

Robert Shaw Primary School

Southfield Road, Western Boulevard, Nottingham NG8 3PL

Inspection dates

17–18 May and 17 June 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	Requires improvement
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

- Senior leaders did not rigorously check the progress that pupils were making until recently. Pupils did not make the progress they were capable of.
- Middle leaders have not been effective at improving the quality of teaching for the subjects they lead, until recently.
- Not all teachers have had high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Consequently, standards in Year 6 slipped to well below average last year.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average. A significant minority of pupils are not punctual at the start of the school day.
- Pupils' mathematical reasoning skills are underdeveloped.
- Pupils' sentence structure and vocabulary are not as well developed as they should be.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers apply the school's assessment procedures to help pupils improve their work.
- A significant minority of parents feel they do not receive enough information about how well their child is doing at school.
- Leaders have not evaluated the impact of funding on increasing pupils' participation in sports for the different groups of pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have taken effective action during the current academic year to stop the decline in standards.
- Senior and middle leaders have monitored the quality of teaching and the amount of progress pupils make more frequently this year. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils are making much better progress.
- Leaders use additional funding well to close the gaps in learning that exist between disadvantaged and other pupils within the school.
- As a result of effective leadership, children in the early years receive an engaging and purposeful curriculum and make good progress.
- The school's partnership with the Transform Trust is effectively supporting school improvement.
- Pupils are developing positive attitudes to learning. The number of incidents of poor behaviour is decreasing.
- Pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They are happy in school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attendance and punctuality of pupils by:
 - raising the importance of good attendance and arriving at school on time with both pupils and parents
 - working closely with parents, external agencies and the local authority to increase pupils' attendance.

- Strengthen the impact of leadership further by:
 - ensuring middle leaders scrutinise pupils' work more closely, particularly of middle-ability pupils, to identify how pupils can improve their work
 - checking the school's assessment procedures are applied consistently to help pupils improve their work
 - informing parents more frequently how well their child is doing at school
 - analysing the participation of different groups of pupils in extra-curricular sporting activities.

- Raise pupils' achievement by:
 - improving pupils' sentence structure and use of imaginative vocabulary in their writing, particularly for the middle-ability pupils
 - developing pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are consistently good in all year groups and subjects. As a result, pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable.
- Until recently, checks on pupils' progress were too infrequent. In addition, leaders did not address weak teaching quickly enough. As a result, leaders were too slow to intervene to improve the outcomes for pupils.
- Middle leaders have not been effectively monitoring the quality of teaching in their subjects. Consequently, they have not ensured that teaching promoted good pupil progress. This has now improved.
- Leaders have not been effective in raising pupils' attendance. Attendance has remained too low and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has been too high. However, leaders have reorganised the monitoring of attendance and there has been a recent, marked improvement.
- The curriculum, while it engages pupils' interests through its themed-based approach, does not consistently provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and to practise and apply their subject-specific skills.
- Leaders do not check that the school's assessment policy is applied to all subject areas. Consequently, pupils do not receive the advice they need to make good progress in all curriculum areas.
- School improvement planning is in place and is based on honest self-evaluation. It identifies where improvement is required, and progress against plans is checked regularly by senior leaders.
- The headteacher provides sincere and dedicated leadership and is accurate in her evaluation of the quality of teaching across the school and of outcomes for pupils. She is committed to urgent improvement. For example, she has increased the number of checks completed on teaching and learning and implemented a policy of non-negotiables for the classroom. This policy has set the expectations for the quality of teachers' planning, delivery of lessons and the assessment of pupils' learning. As a result of these changes, outcomes for pupils currently in the school have improved and more pupils are working at or above age-related expectations than previously. However, the school's assessment policy has not always been applied consistently which slows the pupils' progress.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic and working hard to promote quality learning experiences for pupils. They have also increased the checks they make on pupils' learning and have put in support to improve the quality of teaching in the current academic year. Consequently, pupils are making better progress. However, middle leaders have not analysed how more middle-attaining pupils could further accelerate their progress in their subjects.
- The special educational needs coordinators monitor the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities closely. The school provides a range of tailored intervention groups to accelerate pupils' progress. If a child is not making progress, this is identified quickly and the provision is changed. As a result, this group of pupils is making better progress from their starting points than previously.
- Performance management procedures are in place for all staff and are directly related to pay awards. Teachers are set measurable targets and this has sharpened teachers' focus on their accountability for improved achievement. Leaders have drawn up a set of expected standards for teaching assistants, which helps to ensure that effective support is provided in all classes.
- Leaders have increased opportunities for staff to work alongside leaders at the Transform Trust Teaching School Alliance. This has improved the accuracy of assessment information submitted for pupils and strengthened teachers' subject knowledge. Leaders have wisely recognised the need to formalise partnership arrangements with the trust in order to accelerate the rate of improvement.
- The pupil premium, which is additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, is used wisely. A member of the teaching team is responsible for monitoring the progress of these pupils across the school and providing timely intervention should any gaps in learning become apparent. Gaps in their attainment are reducing.
- The primary school sports funding has been used well to supplement the after-school provision and to develop the skills of teachers working within the school. The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in physical education observed during the inspection indicates money has been spent wisely. However, leaders have not evaluated whether there has been an increase in the number of pupils from different groups participating in extra-curricular sporting activities to improve pupils' physical fitness and health.
- Leaders and governors provide effectively for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and embed fundamental British values. Pupils are taught about respect and tolerance and are prepared appropriately for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed and to participate fully in the life of the school. There is no discrimination.
- Parents are generally supportive of the school and feel their children are looked after well. A significant minority of parents voiced their concern to inspectors that they were not kept well informed of how well their child was doing. Leaders recognise that not all parents receive regular feedback about how well their child has completed their homework.
- Local authority officers have supported leaders in addressing the decline in pupils' outcomes and continue to closely monitor the work of the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are highly committed to the school. They know it well and recognise more needs to be done to continue to improve the quality of teaching and strengthen outcomes for pupils.
 - The governing body is dedicated to ensuring the well-being and success of all pupils and has organised a committee structure to best support their work. They are diligent in their work to keep pupils safe in school.
 - Since the last inspection, governors have had a professional review of their work. They have improved their effectiveness through a formal programme of visits to the school. The impact of this work has been noticeable in improvements seen in the current academic year and in the early years.
 - Minutes of governing body meetings clearly demonstrate the increasing challenge by governors to leaders, but this was not effective enough to help to prevent the decline in outcomes in 2015.
 - Governors have ensured procedures for performance management are in place in the school for all staff and know that this has had an impact on the quality of teaching evident this year.
 - Governors know how additional funds, such as the pupil premium and the primary school sport funding, are spent and the impact they have had. A dedicated governor is now in place to review this aspect of the school's work and to ensure value for money is achieved.
 - The governing body will undergo further review as part of the process of academy conversion.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school maintains careful, detailed records for pupils who cause concern and follow up with appropriate agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. All staff receive training, and policies and practice are robust. All safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. Records kept by leaders are thorough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teachers have not had consistently high enough expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. Pupils' progress until recently has been too slow.
- The teaching of writing has improved since the last inspection. The theme-based curriculum is effective in stimulating pupils' writing because pupils find the topics relevant. There is evidence of pupils writing more and structuring their work using paragraphs. However, middle-ability pupils are not challenged to develop their sentence structure and use more imaginative vocabulary to further improve their writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is strengthening. Teachers consistently apply the school's calculation policy and, as a result, pupils are becoming increasingly accurate in their written calculations. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical reasoning skills are not well developed through the school.
- Teachers use questioning to gauge what pupils know but not to encourage pupils to reflect on or apply their learning. As a result, pupils do not develop their answers to questions to deepen their understanding.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Teachers identify the children's next steps through ongoing assessments, which enables children to make good progress from their starting points.
- At the start of the academic year, leaders implemented a non-negotiable policy that detailed their expectations for teaching, learning and assessment within the classroom. Work in pupils' books now demonstrates improving standards and increasing rates of progress.
- The school's assessment procedures are mostly applied in all classes. Teachers now accurately record assessment information across the school. Leaders regularly review this information, so that any underachievement is pinpointed and interventions are put in place to address pupils' specific needs rapidly.
- Teachers are working alongside colleagues from the Transform Trust to moderate their assessments in order to make sure that they are accurate. Work seen in books shows that this is now the case.

- After the decline in standards in 2015, leaders delivered a robust package of training to improve the teaching of phonics (sounds that letters and groups of letters represent). As a result, reading skills are now taught effectively and regularly in all classes from the Reception Year to Year 2, with catch-up sessions in place for those pupils who do not attain the required minimum standard. Inspection evidence indicates that outcomes for pupils will be better than last year.
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed across the school and are attuned to teachers' lesson objectives and the specific needs of individuals. They offer purposeful support.
- Classrooms are attractive, well-resourced environments in which pupils can learn. Displays offer a balance between learning support and a celebration of pupils' work.
- Homework is relevant to the work undertaken in class, is regularly set and contributes to pupils' learning. However, parents do not always receive regular feedback about how well their child has completed the homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Not all pupils present their work to a high standard in their books, particularly in Years 4 and 5.
- A small minority of pupils are not consistently punctual at the start of the school day. They do not have a clear understanding of how to be successful learners.
- The school has healthy school status. It runs a successful and popular breakfast club that is oversubscribed. Pupils are rightly encouraged by staff to make healthy food choices.
- There are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school and make decisions. In Year 2, younger pupils act as playtime buddies. They are identified by high-visibility jackets and ensure all pupils are playing nicely. At the end of playtime, they ensure all pupils are lined up smartly in their classes and check all equipment is returned to its base.
- Pupils have a well-formed understanding of bullying and all its forms. They know how important it is to report any incidents and are confident they will be dealt with swiftly. Records seen by inspectors indicate that any reports of incidents of bullying are taken seriously and handled sensitively and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Overall attendance is below the national average for primary schools. Persistent absence is above the national average. However, more recently, more pupils have attended school more regularly following closer scrutiny by school staff.
- There are too many incidents of low-level disruption. However, leaders monitor the reasons for the incidents and take swift action. The frequency of these incidents is reducing.
- In the past, exclusion rates have been higher than the national average; this is the result of changes leaders made to the school's behaviour management policy. The revised policy is now having a positive impact on the behaviour of pupils currently in the school and there have been no exclusions over the past term.
- In all classes, pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly positive. They are keen to contribute and answer questions and are swift to respond to instruction.
- Playtimes are effectively organised, well supervised and the play areas are kept in good order. There is a good range of equipment available to engage pupils in purposeful play.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the standards expected in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. In 2015, the school failed to meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum standards required by the end of Year 6.
- Assessment information and the work seen in pupils' books indicate the decline has been halted. For example, the proportion of Year 6 pupils set to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is likely to be higher than in previous years. This has been the result of the effective actions by leaders in more closely monitoring pupils' progress and by insisting on higher standards of teaching.

- Most pupils in all year groups are now making good progress from their starting points. However, not enough middle-ability pupils have progressed to gain a deep understanding mathematically and not enough are now achieving above age-related expectations in reading and writing across the school.
- In Year 1, the proportion meeting the standard expected in the phonics screening check has improved over three years and is likely to improve further in 2016 to above the previous national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive effective and well-coordinated support. Improved leadership of this area of the school's work has ensured that teachers now identify and address gaps in learning more quickly. Outcomes for this group of pupils are rising to those of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities reach standards that are generally lower than those of other pupils. Their progress rates fluctuate and in some classes it is slower than in others because their needs have not been met fully. A raft of interventions are now in place to narrow gaps in outcomes and accelerate these pupils' progress.
- The most able pupils across the school are making good progress with their writing, particularly in using imaginative vocabulary. They make at least the expected progress in reading and mathematics. However, in subjects such as geography and science they sometimes have to complete work that is not sufficiently challenging before moving on to activities that require them to think more deeply and apply their skills.

The early years provision

is good

- The early years leader has great enthusiasm for her role. She uses her deep understanding and extensive knowledge of the learning needs of very young children to create a vibrant and stimulating learning environment. As a result, teaching is focused and purposeful and the children are confident and happy.
- Adults working within the early years share the leader's enthusiasm and provide effective and timely support for children's varied needs. However, some teacher-led activities do not consistently challenge children to do more. For example, middle-ability children are not always expected to extend their writing as quickly as they could be.
- Staff encourage children to be helpful and kind to each other. This leads to safe movement between the indoor and outdoor spaces, reinforces effective learning and ensures children's overall good behaviour.
- Learning journals provide an accurate picture of the key stages in each child's development. They are supplemented with photographic and anecdotal evidence to create a record for parents.
- Early phonics teaching is effective and children are able to use their skills to spell and read less familiar words. For example, children using their doodle books were able to independently apply the sounds they had learned and write the word 'flowr' and 'snayl' next to their drawings.
- Children enter Nursery with skills below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking English. This is because the majority of children entering school have English as an additional language and have had limited access to pre-school experiences. Through the rich environment, children learn English quickly and make rapid progress.
- Activities within the Nursery and Reception classes are well organised to meet the needs and interests of children. This leads to rapid acquisition of new words and a deeper understanding of concepts. For example, children in Reception had learned the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and completed activities relating to the story. As a result, they developed a good understanding of life cycles and told inspectors that 'It starts as an egg, then becomes a caterpillar, then a cocoon, then a butterfly.'
- Outcomes at the end of Reception class have improved year on year with the majority of children reaching a good level of development. This demonstrates good progress from children's starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	122437
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10009098

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

School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	472
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Douglas Sutton
Headteacher	Karen Coker
Telephone number	01159 155768
Website	www.robertshaw.nottingham.sch.uk
Email address	admin@robertshaw.nottingham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 January 2014

Information about this school

- Robert Shaw Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than the start of the academic year is slightly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for funding through the pupil premium) has reduced over time and is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school is planning to convert to academy status and join the Transform Multi-Academy Trust in the autumn term.
- In 2015, the school did not meet 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 does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the impact of sports premium funding on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Ofsted deemed this inspection incomplete. Two more inspectors visited the school on the 17 June to gather more evidence.
- In total, the inspectors observed pupils' learning in 42 lessons and part lessons, several of which were joint observations with the senior leaders of the school.
- In addition, the inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 16 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, in addition to the school's own consultation outcomes and discussions with parents.
- The inspectors examined the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress; the school's evaluation of how well it is doing and its records of monitoring the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Diane Buckle, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Waldron	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Drabble	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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