

Thrapston Primary School

Market Road, Thrapston, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 4JU

Inspection dates

28–29 September 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	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders do not use school information well enough to improve teaching and learning. Pupils do not make the progress that they should as their learning needs are not being met.
- Middle leaders are not focusing sharply enough on the school's priorities for improvement in their action planning to enable pupils to make rapid progress.
- The inclusion leader is not involved enough in planning teaching and learning for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Learning activities do not meet their specific needs.
- Teachers do not plan well enough so that pupils meet the expectations at the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders do not use performance management as well as they should to ensure that training for teachers has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes in the classroom.
- Teachers do not use information about pupils' attainment, including that of the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, well enough to plan appropriate tasks.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics across the school. Progress in mathematics is not as good as it should be.
- Teachers do not monitor pupils' reading closely enough to ensure that they practise their reading skills to become confident and competent readers.
- Children do not make good progress during their Reception Year; adults do not use information about children's development well enough to ensure that all children are well prepared for Year 1.

The school has the following strengths

- Adults in the Nursery ensure that children make a good start to their education. Adults support children's learning through the design of high-quality tasks, which are followed up by pertinent questioning.
- Governors and senior leaders have ensured that extending the school's age range to provide for pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been managed well.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well supported.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Pupils are well mannered and motivated to learn. Pupils respond well to all adults and are well cared for in the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the governors' development plan covers all aspects of the school's work so that leaders can be held to account for the rate of improvement and staff understand the actions that are required to improve pupils' outcomes
 - leaders monitor the use of assessment information by class teachers to improve the outcomes for all pupils
 - middle leaders focus on the school's priorities in their action planning so that they can make the necessary improvements in teaching and learning across the school
 - the inclusion leader, who is responsible for leading the provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities and the use of the pupil premium funding, uses the funding more precisely to meet the needs of these pupils so that progress improves
 - teachers plan the curriculum carefully so that pupils build on their skills year on year so that they meet the expectations required at the end of key stage 2
 - ensure that leaders monitor the provision of the curriculum so that it meets the needs of the pupils through interesting and stimulating activities, particularly in English and mathematics
 - leaders use the checks on the targets set and the impact of training for teachers effectively to ensure that teachers plan and deliver high-quality teaching and learning so pupils' outcomes improve.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - teachers use school information about pupils' progress to design tasks that meet the needs of those who are disadvantaged, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able pupils, to better help them to make the progress of which they are capable
 - pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics lessons, so that they are able to use and apply their skills effectively and, therefore, make the progress expected of them
 - tasks meet the needs of pupils' learning in English and mathematics, across the school, so that they make the progress of which they are capable
 - key stage 1 teachers monitor lower-ability pupils' reading to ensure that pupils practise regularly to help them make at least the progress expected of them.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Reception Year by ensuring that:
 - adults use assessment information skilfully to plan tasks to meet the needs of all pupils so that they are ready for key stage 1.
 - adults respond to children's interests through listening to children, and questioning them skilfully so that they develop their thinking skills.

An external review of the school's use of the 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

- The recent high turnover in staff has hampered senior leaders' efforts to ensure that there is a consistent approach to raising pupils' achievement effectively. As a result, it has been difficult for senior leaders to hold teachers to account. Teachers require more time to use their new training to have an impact on pupil progress.
- The inclusion leader, who is responsible for managing the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the use of the pupil premium funding, does not monitor closely enough the effectiveness of class teachers' provision for these pupils. More careful monitoring is required so that these pupils make good progress.
- Leaders do not monitor the teaching of the curriculum well enough to ensure that it provides excitement and enjoyment in pupils' learning, particularly in English and mathematics. However, the school does provide a broad range of opportunities to develop pupils' personal development and social skills through trips and visitors.
- Leaders do not monitor the use of the pupil premium funding closely enough to ensure that it has the desired impact on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils do not make the progress expected of them because the funding is not targeted as precisely as it should be.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have made a promising start to moving the school forward from a first school to a primary school. They have quickly created a school culture that celebrates success and is inclusive of everyone. The headteacher recognises that the substantial changes have served as a distraction to school development and she is making teaching and learning a priority.
- Senior leaders have a detailed and well thought out development plan; however, it is not shared with middle leaders as well as it could be. As a result, middle leaders are not conveying to staff the actions that are required to raise pupils' outcomes in their areas of responsibility. New leaders for mathematics and English understand the broad areas for development and how to improve standards in their subjects.
- The senior leaders recognise the importance of training and development opportunities to improve teaching and learning. They have established links with other schools so that good practice can be shared. Teachers have not yet responded as quickly as they should to the training and development opportunities and used them in the classroom.
- Pupils understand the importance of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and how it prepares them for life in and beyond the school. A visit to the school by the charity Operation Christmas Child helped pupils to understand their role in helping others. The school promotes British values effectively and pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils value their role in selecting the school council and using their skills on the playground to support pupils to show tolerance and respect for others.
- Pupils have a good understanding of equality and diversity in society through their learning about different religions. Pupils have developed a good understanding of right and wrong and how to resolve conflicts, including how to sort out the occasional friendship disagreements on the playground. Pupils are supported well to make the right choices.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary sports funding. Pupils have access to a broad

range of sporting activities and local tournaments. Pupils reported that they enjoy the opportunities on offer. Governors and leaders ensure that the funding supports the continuing training for teachers and pupils' health and well-being.

Governance of the school

- Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They understand that there is more work to be done in order for pupils' outcomes to improve.
- Governors have worked closely with the headteacher to manage the change from being a first school to a primary school that provides for pupils aged three to 11 years. They value and recognise the hard work of the headteacher and deputy headteacher to address the new age range and understand that there is still work to be done to ensure that there is consistently good teaching across the school.
- Senior leaders and the governing body successfully run a breakfast club and after-school club. It is well attended and pupils enjoy the opportunities that are on offer. Pupils show good manners and cooperate well together.
- Governors are not clear on the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding, or of the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the classroom. More work is needed to ensure that the funding is used to improve outcomes for pupils and is having a good impact. The impact of the use of the funding is not evaluated as well as it should be.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they know that they can ask for help from any adult in school.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders have a rigorous approach to safeguarding and ensure that all staff receive regular updates and training. The headteacher is tenacious in her approach to managing the welfare of all pupils.
- The governing body has undertaken appropriate training and ensures that the necessary checks are in place to safeguard all pupils and adults on site.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet good because the level of challenge for pupils is inconsistent across the school. Tasks do not challenge pupils sufficiently; nor are there sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics. Pupils are not developing a deeper understanding of mathematics or using their skills widely enough.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils is not meeting their needs proficiently in the classroom. For example, inspectors observed pupils working on tasks that were either too easy or too difficult, so they did not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The majority of class teachers do not use the information available about pupils' progress to address the learning needs of the most able pupils in their classes. Consequently, these pupils do not make good progress across the school.
- Provision for disadvantaged pupils is inconsistent across the school, particularly in writing and mathematics. Pupils' books show that the majority of disadvantaged pupils do not

make rapid progress in these subjects and tasks are not designed well enough to meet their needs.

- Teachers do not fully understand the curriculum expectations required for pupils to meet expectations at the end of key stage 2. Teachers across the age range are not yet fully aware of curriculum coverage and how skills are developed over the broader age range.
- Where learning is successful, teachers use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning to create tasks that are suitable for a range of abilities. For example, in a Year 6 class, the teacher worked with the most able pupils showing them how to use a semi-colon in their writing.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have many opportunities to read during their time in key stage 2. Adults ensure that the most able pupils, and disadvantaged pupils, receive regular support with their reading. Pupils who read to inspectors said that they enjoyed reading.
- Teachers do not monitor the progress of reading as well as they should, especially for lower-attaining pupils. On occasion, books are not matched well enough to pupils' level of reading and phonics skills. Pupils struggle to apply their phonics skills to a text that is too difficult.
- In key stage 1, teachers promote pupils' writing skills effectively and apply their recent training to whole-class teaching. Teachers use technical vocabulary effectively to show pupils how to structure a story and model sentence structure. For example, pupils give examples of noun phrases and understand how to use adjectives to improve sentences.
- Phonics teaching in key stage 1 is consistently good. Teachers enable pupils to practise their skills during their writing activities. Pupils use informative displays in the classroom to support them with the development of their knowledge of phonics.
- Pupils enjoy reading and use their phonics skills well. There is a range of reading books; however, leaders recognise that they need to enhance the provision of non-fiction books, in particular.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Older pupils support younger pupils sensitively. For example, they support younger pupils on the playground at breaktimes and are lunchtime monitors in the hall. Year 6 pupils are proud of the special responsibility they have, and value the recognition of being the oldest pupils in the school.
- Pupils understand the school's values and they talk enthusiastically to inspectors about how the headteacher has shared important values that will support them to make the right choices in life. They enjoy assemblies, based on the school values of responsibility, empathy, ambition, collaboration and honesty.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of personal safety, as well as the recent changes to the school's site, such as new fences and gates. Pupils value the adults that support them at breaktimes.
- Pupils enjoy the range of sports and enrichment activities that are on offer. They understand the importance of keeping healthy and how fitness can contribute to their overall well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils consistently show good manners and happily

engage in conversations with each other and adults. They show consideration and respect to each other and to adults in the school.

- Pupils behave well at breaktimes. They play cooperatively and know that they can approach the Year 6 'Bully Busters' should they need support with the occasional friendship disagreement.
- At the end of breaktime, pupils line up promptly and exit the playground with military precision. Without any prompting, pupils show the utmost consideration and respect to everyone.
- The headteacher has addressed persistent absence decisively and school information shows that there has been a significant reduction in the proportion of pupils who do not attend school regularly. In 2016, attendance was just below the national average. The headteacher is monitoring attendance closely and, so far this year, persistent absence has decreased and attendance is now in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- In 2015 the proportion of key stage 1 pupils reaching the expected standard in all subjects fell sharply, particularly in writing. However, school information shows that for 2016 the proportion of pupils reaching the standards expected for their age has improved in reading and writing. Nonetheless, pupils' attainment in mathematics lags behind that in reading and writing.
- School information for 2016 shows that the proportion of the most able pupils achieving greater depth in their learning is not as high as it should be at the end of key stage 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making as much progress as they should do by the end of key stage 1. School information for 2016 shows that by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 the proportion of pupils making expected progress is not as high as it should be.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at the end of key stage 1 has risen since the previous inspection. In 2015, it was above the national average. This has been improved on in 2016.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress that they should because teaching and learning are not supporting pupils' needs precisely enough.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Published information shows that the proportion of children in the early years achieving a good level of development in 2015 was significantly below the national average. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved a good level of development increased. The early years leader is confident that with new strategies in place, pupil outcomes at the end of the early years will improve further.
- Teachers in the Reception classes do not build on the strong start that children make during their time in the Nursery. As a result, not enough children are securing a good level of development by the time they leave the early years, resulting in too few being well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- The early years leader has not provided her team with an action plan that clearly identifies the priorities for the early years. Although there are regular meetings, staff are not clear

on the long-term goals, or of the impact of actions taken to improve the provision.

- Adults in the Reception classes do not use children's assessment information as precisely as they should so that they can meet children's needs in teaching and learning. Adults are not using information about children's progress and development to plan activities to promote their consistently good achievement.
- Often, adults working with children in the Reception Year do not question them sufficiently in order to extend their learning. Children's comments and ideas are not followed up by adults in order to create learning opportunities that interest the children.
- Adults in the Reception classes underestimate what children can do and, therefore, do not have high-enough expectations of what they can achieve. Adults do not use the well-resourced learning environment as well as they could to extend the most able children's learning.
- Reading opportunities in the early years are inconsistent and children are not supported as well as they could be by adults. Adults do not show the next steps of skill development in reading, and records do not give a clear indication of who has read with the child.
- Disadvantaged children have additional group activities to support their needs. However, these groups are not monitored closely enough by teachers to ensure that these children make the progress expected of them.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors on the playground stated that they would appreciate more information on the teaching and learning activities provided. They did not feel that they received enough information.
- The school has worked with the local teaching school alliance to improve provision and to share ideas. This has not yet resulted in children's better attainment and progress, and more work needs to be done to improve teaching and learning in the early years.
- The early years staff liaise effectively with other pre-school providers to ensure that there is a smooth transition into the Nursery class.
- Children learn and play together cooperatively. They are keen to share their news with adults and happily follow instructions. Children are safe and well cared for in the early years.
- The Nursery provision is a strength of the school, providing a strong starting point for all its children. The environment is bright and well resourced, with a range of interesting activities for all children. Inspectors observed children enjoying learning, through baking and playing with dough, as well as mark-making using toy trucks with pens attached.
- Adults in the Nursery are diligent at meeting the needs of the children. They actively follow up on children's interests. For example, adults organised a baking activity in response to children's interest in celebrating birthdays.
- Children in the Nursery are confident and willing to engage in conversations with adults. They work cooperatively with each other and adults facilitate their learning expertly.

School details

Unique reference number	122111
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10020323

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	580
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adam Boon
Headteacher	Pauline Turner
Telephone number	01832 732 512
Website	www.thrapston-primary.northants.sch.uk
Email address	head@thrapston.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 September 2013

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average primary school.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- In 2014, the school changed its age range to meet the needs of a local government review. The school moved from a three to nine years age range to three to 11 age range.
- Most of the pupils come from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils from other heritage groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average.
- Most pupils receiving additional support have speech, language and communication needs and/or they experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Others experience a range of difficulties including: specific learning difficulty; moderate

learning difficulty; physical disability; autism spectrum disorder.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion supported at School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The governing body manages a daily breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed each class in the school, some on more than one occasion. In total, they observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons. Inspectors checked pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime, and as pupils moved about the school during the day.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders in the school, newly qualified teachers, the leader for the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the leader of the early years and the subject leaders for mathematics and English.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with them in lessons, heard them read aloud, and met more formally with them in a group to discuss particular aspects of their experiences at the school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documentation, including the school's improvement plan, the school's information for tracking pupils' attainment and progress, minutes of meetings of the governing body and the school's self-evaluation document. They also looked at a large sample of work in pupils' books, anonymised records of the performance management of staff and school documentation relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also examined the school's website.
- Inspectors analysed the responses, including the comments made by 106 parents on Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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