

Chiltern Primary School

Chiltern Way, Duston, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN5 6BW

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not use information about pupils' achievement carefully enough to provide a clear picture of the school. Plans for improvement are not sharp enough to hold leaders and teachers to account.
- Teachers do not use assessment information consistently. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough.
- Middle leaders are not fully developed in their role. Information gathered from their checks on the quality of teaching is not followed up well enough to ensure that teaching is consistently good.
- The behaviour policy is not used consistently. Sometimes, teachers do not respond quickly enough to incidents of low-level disruptive behaviour in class.
- Pupils' skills in reading and writing are not developed well for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils and those who are the most able do not make good progress in reading and writing.
- Governors have not evaluated sharply enough the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors and leaders have responded well to accommodate the rapid growth in the number of pupils on roll since the last inspection.
- Pupils feel safe. The school is a friendly and caring place to learn. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and in the wider community.
- Pupils understand how to stay healthy. Leaders have used the funding for physical education and sport effectively to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles.
- Leaders have made improvements to the teaching of phonics. This has led to rapid improvements, bringing the number of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of Year 1 in line with the national average.
- The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about life in modern Britain and to understand different cultures.
- Provision in early years is good.
- Leaders are proactive in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. The family support worker works well with families to encourage good attendance.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to increase pupils' progress and raise standards, especially in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that assessment information about pupils' skills and knowledge is used well to set work at the correct level of difficulty so pupils make at least good progress
 - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement so that pupils make accelerated progress
 - giving pupils more opportunities to develop their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently in all lessons, in order to minimise disruption to learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - making regular checks on the quality of teaching and using these to hold teachers to account, especially for the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the most able and those who are disadvantaged
 - developing the leadership skills of subject leaders so they raise standards and improve the quality of teaching in their subjects
 - ensuring that all members of staff have a good understanding of how to teach grammar effectively
 - leaders improving school development planning so that it is more effective in driving improvements in provision and in pupils' outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders have not been able to secure consistently good teaching since the previous inspection. The rapid increase in the number of pupils on roll at the school has proved to be a challenge to school leaders to ensure that the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes have remained at a good standard.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced a new assessment system. This has not had time to embed fully. Leaders' checks on teaching, and in particular how teachers use assessment information, have not been consistent. A few teachers are still developing their skills in assessing accurately pupils' attainment. This is hindering pupils' achievement because subsequent lessons are not planned to help pupils make good progress.
- Senior and middle leaders' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. Leaders are not always quick enough in tackling pupils' barriers to learning. The findings from checks on the quality of teaching by senior leaders and those responsible for subjects are not being followed up robustly enough to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Leaders for the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not check frequently the progress these pupils are making. The additional funding for these pupils is not always used effectively because it is not sharply focused on supporting pupils to make progress and raise their attainment.
- Leaders have not evaluated precisely the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. This is a factor in these pupils having not made good progress.
- The school's plan for development is not fully effective in driving improvement. Targets for improvement are not always specific enough and sometimes do not link clearly to the areas for development.
- Support provided by the local authority has been minimal. Leaders have sought support from a local teaching school alliance and from the local cluster of schools. This support has been effective in improving the quality of phonics teaching.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have responded well to the rapid rise in the number of pupils on roll. Induction procedures for pupils are effective because their welfare needs are quickly assessed and support is put in place. The vast majority of pupils settle well and make friends quickly.
- Leaders have set ambitious targets for pupils to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics. These targets are now used to hold teachers to account, and the school's own information about how well current pupils are doing shows that pupils are now making faster progress. This is bringing the proportion of pupils achieving at the expected standard in key stages 1 and 2 closer to the national average. This is indicative of leaders' capacity to secure improvements.
- Leaders recognised that too few Year 1 pupils were reaching the expected standard in phonics. Teachers and teaching assistants have received a programme of training and development. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard has improved and is now in line with the national average.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils learn about life in other countries and cultures as well as life in the past. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional development is linked to learning about the school's values of peace, honesty and respect.
- The additional funds provided through the physical education and sport premium are used well. Leaders recognise the importance of enabling pupils to experience a wide range of activities that promote physical development for all, including archery, table tennis and basketball.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is ambitious for the school to improve and understand its strengths and weaknesses. However, while governors are providing individual challenge to the headteacher, they are not considering closely enough the extent to which improvements are being made against the school's development priorities. This is limiting the rate of improvement.
- Governors' overview of performance information is not always sharp enough. They have partial understanding of the impact of the additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils.
- The governing body has responded well to accommodate the rapid growth in the number of pupils on roll. Governors are aware of the impact that this growth has had on classes and staffing, and have been proactive in seeking additional funding from the local authority to accommodate these new pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures to reduce pupils' risk of harm are thorough. Leaders work well with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils are supported well and concerns are addressed swiftly. Staff know pupils well and are vigilant in responding to concerns.
- The designated safeguarding leads and the safeguarding governor meet regularly to ensure that information is shared and they are all aware of any safeguarding concerns. Where cases meet the local authority's threshold for involvement, leaders are tenacious in ensuring that concerns are followed up and that cases are not left unmonitored.
- Wherever possible, leaders and the family support worker put in place early help to support families. The family support worker has developed close relationships with vulnerable families and an open-door policy is in place for them to seek support when needed.
- Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and child protection and are aware of their responsibilities. The four designated safeguarding leads attend training regularly to ensure that their knowledge is up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good. Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a significant increase in staffing, which has hindered the consistency and quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, pupils' progress is not as rapid as it could be.
- Sometimes, pupils are not challenged by the tasks they are set. Teachers are not using pupils' assessment information precisely enough to inform their planning. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able, are not making good progress.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not checked regularly. Any review of the impact of the support these pupils receive does not focus on whether the attainment of these pupils has risen. Consequently, the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not rapid enough.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading and grammar. This new approach aims to challenge pupils to use inference and deduction when reading. Occasionally, work is not set at the right level and some pupils are completing work that is too easy or too hard. In some instances, teachers' and teaching assistants' subject knowledge is not good and grammar is taught incorrectly.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to practise their writing skills across the curriculum. Writing tasks are often the same for all pupils, which can result in the middle-ability and most-able pupils not being suitably challenged to improve their writing skills. These pupils do not make good progress.
- In mathematics, most teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems and to develop their ability to reason.
- Where learning is more effective, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use pupils' assessment information effectively to set appropriate tasks. Teachers challenge pupils to reason and deepen their understanding through effective questioning. Pupils make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported. Adults are careful to ensure that pupils understand the tasks, and reshape where necessary to ensure that pupils understand. A programme to develop early English skills equips pupils new to the country with words and phrases to help them adjust and settle quickly.
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 and early years is effective. Pupils use and apply their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words and enjoy the range of books available.
- Pupils in key stage 2 are encouraged to choose their own reading books from a recommended list. They are supported to make appropriate choices matched to their ability. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home and their reading records show that they are motivated and well supported by their parents.
- Teaching assistants, working alongside teachers, are used well to support learning. They use effective questioning to develop pupils' understanding and intervene to

reshape learning when pupils need extra support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff quickly assess the welfare needs of pupils new to the school. Leaders meet with the families of these pupils and where appropriate put support in place to ensure a smooth transition. As a result, these pupils settle well.
- Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They understand that pupils at the school come from many different countries and are proud of the different languages they speak. They understand that other people's lives may be different from their own and value these differences. The welcome existing pupils give to newcomers contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils entering the school speaking little or no English.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they felt safe in school and that incidents of bullying were rare. They said that they know where they can go if they have a concern or problem and how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know that they must not share personal information on the internet. Teachers remind pupils often about how to keep safe online.
- Pupils know how to live healthy lifestyles. They appreciate the range of extra-curricular clubs available to them, such as those for archery and basketball.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Sometimes, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and find the work too easy, because teachers do not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve. As a result, pupils who disengage are not encouraged to get back to their work straightaway and they can occasionally distract other pupils. Some adults do not tackle poor behaviour in class quickly enough.
- In classrooms, there are occasions when pupils are not respectful of adults. Adults do not always challenge this poor behaviour. When pupils are removed from class due to poor behaviour, the school's agreed response is not applied consistently and consequently, some pupils miss learning.
- At breaktimes, pupils play well together. Pupils behave well around the school. They are polite and respectful of visitors, greeting them, waiting on the stairs and holding doors open for them.
- Leaders are proactive in securing pupils' good attendance. Leaders carefully monitor cases of persistent absence. The family support worker meets with families to secure better attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because pupils are not making good progress throughout the school. In 2017, the school's own assessment information suggests that standards dipped in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2.
- In 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was below the national average. The use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not sharply targeted. Because of this, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not making as much progress as other pupils in the school.
- A minority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make good progress from their starting points. Their progress is not checked on regularly and support is not always focused on raising their attainment.
- Pupils' attainment in reading has been below the national average in key stage 1 for the last two years. Leaders have made changes to how reading is taught across the school. However, this has only had a limited time to affect pupils' progress and attainment.
- In writing, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in key stage 2 was in line with the national average in 2016. However, the school's own assessment of progress and attainment for the end of key stage 2, in 2017, shows that achievement has dipped. Writing at key stage 1 has improved and is broadly average. Writing in current pupils' workbooks shows that guidance provided by teachers is helping to improve pupils' writing skills.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 was slightly above the national average. Consequently, the majority pupils are leaving the school prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics in key stage 2 has been broadly average. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at key stage 1 has been below the national average. However, this is now rising.
- Lower attaining pupils make better progress than their peers, and in writing and mathematics are performing better than lower attaining pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved and is now in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Assessment of children's progress is continuous. Staff use a new electronic assessment system that enables staff to record children's achievements instantly. They share children's achievements with children's parents and encourage them to record their children's achievements at home using the online system. This means that adults in early years are able to build on children's learning that happens at home.
- The learning environment across early years is safe, bright and vibrant. Activities are well thought out, providing children with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding. For example, the well-resourced writing table enabled children to practise their letter formation and early phonics skills. They were able to use letter mats to find sounds and write words with support from adults.

- Adults in early years enable children to develop their independent skills because routines are well embedded. For example, children are encouraged to put on their own aprons, hang up their coats and help themselves to their fruit break. Children feel safe, and willingly try out new learning experiences. Adults are vigilant of the needs of children, but also enable them to become independent.
- Children enjoy playing outside because adults engage them in purposeful play. For example, children were enthusiastically making mud pies and cakes. They were encouraged to think about what ingredients they were using to make them. During this activity, children engaged in purposeful play using good manners.
- The early years leader has a clear view of the progress made by different groups of children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children. Support is targeted to meet the needs of children, for example, in a programme to help them to develop fine motor skills.
- Children are kind and caring towards one another, and are keen to share their thoughts with each other and adults. They are inquisitive and eager to learn, making the most of the stimulating and vibrant learning activities available to them.
- Teachers and teaching assistants communicate well with parents, providing information about how their child can be supported at home. Close links between home and school mean that children settle quickly. Any additional needs are quickly identified and support is put in place.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective. Teachers and teaching assistants have a good understanding of children's needs, and act quickly to put appropriate support in place.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception Year is just below average. The majority of children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1. However, expectations of what children can achieve are occasionally too low, and some children do not make as much progress as they could.

School details

Unique reference number	121924
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10036010

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	374
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vanessa Bradley
Headteacher	Penny Howell
Telephone number	01604 753830
Website	www.chiltern.northants.sch.uk
Email address	bursar@chiltern.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Chiltern Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in 13 classes. Children in Reception Year are taught full time and in two classes, with their own outdoor provision.
- The school has increased in size from 223 pupils in 2013 to 374 pupils in 2017.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a number of lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. They observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils read. The inspectors also talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work in all year groups to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, subject- and middle leaders, and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors also spoke with the local authority link adviser.
- The inspectors spoke with parents informally and considered the 19 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's own self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the health, safety and safeguarding of pupils; the school's most recent data relating to the attendance of pupils; and minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

Inspection team

Helen Williams, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Tuffin	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Damien Turrell	Ofsted Inspector

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