

# Skelmanthorpe First and Nursery School

Elm Street, Skelmanthorpe, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 9DZ

## Inspection dates

8–9 March 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite some improvements, leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good across the school. Pupils' progress is variable over time and between different subjects. This relates directly to the quality of teaching and teachers' expectations.
- Pupils who start with skills and knowledge below what are typical and some pupils who have special educational needs or disability are not always helped to make good progress.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 declined in 2015, as did the proportions reaching the expected level in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) check.
- Teachers do not always use what they know about pupils' understanding to tailor work or expectations. This means that some pupils find work too easy and others find it too difficult.
- The expectations of what the most-able pupils can do in terms of both the quality and quantity of work are not always as high as they could be.
- The progress of children in the early years is uneven. The proportion of boys reaching a good level of development declined in 2014 and 2015. It is only recently that the leaders have begun to address this.
- Leaders have not ensured that the assessment and tracking of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are reliable. They have not been able to check that all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Although leaders evaluate learning soundly, the feedback to teachers does not always sharply identify where improvements are required.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and staff have created a safe and caring school community where each child is valued as a unique individual.
- Effective teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 means that some pupils catch up rapidly, particularly the most able. This group of pupils are performing at levels that are more typical of Year 6 pupils.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils say, 'It just doesn't happen here,' when asked about bullying, racism and unpleasant name-calling.
- Governance has improved. Governors are knowledgeable about the performance of the school and know where most improvement is needed.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that teachers, including in the early years, consistently:
  - match work carefully to the range of abilities in the class, particularly the least able, some boys and those who have special educational needs or disability
  - insist that work is presented to an acceptable standard in all classes
  - raise their expectations of what pupils, particularly the most able, can achieve.
- Improve outcomes by making sure that pupils in all classes, including in the early years:
  - apply their mathematical skills more frequently to reasoning and problem-solving tasks
  - apply their handwriting and letter formation consistently
  - use whole-class reading time to better effect.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that across the school and early years:
  - leaders and teachers develop a system of assessment and tracking that provides reliable information about what pupils know, can do and understand
  - the feedback provided to teachers and other staff after leaders have observed their work is precise and provides clear ways for improving learning and progress
  - individual teachers have bespoke training and development plans.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership has improved. More of the senior staff observe and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Although these evaluations are sound, the increased observations have not led to good teaching across the school because the feedback to teachers does not precisely pinpoint ways to improve learning and progress.
- Like all schools, the leaders have been grappling with assessment and tracking of pupils' learning and progress without prescribed National Curriculum levels. Some variability in assessment and the use of assessment information means that they do not have a clear picture of attainment and progress across the school or in the early years. Leaders are not all able to pinpoint where progress and learning are most and least effective. This is in part because they do not all have a clear understanding of the school's own assessment information.
- Performance management is used soundly. For example, the observations of teaching as well as the learning and progress of pupils are considered when evaluating the performance of each teacher. However, teachers do not each have bespoke personal support and development plans. Consequently, training and development have not led to good teaching because individual shortcomings have not been addressed.
- Leaders know the strengths and relative shortcomings at the school. However, at times they have a more positive picture of the effectiveness of the school than the evidence would merit. In part, this is because the school's evaluation of teaching over time does not always link closely to the analysis of attainment, progress and pupils' work.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, placing appropriate emphasis on the development of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils cover all the areas of the National Curriculum. Topics are covered in a way that accommodates the mixed-age classes.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and is benefiting the appropriate pupils. Consequently, although numbers are small, in 2015 the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others at the school was narrowed.
- The sports premium is used well and there are many sports-related clubs. Pupils say they like sports and enjoy the many clubs. Pupils talked positively about attending things such as fencing and athletics clubs. Pupils understand the importance of exercise to a healthy lifestyle.
- Work with partner schools is helping to develop the skills of leaders. For example, work with a leader from a better-performing school has helped to improve the leadership of mathematics and has resulted in a sound plan for developing mathematics across the school.
- Parents have quite mixed views of the school. Their views on the quality of leadership, teaching and their children's progress reflect the variability identified by inspectors. Nevertheless, most parents who spoke to inspectors were positive about the quality of care and the approachability of staff.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance has improved since the last inspection. Information about the performance of the school is plentiful. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and have a good understanding of the school's data. Consequently, they know the strengths and weaknesses. They express some frustrations about the speed of improvement but nevertheless know where improvements are being secured. They use this information to provide challenge and support to leaders. Despite this, outcomes and the quality of teaching have not improved as quickly or securely as governors would like.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and all staff have received training and guidance on safeguarding, and they understand their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Risk assessments have very recently been updated so that there are appropriate systems in place for both the school and the Nursery building to keep pupils safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Although teaching has improved since the last inspection, particularly in terms of eradicating inadequate teaching, the quality of teaching is variable over time and between subjects. Teachers do not always use what they know about pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses to tailor work or expectations to the needs of pupils. This means that some pupils find work too easy and others find it too difficult.
- The expectations of what the most-able pupils can do in terms of both the quality and quantity of work is variable and sometimes not enough is expected of them. Consequently, some pupils say that their work is sometimes too easy and they could do more or better work if they had to.
- Within some classes, the needs of the lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability are not always fully met. To some extent, teachers and leaders have recognised this and they are using additional adults to give small groups of pupils specific extra help.
- The use and impact of additional adults is variable. In some cases, they provide just the right level of extra help and their impact can be seen in the gains that pupils make. However, at times, some do not always correct the mistakes that pupils make even when they are sitting very close to pupils.
- The teaching of reading is sound. However, some of the time devoted to developing reading, when pupils read books independently, is not always used to best effect. Sometimes pupils take too long to select a book and do not always spend the available time reading their selected book.
- Most lessons get off to a prompt start. However, this is not always the case and sometimes lessons are slow to begin. Sometimes the pace of learning slows when pupils have to wait for too long to move on with their work. In such cases, pupils become restless.
- In line with the school's policy, teachers regularly mark pupils' work. They typically provide useful feedback to pupils and identify corrections or useful suggestions to improve future work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff know pupils' individual personal and social needs well. Pupils say they are well looked after and they feel safe. Pupils enjoy very positive relationships with staff and other pupils. They are polite and respectful to each other and to visitors. Consequently, the school is calm and orderly and each pupil is known and valued.
- The school provides strong moral and social guidance. Pupils recognise the importance of fairness, right and wrong and respect one another. Pupils understand what bullying is and that it can occur for many reasons. They were very clear that there is no bullying or unpleasant name-calling at the school. They are confident that any disagreements are quickly sorted out by staff.
- Pupils know about the importance of road safety and of the dangers associated with using the internet.
- Assemblies are used well to develop pupils' sense of belonging to a community. They discuss local, national and global issues. These are all helping to develop pupils' understanding of their role as good citizens.
- Within their classrooms pupils work well in small groups and pairs. They are able to take turns and share resources. They take care of resources and even the youngest children are able to tidy resources away in an orderly way.
- In an age-appropriate way, pupils are taught about the adverse effects of drugs and alcohol.
- Modern British values are promoted well. For example, the Year 5 house captains are democratically elected. Pupils learn about Christianity, Judaism and Islam during their time at the school. Older pupils were able to identify some similarities and differences between these religions.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's approach of 'catch me being good' works well. Pupils say they value the rewards and they believe any sanctions are applied fairly. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons. It is only occasionally that some pupils are off-task and do not complete as much work as they could. This is invariably related to the quality of teaching and the expectations of teachers.

- Playtime and lunchtimes are calm and orderly. Pupils know and understand the rules and comment that these are there to keep them safe. For example, they know why classes take it in turns to use the fitness trails at lunchtimes and why they should not go on the grass when it is wet.
- Pupils recognise the importance of being kind to each other. This results in a harmonious community where everyone gets along well.
- Pupils say that they enjoy school and their lessons. Consequently, attendance rates are above average. The school has worked hard with parents to improve attendance rates and, as a consequence, there are few pupils with persistently high levels of absence.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Pupils' progress over time is too variable. This relates directly to the quality of teaching and teachers' expectations. Overall, pupils tend to make expected progress in a range of subjects but not better than this.
- The most-able and average-ability pupils tend to make the most consistent progress over time. Effective teaching at the top of the school ensures that the most able catch up rapidly and, as a consequence, this group of Year 5 pupils reach standards more typical of Year 6 pupils. However, across the school, pupils who start with levels below what is typical and some pupils who have special educational needs or disability make less than expected progress and few make better than expected progress.
- In upper Key Stage 2, pupils explain that they are expected to do their neatest work all the time. Consequently, most have developed a neat and legible style of handwriting and most work is well presented. However, across the school, the expectations of teachers vary; some pupils do not consistently apply the skills they are taught in handwriting and some pupils do not show pride in their work.
- Recent developmental work on strategies to use in mathematics, such as using equipment, is beginning to have an impact. Consequently, progress in mathematics is improving but is inconsistent because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their arithmetic skills to problem solving and reasoning. Nevertheless, progress is stronger in mathematics than in reading and writing.
- Pupils' skills at using what they know about letters and sounds (phonics) are improving and pupils regularly use their phonics skills to work out unknown words when reading. They have opportunity to read a range of books within school. For example, when a teacher works with a small group of pupils to check on their reading and to help them to acquire new reading skills, the rest of the class are able to read independently or complete other tasks. On some occasions this time is not used well, particularly by some pupils reading independently.
- The school's own assessment information for reading throughout the school over the last academic year showed that progress was uneven and in some classes significant proportions of pupils made less than expected progress. Nevertheless, most pupils say they enjoy reading for information and for pleasure.
- The number of pupils at the school supported by the pupil premium is too small for any comparison with national standards. However, the school's information shows that gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are narrowing.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- From varied but broadly typical starting points, children make the progress that they should in Nursery. In Reception they continue to make expected progress. Over the last two years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has declined. Inspection evidence indicates that the current group of children are on track to reach average levels. However, boys and least-able children do not do as well as their peers. The school recognises this: some adaption to the curriculum has been made and children at risk of not reaching a good level of development are identified for extra help.
- Leadership has improved and the early years leader has a sound understanding of the early years outcomes. However, systems for assessing and tracking the progress of children are in their infancy and are not consistent across the early years. The next steps in learning for children are not accurately identified and there is no clear system to demonstrate children's progress over time.

- The teaching of phonics is effective and children make good gains overall, particularly the most able. There are inconsistencies in what is expected of children when they form letters in their writing. Consequently, not all form letters correctly by the time they move into Year 1.
- Teaching spaces, inside and outdoors, are used well and interesting activities are provided which generally interest children. For example, children in the Reception class were exceptionally excited about discovering dinosaurs frozen within eggs made of ice. However, not all activities link to what teachers know about the children's ability. Consequently, some children are not stretched by the activities and so their progress is not maximised.
- Children benefit from good relationships with staff. They are inducted well into the Nursery and there are effective arrangements to support transition from the Nursery into Reception. Consequently, children know the well-established routines, behave well and get along with each other. They enjoy their time in the early years, especially when activities capture their interests and imagination. A good example of this was seen by inspectors when children were fossil hunting and chipping away at objects hidden in plaster. The children were understandably excited about their discoveries and were able to explain why they had to wear safety goggles.
- Recent reviews of risk assessments and day-to-day practices have further strengthened the arrangements for safeguarding children. Parents were particularly positive about the care that their children receive in this part of the school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107652
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	1002111

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	167
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	the governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joshua Beckett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Boothroyd
<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 222936
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.skelmanthorpefandn.co.uk">www.skelmanthorpefandn.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office.skelmanthorpe@edukirklees.net">office.skelmanthorpe@edukirklees.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8–9 October 2013

## Information about this school

- This is a first school, catering for pupils aged three to 10. It is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The number on roll has declined a little since the last inspection, particularly in the early years.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is well below the national average. Numbers within some year groups are so small that comparison with the national average is unreliable. (The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to support those children 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 just above the national average.
- Pupils attend the Nursery Year on a part-time basis and the Reception Year on a full-time basis.
- The school is in the process of converting to an academy with a local multi-academy trust.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes, including observing some additional adults working with groups of pupils. Some teaching was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their learning and their experiences at school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors. Discussions were held with a group of pupils and with pupils in their classrooms and around the school.
- The inspectors also talked with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' progress, records of the checks made on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, information on safeguarding and a range of school policies.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in questionnaire returns from staff and the 46 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Amraz Ali, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Twaits

Ofsted Inspector



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