

Wath Central Primary School

Fitzwilliam Street, Wath-upon-Deerne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 7HG

Inspection dates

28–29 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The improvements seen in leadership and teaching are recent and are not sufficient to secure the good and better progress pupils have needed to make since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in order to help teachers improve more rapidly. They are not yet tackling underachievement effectively, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Assessment information is not always accurate or used effectively by teachers to provide pupils of all abilities with the right level of challenge, but in particular the most able.
- The early years requires improvement. Assessment information is not as accurate as it needs to be to ensure the best start for children. Senior leaders do not check the accuracy of this information.
- There are strong and positive relationships with parents. However, teachers do not explain clearly enough to parents how well children are doing, nor do they explain well enough how parents can help pupils at home.

The school has the following strengths

- The strong and determined leadership of the executive headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, has brought about recent and rapid improvements in the life and work of the school.
- Middle leaders make an increasingly strong contribution to school improvement. The school's capacity to improve is much stronger than has been seen in recent times.
- The provision for pupils who have special needs is effective.
- Senior leaders have worked hard to improve the culture and ethos, and the values of respect, responsibility and pride permeate the life and work of the school. This has had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure because they know adults will always look out for them.
- The school provides a broad and engaging curriculum which is enriched with a range of artistic, cultural and sporting activities.

Full report

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders need to quickly secure consistently good and better teaching to enable pupils to make the progress they are capable of by:
 - focusing more on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning when checking on the quality of teaching in order for teachers to know precisely what they need to improve
 - using good and effective models of teaching to help other teachers know how to improve
 - checking assessment is accurate, particularly in the early years, so that the children get off to the best start possible and expectations are high from the outset.
- Develop effective systems for reporting on pupils' progress and provide useful information for parents so they have a clearer understanding of how well their children are doing and can support their children's learning and development throughout school.
- Ensure the school's website meets requirements on the publication of specified information.
- An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Over time, leaders have focused their monitoring on compliance without evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. This has led to some improvements in teaching, but has not enabled all teachers to know and understand how to develop their teaching to maximise pupils' learning and ensure good progress.
- Although there is no teaching that is inadequate, senior leaders need to tackle some of the persistent weaker teaching which has resulted in the variability in pupils' outcomes across the school and created gaps in some pupils' learning.
- Some middle leader roles are at an early stage of development, particularly in supporting and improving the quality of teaching and learning and sharply evaluating the impact of their work. In the best examples, leaders evaluate areas of development from a wide range of sources and plan appropriate actions to secure improvement. This is particularly evident in the leadership of mathematics and special needs and in the progress pupils are making.
- Leaders do not review the use of pupil premium funding closely enough to ensure the impact of individual aspects of spending is evaluated. The outcomes for disadvantaged children, particularly at key stage 2 where only half of this group currently are assessed as being at 'age-related expectations', indicate that the use of funding is not consistently supporting children's learning and narrowing the gaps between this group and other pupils.
- After a slow and unproductive start following the last inspection, the tenacious executive headteacher, supported by an increasingly effective senior leadership team and some middle leaders, has made a strong and positive impact on the school in a relatively short time. The school has turned a corner and is beginning to reap the rewards.
- Leaders have worked hard to create a solid foundation for learning by tackling the issues around pupils' personal development and welfare. This is now a happy, safe and increasingly ambitious school where pupils thrive and love to be. The senior leaders are held in high regard by the pupils, parents and staff. One parent commented, 'The atmosphere within the school is very positive. Staff all work together to educate the whole child, academically and socially.' Staff often go beyond what is expected to help pupils in their care. Pupils know this and value it.
- Staff morale is good. The senior leaders have successfully inculcated among most staff and pupils a sense of ambition and a determination to improve. The impact is evident in the improvements that have been brought about in pupils' behaviour, attendance and attitudes to learning and, increasingly, in the amount of better teaching seen.
- The staff take care to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities can benefit from the curriculum and lessons. The school's tracking system enables leaders and teachers to identify the needs of pupils in all areas of their learning. Personalised learning plans mean these pupils regularly engage in purposeful learning opportunities and make better progress than has previously been seen.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is a strength of the school's work. Senior leaders see the curriculum as central to the school's ambition to inspire pupils, and it does so in numerous ways. This includes opportunities for pupils to visit places of interest, develop skills in the performing arts and 'face their fears', as one pupil described her experience on an outdoor pursuits residential visit. These activities are helping to develop skills across curriculum areas. The curriculum ensures pupils learn about different faiths, lifestyles and cultures in depth and, as a result, they display high levels of emotional maturity and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Staff promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively and this is reflected in the general good conduct of pupils and their relationships with each other and adults. The school's aims and values reflect British values and run like a 'golden thread' through the work and life of the school. The pupils are 'Proud to be Central, Proud to be me'.
- The primary sport premium is used to purchase expertise to help staff improve the teaching of their physical education (PE) skills. This ensures there is a legacy of better-quality teaching should the funding cease. Governors have challenged leaders on the success of this and the support is being reduced as teachers become more skilled in their own delivery of PE.
- The local authority provides effective support to the school. Governors and senior staff value the extra help they have been given in providing training, which has all been centred on raising the quality of

teaching and learning. Regular visits to the school help leaders to validate their own judgements, and challenge and support leaders to improve the quality of education.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Governors have a developing understanding of the quality of education provided by the school. They know about the quality of teaching in the school because they have regular and appropriate information, meet with leaders and some visit the school regularly.
 - Governors are provided with detailed assessment information. They have a developing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have not yet done a sharp analysis of which strategies lead most effectively to improvements for disadvantaged pupils.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the link between teachers' salary progression and pupils' progress.
 - The governing body ensures it meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Thorough procedures for checking the suitability of staff and visitors to work with children are in place and all training is up to date. Staff know how to keep children safe and vigilant. Staff who work with other agencies are not afraid to pursue information from others if it does not come through in a timely manner. They keep meticulous records so no stone is left unturned on ensuring pupils are safe and well cared.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is variable. No teaching is inadequate. While the quality of teaching across the school is improving, this variability means not all pupils make the progress they are capable of.
- Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not make effective use of assessment information to plan lessons that challenge the most able or cater well enough for pupils' differing needs. At times, this leads to pupils repeating work or wasting time going over things they already know and can do. Less effective teaching adheres too closely to published schemes and does not take account of what effect teaching is having on pupils' learning. Some teachers do not plan well-structured sequences of lessons to develop learning effectively. Pupils are unsure of expectations, which slows learning and holds back progress.
- In contrast, where teaching is stronger, teaching builds carefully on pupils' prior knowledge and pupils are given appropriate and timely opportunities to consolidate and deepen their understanding. In these lessons, teachers model clearly what pupils are expected to achieve, so pupils know what to aim for. They use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' thinking and develop the language of explanation and reasoning. In these instances, pupils' learning and progress are strong.
- Teaching assistants' skills are variable. Leaders have invested in training which has helped many to support pupils' learning more effectively, but this is not fully embedded across the school. Nevertheless, some teaching assistants use the teachers' plans to guide them, rather than following them as a checklist, and they use their initiative to provide carefully tailored support. This is helping the least able to make better progress and catch up.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) has improved. As a result, pupils are more confident readers. Pupils are increasingly applying their reading skills across all aspects of their learning and they are given opportunities to practise their reading skills in regularly taught sessions. There are some children who do not read regularly at home. The school does not routinely compensate for this, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders know that developing a love of reading is an area for development.
- In mathematics teachers provide increasing challenge, but miss opportunities for pupils to explore how numbers and operations relate to each other. Pupils' opportunities to use and apply what they know and understand across the mathematical areas of learning and in real-life contexts are limited. Nevertheless, the mathematics leader has been instrumental in securing some notable improvements in the teaching of mathematics.
- Teachers, supported by the special educational needs coordinator, identify barriers to learning as early as possible for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils and less-able pupils have effective provision. For example, one-to-one interventions, such as the specialist reading and mathematics support pupils have, are having a positive impact on pupils' progress and their personal development. Some pupils enjoy and benefit from small-group 'catch-up' mathematics sessions, which are helping to quickly fill gaps in their mathematical skills and knowledge, enabling them to catch up with their peers.

- The most able pupils are, on occasions, encouraged to apply reasoning and think deeply about their work, but this greater level of challenge is not consistent across the school. In some classes, these pupils are held back because they have to complete easier work before moving on to more demanding tasks. Consequently, they do not make the faster progress of which they are capable.

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 pupils live out the school's values of respect, responsibility and pride. This can be seen in their relationships with adults and each other and increasingly in their work. This makes for a happy school and has provided a solid foundation on which to build improvements in learning.
- The school works effectively with a range of other agencies to ensure all pupils are safe and well cared for. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and value all that has been done to make their school a happier, safer place to be. They say, 'It's different now', and pupils are able to describe how earlier, negative personal experiences have been turned into positives. They respect decisions that have been made to ensure lunchtimes are happy and safe for all, and older pupils are protective of the youngest pupils.
- Pupils know who to go to for help and say all adults care about them. Parents agree pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet or social media. The school continues to review and update this aspect of its work to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils understand the different forms bullying can take and know how important it is to show respect and tolerance for others. They know the use of derogatory language is unacceptable and say they very rarely hear it in school, but know when and if it does happen, adults will deal with it appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils fully understand the school's behaviour system and respond positively to the expectations set by leaders, teachers and other staff.
- Pupils are extremely thoughtful and caring towards each other and inspectors saw many examples of this, both in class and around school. They know how to manage their own behaviour and know the difference between what is right and what is wrong.
- Their attitudes to learning are positive and behaviour in class is typically good. This is leading to better learning and improved outcomes for pupils.
- Attendance is at least in line with that seen nationally and the school's work to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent, particularly those eligible for pupil premium funding, is effective. Although their attendance has improved notably this year, it still remains below that of other pupils and pupils nationally.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading by the end of key stage 2 in 2015 was significantly below that seen nationally. Leaders' actions to improve reading have had a notable impact, particularly in Year 6. Inspection evidence suggests there is an acceleration in the progress they are making.
- Pupils' progress and achievement are not uniformly good in all year groups because the quality of teaching is variable.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in writing in 2015 was similar to that seen nationally and above in mathematics. There are indications from pupils' work and observations of teaching that teachers' expectations have been raised further in response to the new curriculum and standards. Consequently, pupils in Year 6 have accelerated progress from starting points that were lower

than those seen nationally at the end of key stage 1. Standards within the key stage are more variable and reflect the inconsistencies seen in teaching.

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015 at the end of key stage 1 were in line with or above those seen nationally. Current assessment information would suggest this improvement has been sustained, but for those pupils working at higher levels the improvement is less secure. Outcomes are noticeably weaker in writing than other areas and this correlates with the standard of writing seen in pupils' books. There are times when the free flow and quality of writing is restricted by the use of writing frames and worksheets, particularly for the most able.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics check has increased year on year, and this year the proportion of pupils who have reached the expected standard is above that seen nationally in 2015. Current outcomes for boys, girls and those eligible for free school meals have all significantly improved and reflect the improved teaching and the use of phonics assessment information to plan purposeful teaching and learning. Most pupils make better use of their understanding of phonics to help them read and spell unfamiliar words. Leaders recognise that many of the strategies for improvement are newly established and not firmly embedded.
- In 2015, those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieved standards that were at least in line with those seen nationally. However, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils currently at the end of key stage 2 is significantly lower. These pupils have not made enough progress from their starting points in order to catch up.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieved above national outcomes in writing, mathematics and in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test in 2015, although their achievement in reading was significantly below that nationally. Much has been done to improve the tracking and intervention for these pupils. The teaching seen during the inspection was appropriately balanced between challenge and support.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Although outcomes at the end of the early years are improving because of better provision and teaching, the accuracy of assessment information on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes is questionable. Senior leaders do not check this. This is lowering teachers' expectations of what children can do from the outset.
- The new early years leader has brought about a number of positive changes. There is greater cohesion in how adults work across the setting and there are notable improvements in teaching and the environment, particularly in Reception. This is resulting in better progress for children, particularly for boys and disadvantaged children.
- Staff plan activities which increasingly capture children's imagination and help them to learn effectively and develop. This is particularly strong for the least able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have good-quality support and interventions to tackle barriers to learning. This is resulting in stronger progress and enabling some of these children to catch up quickly.
- Teachers make effective use of the outdoor provision to promote children's development in many aspects of the early years curriculum, including reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have plans to improve the provision further.
- Teaching assistants make a notable contribution to children's learning and are well deployed to boost learning and language development.
- The effective teaching of phonics has enabled children to put this to good use in their reading, writing and number work across the areas of learning. They are taught to form their letters and numbers correctly. This is laying good foundations for future learning.
- Children relish the opportunities they have to cooperate and learn from each other. They play with sustained concentration and are growing into successful, confident learners. They behave well and typically participate fully in the activities provided for them, particularly in the Reception classes.
- The welfare arrangements in the early years are effective. Staff carry out daily risk assessments indoors and outdoors to ensure children are safe. They make sure children are handed over to an appropriate adult at the end of a session or the day.
- Staff work closely with parents, who are very positive about the provision. Staff are welcoming, supportive and enable their children to settle well.

School details

Unique reference number	106893
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10009754

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	463
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	June Stone-Riley
Executive Headteacher	Helen McLaughlin
Telephone number	01709 760345
Website	www.wathcentralprimary.co.uk
Email address	wath-central.primary@rotherham.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The school is part of the Wath Learning Community Co-operative Trust.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes to the teaching staff; the executive headteacher took up her post in May 2015.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national figure.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is in line with the national average. The pupil premium is extra funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school does not meet the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school manages its own breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 18 whole and parts of lessons. Five of these were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspection team observed pupils' behaviour at play and lunchtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 5 and spoke to pupils about their work.
- Discussions were held with three groups of pupils, two members of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, teachers, a representative from the local authority and the chief executive officer of the James Montgomery Academy Trust, which the school is to become a part of.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account by inspectors. In addition, parents were asked for their views at the end of the school day as they collected their children from school.

Inspection team

Gillian Wiles, lead inspector

Anne Bowyer

Ofsted Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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