

Sitlington Netherton Junior and Infant School

Netherton Lane, Netherton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 4HQ

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

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, other leaders and governors have been tenacious and resolute in tackling the issues raised at the previous inspection. This has brought about swift school improvement, including in teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Overall, all groups of pupils, including the most able and those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in a range of subjects, including reading, writing, mathematics, art and music. Standards are rising as a result.
- Teachers have responded well to leaders' higher expectations. They are held accountable for their teaching and for pupils' progress. However, best teaching practice is not always shared widely among staff.
- Teaching has improved and is now good. Activities enthuse pupils' learning and are well matched to their varying learning needs.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to use and apply their mathematical and English skills in these subjects. Opportunities to do so in other curriculum subjects, however, are more limited.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support. They are now making good progress from their starting points. The achievement of the few most able disadvantaged pupils, however, is below that expected nationally.
- Effective leadership and teaching in the early years ensures that children are very well prepared for learning in key stage 1.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Pupils feel safe and cooperate well with each other. Behaviour is calm and makes a positive contribution to learning.
- Overall, attendance has improved and is above average. Pupils are punctual and benefit from school. The attendance for some disadvantaged pupils is below average and requires further improvement.
- Governors provide good challenge and support to senior leaders. They know the school's strengths, areas to improve and hold leaders to account well. Governors use information in an efficient manner to challenge leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further so that standards continue to rise by:
 - accelerating the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils so that it at least matches the progress expected of other pupils nationally
 - making sure that most able pupils access challenging reading books and increase their knowledge of a wider variety of authors
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics, writing, grammar and punctuation skills in subjects across the curriculum
 - sharing the best teaching practice in the school more widely among staff
- Further improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so that it matches that of other pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, senior leaders and governors have been united in their quest to improve the school. The headteacher has effectively galvanised staff and tackled weaknesses in teaching. She has instilled a higher culture of expectations for what pupils can achieve. This has resulted in improved progress for current pupils.
- Leaders make frequent and rigorous checks on teaching, learning and assessment through lesson observations, examining work in books and meetings with teachers. As a result, current groups of pupils are making good progress. Teachers, including new staff, are well led through a balance of support, challenge and training to meet teachers' needs. Leaders do not fully capitalise on sharing the best teaching as a means of improving the quality of teaching throughout the school even further.
- The arrangements for managing teachers and teaching assistants' performance are effective. Inspectors observed the vast majority of teaching assistants being deployed well, working in tandem with teachers. Targets are closely tied to accelerating the progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. These targets are effective in driving improvements in the school.
- Middle leaders focus their plans on strategies that will improve pupils' progress. Newly developed assessment systems have enabled teachers, leaders and governors to keep a watchful eye on the progress pupils make and to take action where necessary. The assessment leader's work is endorsed in the achievement of a national qualification for leadership.
- The curriculum reflects a wide range of subjects and a variety of visits and visitors into school. Pupils sing with gusto in music lessons and as part of a choir. Pupils and staff alike are excited about the choir singing at the Young Voices concert.
- The school's commitment to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain is well developed. In response to a story on diversity, pupils' work showed mutual respect for difference, such as: 'I liked seeing the different people. Some had different coloured skin. We have the same hearts.'
- The school promotes British values well. There are good links with the local church and pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. Pupils understand the rule of law, how Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected and how governments are formed. 'Parliament plays an important role in British democracy. MPs represent the British public,' reflects a typical pupil comment.
- The pupil premium funding is used to good effect and is having a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress. The funding is used to provide additional teaching and to enhance wider experiences of this group. Disadvantaged pupils overall make the same good progress as other pupils in the school. The school's own records and provisional tests results, however, show that the few most able disadvantaged pupils make expected rather than accelerated progress.
- The funding that the school receives to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well to ensure that pupils make good progress. Pupils benefit from individual support to meet their needs.

- The additional physical education and sports funding is used effectively. Working alongside experienced coaches, teachers develop confidence in teaching physical education. The school offers a wide variety of sporting activities including Zumba and archery. Pupils' participation and enjoyment at competitive tournaments is high.
- The school's work with the local authority has helped to bring about improvements in teaching and in the quality of assessment. Governors have benefited from local authority advice, such as to challenge senior leaders over the progress pupils make, especially disadvantaged pupils, and how additional funding is spent.
- The large majority of parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and its improvements. Parents shared very positive views with inspectors, acknowledging, for example, that 'The school has made substantial improvements in the teaching standards in my experience. My children are happy in this school and certainly the more recent additions to staff have had a positive impact on leadership.'
- Prior to the inspection, the school's website did not meet statutory requirements. Leaders rectified and improved this during the inspection. Leaders accept that regular updates are required to ensure that it remains compliant.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has strengthened since the previous inspection. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors have benefited from a review of their effectiveness from the local authority. Consequently, they use their expertise, including in education, to challenge leaders about the progress that pupils make.
- The minutes of governor meetings show that they provide robust challenge to staff. Governors question leaders about the overall quality of teaching and the school's plans to improve end-of-key-stage results for middle-ability and most-able pupils.
- Governors discharge their statutory duties effectively to ensure that pupils are safe. They have a comprehensive understanding of the link between teachers' pay and performance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff receive appropriate training and benefit from regular updates to keep pupils safe. Governors ensure that all statutory duties are met, including the appropriate checks for vetting staff.
- Pupils express positive feelings of safety in the school. Pupils know that help is always available should they need it from staff. The large majority of parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaire agreed that their child is safe and well cared for in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and weaknesses have been effectively addressed.
- Almost all teachers now make good use of assessment information to plan activities which are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are often hooked in by activities with a real-life context and show an eagerness to learn. Pupils appreciate the quality of tasks on offer, saying that their, 'teachers are really nice and put a lot of fun into lessons'.

- Reading is taught effectively. Pupils say that they enjoy reading, which is regular at home and at school. Pupils are taught to read with fluency and expression. Pupils relish events, including World Book Day, to celebrate the joy of reading and to study famous authors, including Roald Dahl. Librarians take their responsibilities seriously to keep the attractive library tidy. Good encouragement ensures that the most able readers take pleasure in reading. However, the limited range of challenging books in the library, to an extent, restricts pupils' knowledge of a wide range of classic reading books.
- Teachers have responded well to guidance from the headteacher on improving writing. Teaching ensures that the most able pupils, in particular, produce well-structured writing using a broad range of vocabulary like 'arduous' to describe a journey. Good progress is seen from the youngest children, who wrote, for instance, with confidence about the Three Little Pigs. Lower-ability pupils use effective description in carefully crafted sentences, for example: 'The ghost of the marsh had red, twitching eyes.'
- Pupils enjoy the varied opportunities to grapple with real-life problems in mathematics. Older pupils were highly engrossed in calculating with money when ordering from a food menu. Pupils were motivated and took delight in their accurate calculation and by spending the exact money for the task.
- Teachers and teaching assistants usually use assessment information to help provide tasks to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least expected progress. Middle-ability and most-able disadvantaged pupils are now being challenged to make faster progress as, for some, progress has been steady rather than rapid over time.
- Homework set covers a range of areas but has an emphasis on developing key spelling, writing and mathematics skills. Pupils enjoy the challenge of being 'times-table champions'. Older pupils enjoyed the opportunity to 'mummify an orange' to reinforce learning about ancient Egypt. The parent questionnaire shows that the vast majority of parents agree that the school sets appropriate homework.
- Work in topic books does not always mirror the same high standards seen in English and mathematics. Opportunities are not always maximised for pupils to apply their mathematics and writing skills in a wide range of subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils told inspectors that they benefit from participating in a broad range of clubs and activities. Sporting activities promote the importance of keeping healthy. Pupils understand the need for a healthy diet and for not having too much sugar in their diet.
- Pupils are friendly and confident. 'My child is happy and she has made a lot of friends' reflects a typical comment from parents.
- Pupils have a comprehensive understanding of how to keep themselves safe in school and on the internet. They understand the different forms of bullying, including racism, and know that this is wrong.
- Pupils treat one another with courtesy and respect. Pupils said that everyone is treated fairly.

- Systems to keep pupils safe and support their welfare are secure. The vast majority of parents and all staff who responded to online questionnaires agree that pupils are kept safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave sensibly in class and when moving around the school building. Pupils listen carefully to each other and share their views amicably.
- Pupils are keen to please and show pride in their work. Some younger pupils were bursting with pride over the writing they had shared with inspectors. Displays show vibrant work across the curriculum, including high-quality pop art.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and well dealt with should it occur. The school's own records show a marked reduction of incidents since the previous inspection.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance. Few pupils are regularly absent or late to school. The current attendance of some disadvantaged pupils is below that of others in the school. Leaders have already identified that this remains an issue and are working with families to improve attendance.
- In a small minority of lessons, some pupils quietly lose focus when they are not challenged appropriately. Leaders are aware of this and are addressing the matter in a timely way.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The headteacher's and senior leaders' zeal has resulted in better teaching and good progress for pupils from their different starting points. Pupils' work is presented neatly and the quality of writing is of a high standard. Work in books shows that boys, in particular, are being challenged to write at length and to use different lengths of sentences and sophisticated forms of punctuation.
- The teaching of phonics is generally good and reflects above-average attainment in Year 1. Teachers and teaching assistants articulate sounds well, which leads to accurate reading and spelling skills. Pupils from different year groups read fluently and with expression. Younger pupils mostly use their phonics to help them read. Some reading books in school do not always help less-able pupils to sound out words accurately.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2016. Progress in writing for was slightly above national average at the end of Year 6. Standards in English, grammar and punctuation were below national average. Leaders have acted swiftly to ensure that middle-ability and most-able pupils are supported to achieve higher standards. Pupils are becoming more adept at using punctuation in their English books and make good progress. Leaders recognise that pupils, especially the most able, do not always write to the same high standards in topic books.
- The school's own assessment information shows that all groups of pupils make expected progress, with differences diminishing between boys and girls. Leaders have

instilled a higher culture of expectations for what pupils can achieve and teachers make better use of information to plan activities for different groups of pupils. Progress in pupils' books demonstrates that almost all pupils are on track to make expected progress, and more pupils, especially in Years 1 and 5, are on track to make rapid progress.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in all that they do. Inspectors saw pupils making fast progress in a mathematics lesson because of the sharpness of questioning. The special educational needs coordinator keeps a close eye on the progress that pupils make and adjusts plans when necessary.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that disadvantaged pupils currently in the school achieve well, with virtually no difference in progress with other groups of pupils. Leaders recognise that most-able disadvantaged pupils need further support to exceed age-related expectations.
- Pupils achieve well in art, sports and music in particular. Displays of quality artwork and the playing of musical instruments, including the ukulele, adds colour to pupils' experiences.
- The headteacher's and senior leaders' zeal has resulted in better teaching and, as a result, all groups of pupils in all key stages now make good progress from their different starting points.
- In 2016, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6, although in English grammar and punctuation, standards were lower in Year 6. Leaders have acted swiftly to improve pupils' standards in this aspect. Current pupils are, for example, becoming increasingly adept at using punctuation in their English books and are making good progress. The middle-ability and most-able pupils are being well supported to achieve higher standards.
- Current in-school information, coupled with inspection evidence, shows that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and more pupils, especially in Years 1 and 5, are making rapid progress.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. The above-average attainment of pupils in the Year 1 reading screening check represents good progress and reflects the effective teaching of phonics. Younger pupils mostly use their phonic skills well to help them to read. Pupils' reading skills develop at a good rate because teachers and assistants accurately articulate sounds. Pupils from different year groups read fluently and with expression.
- In writing, progress has improved, and continues to improve. In Year 6 in 2016, for example, an above-average proportion of pupils made better than expected progress. Pupils present their written work neatly. The quality of writing of current pupils is typically of a high standard. Pupils, particularly the boys, are challenged to write at greater length, to vary their sentence length and to use more sophisticated forms of punctuation. Even so, leaders recognise that pupils, especially the most able, do not always write to the same high standards in their topic books.
- Progress in mathematics is good. Pupils confidently use their calculation skills to solve real-life problems. As a result, standards across the school are rising. Occasionally however, opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in other subjects remain overlooked.

- Leaders ensure that all groups of pupils, including the most able, achieve well and that any differences in achievement, such as those previously evident between boys and girls, diminish.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school achieve well, with virtually no difference in progress compared to other groups of pupils in the school. However, fewer most-able disadvantaged pupils make the expected rate of progress than do so nationally. Leaders know that the most able disadvantaged pupils need further support to improve their achievement.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Inspectors observed pupils making fast progress in mathematics because of the sharpness of teachers' questioning. The effective work of the special educational needs coordinator ensures that a close eye is kept on the progress that these pupils make, adjusting plans when necessary.
- Pupils achieve well in art, sports and music in particular. Displays of quality artwork and the playing of musical instruments, including the ukulele, adds colour to pupils' experiences.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is led very well, reflecting a passion to improve outcomes for children. The highly respected leader has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The leader tackles areas for improvement successfully.
- Staff are adept at working together as a team. Visits into school and information shared with parents ensure a smooth transition. Consequently, children settle quickly into the rules and routines of life in the Nursery and then the school.
- The vast majority of children make good progress from their typical starting points. By the end of Reception, the proportion achieving a good level of development is above average and has been over recent years. Many children exceed expectations in the areas of learning expected for their age. Girls achieve more highly than boys at the exceeding level. Children, including those who are disadvantaged, are very well prepared for the demands of key stage 1.
- Provision for the small numbers of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Staff know the children well, capitalising on effective relationships with external agencies. As a result, current children make good progress from their starting points.
- Communication and relationships with parents are strong. Parents are welcomed into school and regularly share information about their child's progress. Parents are grateful for the informative training sessions on supporting phonics and mathematics at home.
- All welfare requirements are met. All staff take their responsibilities seriously and are appropriately qualified to undertake their roles. Children are safe and happy because of the secure arrangements for safeguarding and welfare. Children are taught well how to exercise independence and, at the same time, how to keep themselves safe indoors and outdoors.
- Children display a mature attitude to learning. They behave well and their good behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning.

- Children are eager and motivated because the curriculum is rich and provides a wealth of opportunities to learn with one another. Activities inside and outdoors are stimulating and well matched to children's needs. Groups of children were engrossed in purposeful activities; for example, when investigating the properties of materials to build a house for the 'Three Little Pigs'. Teaching assistants skilfully linked the opportunity for children to write neat labels for parts of the house. Some children are already joining their writing.

School details

Unique reference number	108158
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10023822

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Woodhouse
Headteacher	Georgina Haley
Telephone number	01924 274873
Website	www.netherton.wakefield.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@netherton.wakefield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 January 2015

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Children attend nursery on a part-time basis until they join the Reception class.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- A lower than average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning across all year groups. Four lesson observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were conducted with the headteacher, governors, a representative from the local authority, and school staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors listened to readers from all key stage 1 and 2 year groups.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and analysed pupils' work, information on pupils' attainment and progress, curriculum plans and records of behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also examined school monitoring information, including the school development plan, records of appraisal and staff training, monitoring records about the quality of teaching, governing board minutes, safeguarding documents and the school's website.
- Inspectors took account of 50 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View, including text responses. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- The views of pupils were taken into account through a planned meeting, during lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspection questionnaires completed by 16 members of staff were also considered.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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