

# Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School

Jossey Lane, Scawthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN5 9ED

**Inspection dates** 7–8 July 2016

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and governors provide determined leadership. Together, they have coordinated good improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders, including governors know the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have a shared ambition to continue raising standards.
- Subject leaders are highly involved in leading school developments. They have made positive contributions to the improvements seen since the previous inspection.
- Teaching and support staff operate as a committed team. They have strong subject knowledge across the whole curriculum. This has led to better learning outcomes for pupils.
- The majority of pupils achieve well in relation to their different needs and varied starting points in English and mathematics. Current pupils, including the most able, make good progress.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and are happy at school. They are motivated by an interesting new curriculum and enjoy a wide range of visits and extra-curricular clubs.
- Pupils' conduct as they move around school is impeccable. They are helpful to one another, showing respect and tolerance for peers, staff and visitors. Exclusions are becoming less frequent.
- Pastoral care and support are very effective and behaviour and welfare are managed carefully. The school works closely with many partners to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.
- The quality of leadership in the early years is a clear strength in the school. Children make excellent progress in the Reception class and are well prepared for their move into Year 1.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While the teaching of reading is good, outcomes for pupils are not yet as high or consistently as good as in mathematics and writing.
- Pupils do not apply their good knowledge of punctuation consistently within their own writing.
- Some of the targets set by leaders do not link sharply enough to the improvements that they are intended to make for pupils.

## Full report

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

- Continue to raise standards and increase pupils' progress, especially in English, by:
  - making sure that pupils use capital letters and other punctuation accurately and consistently within their own writing, across all subjects in the curriculum
  - sharing the very best practice seen in some classes so that all groups of pupils receive high-quality teaching in reading, grammar and punctuation
  - continuing to monitor reading records to ensure that all teachers make purposeful comments that are effective across all year groups and lead to consistent, improved progress in reading.
  
- Encourage leaders at all levels to ask 'What difference do we intend to make for pupils?' before they set targets for teachers' performance and for whole-school improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The new senior leadership team and governing body provide aspiration and ambition for the school. They inspire staff to aim high, resulting in higher standards in English and mathematics year on year.
- Subject leaders make a good contribution to school improvement. They regularly check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that school self-evaluation is systematic and rigorous. Leaders of English and mathematics, in particular, support teachers well by offering feedback and suggesting changes that speed up pupils' progress.
- If teaching is found to be less effective in any area of the school, leaders provide effective support plans tailored to staff needs. These have successfully improved teaching across the school so that it is now good overall.
- A new, broad and balanced curriculum has been developed to inspire pupils and motivate their learning. Pupils have been specifically enthused by changes made to the teaching of mathematics and writing. During the inspection, for example, pupils were keen to tackle challenging puzzles and problem-solving in mathematics. They were observed writing enthusiastically for a range of purposes across several subjects.
- A variety of modern foreign languages is taught across the school by staff and volunteers, including French, Spanish and Mandarin. Pupils are keen to learn different languages and the school prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Recently, pupils' work about British values was displayed in the local leisure centre to promote the importance of democracy, tolerance and rule of law.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the school's curriculum and makes a positive contribution to the warm and friendly atmosphere in school. In their guided reasoning sessions, pupils discuss and debate social and moral issues in depth.
- Pastoral care is a strength of the school. A dedicated team supports pupils who have additional needs of any kind and they help other staff to remove any barriers that may hinder learning. Pastoral care includes a strong focus on pupils' emotional well-being and staff work closely with other agencies to ensure that any support available is offered to parents and their children. During the inspection, several parents praised the attentive and efficient support they had received from staff.
- Regular meetings take place between classroom teachers, leaders and support staff to track and review the progress of each pupil. They discuss the assessment information available for each pupil so that staff can quickly identify any potential underachievement and adapt future plans as needed.
- Assessment judgements are accurate as they have been checked by senior leaders, compared to assessments made by staff in other schools, and evaluated by moderators from the local authority.
- Leaders have identified the right priorities needed to increase rates of progress and achievement. The key areas for improvement that were set out in the last inspection have been addressed effectively. There has been a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, especially for the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders regularly set targets to help manage the school's development and to help them check teachers' performance. However, the targets are not always sharp and specific enough to clearly identify what difference they will make directly to pupils.
- Governors ensure that finances are used efficiently. For example, they have appointed a pupil premium champion to help them make sure that pupils who qualify for the pupil premium funding access a broad package of support. This helps overcome any barriers to their achievement, including improved attendance and support for their emotional well-being and behaviour, if required. (The Pupil Premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils who qualify for free school meals or those who are looked after by the local authority.) Senior leaders regularly check that pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium make the same good progress as their peers.
- The school sports premium has been used well to strengthen teaching in physical education. It has also raised pupil participation in and enjoyment of sports – increasing their confidence and sporting prowess. This was seen during the inspection when the girls' cricket team celebrated their achievements in a celebration assembly.
- The local authority has offered good support to the school since the previous inspection, especially in helping to develop the role and effectiveness of subject leaders. They have also helped staff to link with other local schools to discuss and compare the learning and progress of different groups of pupils.
- Parental involvement has increased considerably in recent years. More opportunities are now provided for parents to meet staff and talk about their child's progress. As a result, the vast majority of responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) were extremely positive.

## ■ The governance of the school

- The membership and structure of the governing body has changed extensively since the previous inspection. A skills audit has helped in the recruitment of new governors who have been appointed to bring specific knowledge and experience on board. They now challenge and support the school in equal measure.
  - Governors have improved their expertise and understanding of the school. They are fully aware of the actions that have been taken to improve teaching and regularly check for themselves what impact their actions are having.
  - Governors are kept well informed about the school's performance and receive helpful reports from the headteacher to help them make effective decisions about teachers' performance. They tackle any underperformance swiftly and reward good teaching appropriately.
  - Finances are carefully monitored by a sub-committee that has considerable experience and expertise. Pupil premium and sports funding are used efficiently and in discussion governors can demonstrate how these have improved outcomes for pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors and senior leaders ensure that all statutory requirements are met. For example, new governors and staff receive induction training and regular updates take place. Robust systems are in place to ensure the safety of pupils and staff work closely with outside agencies to support vulnerable children and their families.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have all improved since the previous inspection and are more consistently good across the school. Teachers plan interesting lessons that engage pupils well, motivating them to want to learn and find things out.
- Leaders have helped teachers develop high aspirations for pupils' progress. Training has widened teachers' skills and subject knowledge so that they regularly ask probing questions to deepen pupils' thinking. This was observed specifically in a Year 5 class where pupils analysed a complex graph linked to temperature and answered their teacher's challenging questions thoughtfully.
- Teachers mark work in line with the school's policy and this helps pupils to correct their work, especially with regard to spelling errors. In some classes, marking is more efficient than others as it is sharp and precise and leads to swifter pupil progress over time.
- Successful training for teachers and support staff has increased staff confidence and subject knowledge. This is most noticeable in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) where staff are highly skilled. They use the vocabulary of phonics with precision so children quickly begin to understand and use it in their own speech.
- Staff have worked with many local schools to further improve their assessments – regularly checking them with others to confirm that they are accurate. Subject leaders have observed lessons and scrutinised pupils' work to offer advice to teachers on areas for improvement in the future. Both of these aspects of training have strengthened teachers' skills considerably.
- Teachers' planning ensures that pupils with different needs and abilities are well catered for. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully supported in lessons and during additional times when they receive targeted group sessions outside the classroom.
- The most able pupils are now making better progress than at the previous inspection because of more challenging work and tougher questioning. This was evident in a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils where the most able pupils enjoyed the challenge of puzzles that extended their thinking and perseverance in mathematics.
- English is taught well. There are many opportunities for pupils to write at length in all subjects of the curriculum. During the inspection, classes wrote letters, postcards and diary entries in depth. Displays around school showed pupils' skills in a range of other writing genres. At times, some of the older pupils did not use capital letters correctly and consistently within their own writing.
- Mathematics teaching inspires pupils to learn effectively. During the inspection, most pupils said it was their favourite subject. Mathematics lessons now engage pupils' interest with more frequent opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning, especially in key stage 1. Pupils' ability to focus, concentrate and keep trying in mathematics has consequently improved.
- Pupils enjoy reading at home – motivated by the school's new reading rewards scheme. Newly refurbished libraries in school also encourage reading. Regular guided reading sessions are planned well and generally pupils' comprehension skills are developing rapidly as a result.

- The impact and effectiveness of record-keeping in reading varies across classes. Progress is more rapid when teachers provide pupils with detailed feedback on their reading skills. In these classes, pupils' fluency, expression and wider reading skills are developing swiftly. The very best practice in teaching reading and grammar has not yet been shared widely enough among staff.
- Teaching is strong in many subjects. Artwork displayed around school is detailed and creative. Physical education is taught skilfully by a specialist coach who also trains other staff to improve their skills in this subject. Pupils tackle science lessons with enthusiasm, especially when they are practical and involve 'hands-on' experiments.

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

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements. Older pupils recognised and explained how much the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Assemblies celebrate pupils' accomplishments and encourage qualities such as determination and perseverance. Pupils are respectful and appreciative of their friends' success so that a positive and supportive atmosphere is developed. Praise and recognition of this kind adds to the warm community spirit in the school.
- Staff are committed to promoting the emotional well-being of all pupils. The pastoral team provides very effective support to pupils and parents whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Several parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection are highly appreciative of the personalised help they receive from staff.
- Pupils report that bullying, racism and misbehaviour rarely occur in school. If instances occur, staff deal with them promptly and consistently. Pupils say that they feel happy and safe in school and are comfortable talking to staff if they have any concerns or worries.
- Pupils enjoy their physical activities in lessons, at playtimes and during after-school clubs. They talked knowledgeably about their healthy lunches and the need to eat a variety of food types. Pupils could also explain how to keep themselves safe when crossing roads, during fire evacuations or when using computers.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around school is exemplary. Playtimes are lively yet peaceful, energetic but orderly. Pupils move around the buildings calmly and without fuss.
- Pupils concentrate and engage in lessons, working cooperatively with their peers and demonstrating respect and tolerance for others. Improvements in teaching mean that the majority of pupils are generally motivated and stay on task until their work is complete. This higher level of focus makes a strong contribution to the gains in pupils' attainment and progress across the school.
- Teachers adhere to the clear behaviour and rewards policy in school. Even the slightest misdemeanour is managed calmly, swiftly and effectively so that learning is not interrupted. Pupils respond quickly to staff requests, valuing the consistency used to promote good behaviour while praise and rewards help keep the atmosphere in school positive.
- Challenging behaviour is infrequent but teachers deal with it consistently. They know their pupils as individuals, are aware of the triggers that may prompt unacceptable behaviour and so can successfully prevent and avoid many of these situations. Consequently, exclusions have dropped this year.
- Leaders monitor and track pupils' attendance more rigorously now. Attendance has been below the national average but is beginning to rise. The school's new breakfast club has helped to encourage disadvantaged pupils to attend more regularly.

## **Outcomes for pupils are good**

- Pupils' attainment and rates of progress are rising because of teachers' higher expectations, effective leadership and better teaching over time. Assessments are now more rigorous and accurate due to external moderation and an increase in staff skills.

- The school's own information and work in pupils' books show that the majority of pupils are making good progress from their different starting points. At all phases, pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who met or exceeded the required standard in their phonics screen has increased significantly over the past three years. Gaps between different groups of pupils in school, such as boys and girls, are closing gradually. This is because leaders have an improved focus on identifying and reducing any inequalities.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because staff assess their individual needs quickly and provide an appropriate range of support to fill any gaps in their learning. Outcomes for this group of pupils are regularly checked by leaders to ensure that the additional support provided is effective.
- Most able pupils make good progress and more of these pupils are now achieving higher standards than previously at the end of each key stage. Teachers' planning is managed thoughtfully to provide challenging tasks and extension activities for the most able pupils.
- In 2015, disadvantaged pupils' progress improved in mathematics and writing. It was above that of all pupils nationally and above that of their peers in school. Attainment in reading was not as high as in other subjects. The school responded quickly and now offers more opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to read in school. The vast majority of disadvantaged pupils currently in school are making good progress in all areas.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has risen regularly over recent years. In 2015, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. In writing, key stage 1 pupils' attainment was significantly above that found nationally. Current information shows that pupils in key stage 1 are continuing to make good progress and standards are rising.
- In 2015, pupils' progress in key stage 2 improved compared to previous years. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics rose again for the third consecutive year. However, it remains below the national average. Better teaching, accurate assessments and more effective marking are now helping these pupils to catch up to where they should be.

## Early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress during their time in the early years provision overall and a much higher proportion of them than previously now achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception.
- The early years leader provides inspirational leadership so the new team is highly motivated, working together consistently and aiming to bring out the best in each individual pupil. Staff know their key children exceptionally well and use their knowledge perceptively to create fun and engaging activities tailored to children's specific needs and interests.
- Staff speak to parents on a daily basis and encourage them to share information about their child's achievements at home. Regular opportunities are planned to invite parents into the classrooms to work alongside their children. This strong partnership between staff and parents supports the good progress made, ensuring that everyone involved with the child has high aspirations for their learning. Assessment information is accurate and regularly monitored by leaders to identify and target any underachievement.
- Significant changes to the provision both indoors and outside have led to the much improved results that have increased year on year since the previous inspection. The early years leader has created effective action plans to address any weaknesses identified. For example, in 2014 girls outperformed boys at the end of Reception. Plans were swiftly set in motion to improve boys' achievement and ensure that this gap was reduced. By 2015, the gap was eradicated and boys achieved as well as, or higher, than the girls.
- All staff in the early years are particularly skilled at teaching phonics. Exciting activities encourage children's interest in letters and sounds. Tasks are targeted closely at the appropriate level for each child's knowledge and understanding so all groups make great strides with their learning. The most able children confidently write sentences and spell words correctly while lower ability pupils practise letter formation and learn to recognise the initial sounds in words. Consequently, children's progress in phonics is rapid.
- Children starting in Nursery have weaker skills in mathematics than in other areas of learning. They make good progress in this subject because of strong teaching that helps them solve problems and think more deeply about mathematical challenges.

- Children make outstanding progress in their Reception Year, particularly with writing tasks where they learn to use full stops and capital letters correctly. Reception children enjoy spelling tricky words. They are resilient and not afraid to make mistakes in their learning. Rates of progress are more rapid in the Reception class than in other areas of the early years unit.
- In 2015, by the end of Reception, disadvantaged children's attainment remained below others nationally and below their peers in school. Additional funding provided to support disadvantaged children is now used effectively and helps this group to make good progress from their lower starting points. An example of this is a specialist programme that aids speech and language development. Children who receive this additional support learn to answer questions appropriately and to speak more confidently in a small group.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. During the inspection, children with specific needs linked to fine motor difficulties were helped by specialist equipment and received frequent encouragement from a patient teaching assistant. By the end of the lesson, this group achieved as well as their peers and showed great pride in their completed work.
- Outdoor provision is exceptional as it engages all children's interests and provides high levels of challenge in all areas of the curriculum. Children's knowledge and understanding of science were developed well in the outdoor water area where they explored how water travels and how it can be channelled in different ways. Questioning from a skilled teaching assistant working at this activity extended their thinking and encouraged them to explain their reasoning in greater depth.
- Staff share assessment information regularly with parents using their 'key chains' to identify next steps in learning. Parents commented that this information helps them to support their children's learning at home.
- Staff prioritise the areas of provision that need further improvement correctly. However, as in the rest of the school, self-evaluation and target-setting are not always specifically linked sharply enough to the outcomes staff intend to make for children.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary throughout the early years unit. Children are polite, friendly and helpful. From their earliest start in Nursery, children learn and follow routines sensibly and their excellent relationships with others make a strong contribution to their learning.
- Staff are vigilant at all times and ensure that children are kept safe while working inside and outdoors. Children learn to look after one another and take turns carefully, especially when using larger equipment outside, as they understand and fully apply the rules they have been taught. All statutory welfare and safeguarding requirements are met.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106693
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012022

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	250
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jenny Gravells
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah McBride
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 780246
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.castlehill.org.uk">www.castlehill.org.uk</a>
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7–8 May 2014

## Information about this school

- Castle Hills is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with additional school support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been a number of changes to staffing and the governing body since the previous inspection in 2014. A new headteacher was appointed on a permanent basis in September 2015.
- Children attend the Nursery provision for 15 hours per week on a part-time basis in the morning or afternoon sessions. In their Reception Year, children attend on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the Department for Education's requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in a number of lessons, one of which was observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed groups of pupils working with support staff.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and on display around school, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their learning and their experiences of school in lessons and at breaktimes.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders and members of the wider leadership team, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. The inspectors also talked with a representative of the local authority and parents of pupils who attend the school.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents and policies containing information on safeguarding, records relating to the work of the governing body, leadership plans for developing the school and records of the checks made on the quality of teaching and pupils' work.
- The inspectors took account of 58 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered 22 responses made by staff to the online staff survey.
- Frequent meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders throughout the inspection to discuss all aspects of the school's work and information about the pupils' current progress.

## Inspection team

Anne Humble, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Dorothy Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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