathematics
 - expecting more of the most able and checking that they are fully challenged
 - improving the consistency of the quality of teaching of mathematics by developing a school policy on the teaching of problem solving.

- Improve the leadership and management of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that leaders further develop their skills in analysing data to effectively compare the performance of the school with others and to raise their expectations, particularly of the most able
 - improving monitoring and evaluation so that leaders have a fully accurate picture of the quality of teaching and learning in the school
 - ensuring that any emerging weaknesses or inconsistencies in teaching are quickly identified and addressed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because rates of progress and the quality of teaching are still not consistently good enough.
- Although better checks are now being made that pupils are making expected progress, data are not sufficiently thoroughly analysed to check that more pupils make better than expected progress. This means that expected progress is too readily accepted as good enough. Senior and middle leaders recognise that they need to improve their skills in analysing data so that they can compare the performance of Sutton-on-Trent pupils with other pupils nationally to check that enough is being expected and to ensure that targets are sufficiently demanding.
- Staff are observed teaching regularly and pupils' work is analysed to check that teachers adopt a consistent approach to such issues as how pupils' work is marked. Staff are provided with guidance on how to improve aspects of their teaching. Reports of observations, however, do not place sufficient emphasis on analysing the progress of the different groups of learners in the class and do not provide sufficient guidance on how to improve the achievement of, for example, the most-able pupils.
- Middle leadership has improved since the last inspection. Subjects such as English and mathematics now have a small team of staff responsible for the subject. Subject leaders now have a more accurate view of where improvements in their subjects are needed and ensure that these aspects are included in the school development plan. The mathematics team have developed an appropriate policy to guide the teaching of calculation but the school lacks an agreed approach to teaching pupils to solve problems in mathematics. The English team have recognised the need to improve pupils' skills in extended writing. They are also aware that opportunities are missed in some classes to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects, such as history and geography.
- The acting headteacher has worked hard since September to focus staff on accelerating pupils' progress and rates of progress have begun to improve. Teaching assistants are now more effectively deployed and trained to support the learning of pupils, especially those at risk of falling behind.
- Each half term the acting headteacher meets each teacher to review the progress of each pupil in the class. Particular attention is paid to those who are making less progress than might be expected. Action plans are agreed and any necessary additional support is planned. These meetings are beginning to accelerate rates of progress.
- Pupils' safety and welfare are given very high priority by leaders. Consequently, this is a happy school. Parents regard this aspect of the school particularly highly and many told inspectors how much their children enjoyed coming to school and felt confident that their children were well looked after.
- Rates of attendance have improved to above-average levels because the school has effective procedures to assure good attendance and because pupils enjoy school so much.
- Additional funding to improve physical education and sport in primary schools is spent well. Pupils enjoy the inputs of additional coaches and staff are also developing their skills by observing the specialist coaches at work.
- The school has recently reviewed its curriculum and its approaches to assessment to ensure that current requirements are met. Reading, writing and mathematics are given sufficient priority and the curriculum is modified to enable disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability to progress in line with other pupils at the school. Although some additional sessions, such as good-quality special weekly mathematics lessons for the most-able older pupils, are provided, the most able are sometimes not fully challenged to do their very best.
- The curriculum is often interesting and is well enhanced by regular visitors and visits. Pupils say that they enjoy their weekly French lessons and enjoy attending out-of-school clubs and look forward to the annual residential visit.
- The school's curriculum places strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught to look after one another, to keep safe and to relate to others well. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted and all are treated equally and fairly.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They show good understanding of ways of life and beliefs other than their own and they are taught British values. During the inspection, pupils benefited from a school assembly on 'empathy' and enjoyed learning to think about others and to show toleration and respect for other life-styles.

- The school receives support from local headteachers and the local authority which the acting headteacher values. Middle leaders find their work with the Tuxford Family of Schools useful in improving their understanding of the role of the subject leader.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body is now playing a significant role in driving improvement. Governors have improved their capacity to challenge and support senior leaders and the governing body now has a clear sense of direction and a great determination to ensure that the school improves.
 - Governors have an accurate and comprehensive view of the school and show a clear awareness of where improvements are needed. Their growing ambition for the school and determination to improve pupils' achievement means that the school has sound capacity to continue to improve in the future.
 - The governing body has a clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching, based on the reports of the acting headteacher and on first-hand visits to classrooms. Decisions on teachers' pay are being appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and fully meet requirements. Safeguarding is given high priority by the school. All required checks are made and staff training for child protection and safeguarding are fully up to date. Parents recognise that their children are kept safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching and the use of assessment requires improvement because its quality across year groups is too variable. As a result, pupils make variable progress.
- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers do not use ongoing assessment in lessons well enough. Too little account is taken of pupils' work and there is insufficient probing questioning about their responses to the teacher. This means that pupils are given insufficient guidance on how to overcome misconceptions and gain a clearer understanding of exactly where to focus their efforts to achieve the next stage of their learning.
- In Year 5 and 6, pupils are clear about their learning targets. In other classes, this is not the case and pupils are often unclear about what they need to concentrate on in their writing and mathematics to improve their work.
- Since the previous inspection, the deployment and effectiveness of teaching assistants has improved. Teaching assistants work well in partnership with teachers. They provide good individual and small group support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability, because they are well informed about pupils' needs and what pupils will be expected to do. They also contribute well to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) and are part of the reason why many pupils make good progress in phonics up to Year 2 and why standards in phonics and reading are above national averages in Years 1 and 2.
- The teaching of writing has improved and work is often well presented and pupils are taught to take a pride in their work. The teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation has improved, but standards in extended writing are not as strong.
- In mathematics, number, calculation and measures are effectively taught, guided by a whole-school policy on how to teach calculation. Although some teachers, for example in Year 5, have adopted a very effective way of teaching pupils to solve problems in mathematics, the school lacks an agreed policy to help ensure a consistent approach to teaching this aspect of mathematics throughout the school.
- Some additional support and challenge is provided for the most able, for example, weekly mathematics lessons are provided by a volunteer. However, in lessons, work is sometimes too easy for the most able and this means that they are not consistently fully challenged. As a result, too few pupils make greater than expected progress or attain above-average standards.
- In almost all classes, behaviour is well managed and relationships are very good. Pupils concentrate well and often enjoy their work. In Years 5 and 6, the management of behaviour and relationships is strong and this helps pupils to develop very good attitudes to learning and to make good progress. On the rare occasions when behaviour is not effectively managed, not enough is expected and insufficiently clear guidance is given and this slows the pace of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school is a warm and welcoming environment and pupils feel safe and well looked after. Care and personal guidance is good and every effort is made to support pupils' social and emotional needs so that they grow in confidence.
- Pupils are very well briefed on safety. They know that social media sites and chat rooms can be dangerous. They know about 'stranger danger' and to tell their parents and teachers if they are worried.
- Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities, for example as play leaders or by helping the youngest children in the school.
- Pupils are kind and considerate to each other and to adults and are polite and helpful to visitors.
- Parents recognise that their children are kept very safe in school. Pupils show a good understanding of what type of behaviour constitutes bullying and say there is no bullying in their school.
- Pupils mostly enjoy their work and find lessons interesting, especially in the older two classes. In other classes, too few pupils are aware of exactly what they need to concentrate on to move their learning forward.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that behaviour is always good at their school and parents support this view.
- Around school, in assembly, in the playground and in the dining room, pupils behave very well.
- In most classes, behaviour in lessons is good and pupils concentrate well and work hard. Just occasionally, when the teacher does not expect enough, pupils do not take turns to answer questions or do not listen carefully, concentrate or do their best.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to get on with work, trying hard even when the work is not sufficiently challenging or they are unclear of exactly what is expected of them.
- Pupils attend regularly and rates of attendance have risen to above-average levels.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Progress has started to accelerate across the school and more pupils are making better than expected progress and are being better prepared for the next stage of their education. However, because progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not consistently good in every class, achievement still requires improvement.
- In 2015, national screening in phonics in Year 1 and attainment in all subjects in national assessments for Year 2 pupils rose to above-average levels. In Year 6, national assessments attainment dropped to a little below national averages. National data on progress indicated in 2015 that too few pupils at Sutton-on-Trent made better than expected progress between Year 2 and Year 6.
- School records and pupils' work from September 2015 to the time of the inspection indicate that the vast majority of pupils are making expected progress, and that rates of progress have improved, especially in Years 5 and 6, where more pupils are making better than expected progress.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year cohort is too small to give reliable information but pupils' work and school records indicate that the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils is getting smaller due to the effective use of additional pupil premium funding and the additional support pupils at risk of falling behind are receiving.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability progress at similar rates to other pupils in their classes. Where they are supported and challenged well they make good progress, but with teaching currently being too variable, not all of these pupils make good progress.
- The most able make expected progress but too few make better than expected progress and achieve their full potential because teaching for these pupils is not consistently demanding enough throughout the school.
- The school has correctly identified the main aspects of writing and mathematics that are holding standards back. The main aspect which hampers pupils' attainment in writing is that their extended writing is not as good as other writing. The main aspect which holds back pupils' attainment in

mathematics is that their problem-solving skills which are not consistently well taught throughout the school. The school has begun work to address these weaknesses.

Early years provision

is good

- Children start in the early years with a wide range of skills and knowledge that are most accurately evaluated as in line with those that are typical for their age.
- Children make consistently good progress in all areas of learning because teaching and the use of assessment are consistently good. They make good progress in their reading, writing and number work and in all other areas of learning. An above-average proportion of children reach a good level of development by the end of Reception. This means that they are well prepared for Year 1 and school life beyond.
- All children are guided and challenged well to do their best. Staff know the learning of each individual child inside out and use this knowledge to modify teaching to ensure that each child does his or her best. The most-able children are challenged and guided well so that they make good progress. Those with particular difficulties are given sensitive but determined guidance that helps them overcome their difficulties.
- Expectations of behaviour are high. Children are well managed and are taught to listen carefully, to sit properly, to work hard and to do their best. Any lack of concentration or minor misdemeanour is kindly but promptly checked so that children are soon secure and happy, knowing what is expected and how to please.
- Good-quality teaching means that all children, including the disadvantaged, are given individual attention which helps them make good progress.
- Staff do much to involve parents in their children's learning and enjoyment of school. Parents and carers regard the early years highly and work in close partnership with staff for the best of their children.
- Safeguarding is given high priority and children are very well looked after and kept safe. Children are taught to act safely and with respect for the safety of others.
- Leadership and management in the early years are very good. Staff have a clear and accurate view of where improvements are needed and waste no time in addressing any issues which come to light. The teacher and teaching assistant work closely together to a common purpose.

School details

Unique reference number	122678
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10001800

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Jackson
Headteacher	Ellen Gascoigne
Telephone number	01636 821286
Website	www.suttonontrentschool.co.uk
Email address	head@sutton-ontrent.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2013

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average.
- There is a below-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has been affected by long-term staff absence. Since September 2015, during the absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher has acted as headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching and learning in all classes, including a joint observation with the acting headteacher. In addition, a number of shorter visits were made to the early years and to see particular aspects, such as the teaching of spelling and reading. A range of other school activities including playtimes, lunchtimes and an assembly were observed.
- Past and current work of pupils of all abilities in all year groups was scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with school staff and with four members of the governing body.
- Documents, including plans for school improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance, safeguarding documents, and policies and records relating to personal development, behaviour, welfare, safety and attendance were inspected. Information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was analysed. The school's records of pupils' progress were also inspected.
- The inspector held short discussions with 27 parents of a total of 38 children at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. The views of 42 parents who responded to the online 'Parent View' questionnaire were analysed. The responses of 14 parents who completed a paper copy for inspectors of the online questionnaire and the results of a recent survey of parents' views carried out by the school were also taken into account.
- The inspector received the views of staff through discussions and by analysing the 13 responses to the inspection survey of staff views. The inspector also received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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