

# Carr Junior School

Ostman Road, Acomb, York, North Yorkshire YO26 5QA

## Inspection dates

7–8 February 2018

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning varies between year groups, which leads to variability in pupils' outcomes, particularly in writing.
- Over time, pupils' outcomes have been below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at both the expected and higher standard. The Department for Education (DfE) categorises the school as a coasting school.
- Differences between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are wider than those seen nationally.
- While outcomes are improving rapidly, there is still some variability in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard, particularly in writing.
- While leaders have prioritised pupils' pastoral care, the planned curriculum for pupils' personal development has not been adjusted to reflect fully the current requirements for schools.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and keen to contribute to the school's improvement. However, they are not fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- Governors are improving their expertise. Over time, systems to enable them to hold leaders to account for pupils' progress and to evaluate the impact of additional funding have been underdeveloped.
- Leaders' action plans are not sharply enough linked to the gains sought in pupils' outcomes, in order for them to be accurately evaluated for impact.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has accurately identified the school's weaknesses and has implemented changes that are now leading to rapid improvement.
- A range of extra-curricular activities and trips supports effectively the wider curriculum.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well and take pride in their work.
- Many lower- and middle-ability pupils are now making the progress they should.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and the vast majority of parents endorse their views.

## Full report

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

- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management further by:
  - providing training and support for subject leaders, to enable them to extend their responsibilities into monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school
  - ensuring that action plans are linked sharply to the gains in pupils' outcomes that leaders desire, at both the expected and higher standard
  - developing the planned curriculum for pupils' personal and social development, so that it is reflective of contemporary issues and national guidance
  - ensuring that the school's website meets with the government's statutory requirements
  - developing governors' expertise in holding school leaders to account more effectively for pupils' outcomes.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by:
  - raising the level of challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils
  - eliminating the variabilities in the quality of teaching between classes.
- Build upon the recent improvements in pupils' achievement, so that:
  - the school is no longer categorised as 'coasting' by the DfE
  - differences between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others diminish more rapidly, especially at the higher standard
  - more pupils are able to reach the standards of which they are capable, especially at the higher standard, and particularly in writing.

An external review of governance is recommended.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding is recommended.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The headteacher cares deeply about the pupils in her charge and places pupils' well-being at the heart of the school's ethos. She recognises that, over time, prioritising pupils' pastoral care has been at the expense of improving pupils' academic outcomes.
- In January 2017, the school received notification from the DfE identifying it as a 'coasting' school. This acted as a catalyst for change and re-energised senior leaders. Recent actions have raised expectations considerably and led to the rapid improvement in pupils' outcomes. While these improvements are notable, there remains some variability in pupils' outcomes, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard.
- Subject leaders think carefully about the planned elements of the curriculum. They consider curriculum experiences that will engage pupils in their learning and will ensure that pupils have opportunities to apply appropriately their basic literacy and mathematical skills. However, their limited role in monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning makes it difficult for them to evaluate accurately the impact of their actions and, therefore, contribute more significantly to school improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Subjects are taught through a thematic approach. Pupils gain access to a range of rich experiences which support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example through visits out of school and receiving visitors. However, the planned curriculum for pupils' personal development is not fully reflective of current national guidelines, limiting pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders recognised the shortcomings in the school's previous assessment system. They have worked successfully to develop an assessment system that tracks effectively the progress of individual pupils and different groups of pupils. It enables leaders to identify quickly any pupils falling behind in their learning. As a result, outcomes for pupils currently in the school are improving rapidly, and the vast majority of pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations by the end of the school year. This represents better progress from their starting points than in previous years.
- Leaders use the assessment information effectively to inform their priorities for improvement. However, while leaders generate lots of detailed information, action plans do not focus sharply enough on the desired gains in pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher has strengthened the performance management system for staff. It now aligns teachers' individual targets with whole-school goals. This is holding teachers to account more effectively for pupils' achievements and contributing to their improving outcomes across the school.
- Senior leaders have developed a strong affiliation with the local community and their and pupils' involvement in community activities is strong. More recently, links to the neighbouring infant school have strengthened and enable greater alignment of policy and practice. This is improving the transition arrangements for pupils as they move from key stage 1 into key stage 2.
- The local authority has facilitated effective support from a local consultant

headteacher, and partnerships with other schools. Such actions enable leaders at all levels to share good practice and effectively refine their systems.

- Recently, there has been considerable investment in staff training and development. This is aligned closely to the school's improvement priorities and is strengthening the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively to enable these pupils to make strong progress from their starting points. Equally strong partnerships with a range of external agencies provide effective advice and support to school leaders and teachers.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding is used to encourage pupils' engagement in sporting competition and a range of activities. The school's on-site swimming pool has enabled most pupils to achieve the 25 metres award, by the time they reach Year 6. However, leaders acknowledge they are not measuring effectively how well the sport funding is improving pupils' achievement across all aspects of PE or raising pupils' levels of fitness. They are taking action to remedy this weakness.
- Additional funding received to support disadvantaged pupils is now used effectively to diminish the differences in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils. Improvements to the school's assessment system pinpoint precisely any gaps in these pupils' learning. A raft of interventions are organised quickly, to ensure that pupils 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'. Such is the effectiveness of leaders' actions that there is a marked reduction in the differences between disadvantaged pupils' achievement compared with that of other pupils. Despite the evident improvement in the quality of these pupils' work now, the school's written pupil premium strategy does not meet with the government's statutory requirements.
- The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school. Most of the parental free-text responses to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View, are positive. One parent said, 'My child is happy and confident and a valued member of the school community.' However, a small minority of parents are less positive about the school, particularly in the school's handling of bullying allegations.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are committed to the school. They show an understanding of the school's strategic priorities and its strengths and areas for improvement. Governors manage the school's finances effectively, but accept that, over time, they have not been as effective in holding school leaders to account for pupils' outcomes.
- Systems to manage the performance of teachers, including the headteacher, are now in place and support the improvements made to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Historically, governors had not checked rigorously that these systems were being used effectively to hold teachers to account for pupils' performance.
- Governors visit the school regularly to check leaders are putting the school's policies into practice. A dedicated safeguarding governor checks that all necessary checks on staff are made and risk assessments are completed. Consequently, the school provides a safe environment for pupils and staff.
- Governors have recently undertaken a skills audit. This has enabled them to identify

where their strengths lie and to appoint future governors with the complementary skills needed to improve further their effectiveness.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Checks made on staff and volunteers working in the school are detailed and recorded carefully. Leaders take all possible steps to ensure that all staff appointed to the school pose no risk to pupils. Leaders are especially vigilant in the checks they make regarding the on-site swimming pool.
- Training is completed regularly, although staff have only very recently completed some aspects of the online units relating to the 'Prevent' agenda.
- The school works with a range of agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Leaders act swiftly whenever there are any concerns about a pupil. They ensure that all necessary steps are taken with relevant stakeholders to provide any additional support that is needed to keep pupils safe and secure.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know that there is always someone they can go to if they have a concern.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Leaders now check the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously than was previously the case. A strong programme of coaching and mentoring ensures that the quality of teaching across the school is improving. Despite this, there remains some variability in its quality between classes.
- A new approach to teaching writing, introduced at the start of the academic year, is consistent across all year groups. It focuses heavily upon teachers modelling the process of writing to pupils before they begin to write independently. While the progress of pupils with low and middle prior attainment is accelerating as a result of this approach, it is less successful in ensuring the good progress of the most able pupils. For example, the approach is not enabling the most able pupils to develop their creative flair or to fully enhance their skills to write consistently at the higher standard.
- Changes to the teaching of mathematics and the significant investment in mathematics resources ensure that pupils practise consistently their skills of fluency, reasoning and problem-solving. Although this is improving pupils' outcomes overall, occasionally pupils spend too long consolidating skills rather than moving onto more challenging activities of which they are capable.
- Leaders have adjusted the timetable to allow for a daily reading session dedicated to improving pupils' comprehension skills. Teachers ask probing questions to make pupils think hard about the authors' intentions.
- Investment in new reading materials and library membership for all pupils are instilling in them a love of reading. Such actions are contributing to the improvements seen in pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching assistants offer effective support. They are involved in planning and are clear

about the level of support they need to provide to individuals and small groups of pupils.

- Homework is regular and related to the work completed in class. Some parents raised their concerns to inspectors that the volume of homework received by pupils was too high.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The school's planned curriculum for pupils' personal and social development focuses strongly upon developing their respect for others and promoting pupils' mental and physical well-being. However, it does not tackle some of the more difficult and contemporary issues faced by pupils, such as extremism, radicalisation and gender orientation.
- Pupils know what bullying is and appreciate the importance of telling an adult. They have great confidence that should an issue arise in school, it will be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Records maintained by the school are reflective of this. Pupils' understanding of other forms of bullying, such as homophobic bullying, is less secure.
- Leaders and staff are committed to ensuring that pupils are safe and cared for well. They celebrate the uniqueness of all pupils and work effectively to ensure that pupils are confident and self-assured individuals. Pupils, who say that they feel safe and happy in school, endorse this.
- Leaders have worked successfully with pupils to develop their social responsibility. Older pupils are involved in the Archbishop of York's 'Young leaders' programme and act as peer mediators and buddies at playtimes. Pupils also raise money for local charities. For example, they organised Christmas hampers for the more elderly members of the local community.
- Attendance is in line with the national average for primary schools. Leaders have worked diligently and effectively with parents and carers and pupils to improve pupils' attendance further. Through a mixture of support and challenge, leaders are reducing absenteeism compared with previous years.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have introduced an approach to managing behaviour based upon restorative practice. Pupils respond well to this approach and it has reduced the incidents of poor behaviour at the school.
- Pupils are productive learners who apply themselves positively in lessons and enjoy the opportunities they receive to work collaboratively with each other. They respond positively to the high expectations placed upon them by teachers to become more resilient in their learning and to 'give things a go'.

- Pupils' movement around the school is orderly and they take pride in their school and their work. This is demonstrated by pupils' good manners and their well-presented work.
- Playtimes are lively occasions. Younger and older pupils access different playgrounds to allow them to play safely a range of high-energy games. Playgrounds are well resourced and well supervised. There is a raft of playtime clubs, such as chess and computing, which are available for those pupils who want something a little less energetic.
- Although there has been a rise in fixed-term exclusions this academic year, pupils with more challenging behaviours are managed effectively and sensitively. The 'Hive' provides a safe haven for more vulnerable pupils, who sometimes require a more nurturing environment.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Historically, pupils' outcomes in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have not been good enough. Pupils' progress and their attainment have been below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, at both the expected and higher standard. This led to the school being classified, by the DfE, as a 'coasting' school.
- In 2017, the differences between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of other pupils were greater than those seen nationally. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes fell into the bottom 10% of all schools nationally.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have raised expectations and their actions have ensured that outcomes for pupils currently in the school are much stronger in all year groups. Evidence from pupils' assessment information and work seen in pupils' books, indicate that the vast majority of pupils are now on track to reach age-related expectations at the end of the academic year. While this represents a marked improvement in pupils' outcomes, there remain some weaknesses. Leaders recognise that this improvement needs to be built on so that more pupils are able to achieve in line with their capabilities, especially at the higher standard. This is particularly so in writing.
- Pupils' reading fluency is improving, partly because of the army of volunteers who listen to pupils read each day. 'Catch-up phonics' is in place for those pupils who did not achieve the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1. As a result of additional support, pupils' reading ages after one term are improving by an average of 13 months, which is an improvement on previous terms.
- Pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is improving at the same rate as that of pupils' basic skills. Pupils develop their subject-specific skills, while consolidating their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points. This is because of the targeted support and care they receive.
- Pupils from lower- and middle-prior-attaining groups are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as a result of the changes made by leaders. Progress remains more variable for the most able pupils.

## School details

Unique reference number	121272
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10042218

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Langton
Headteacher	Caroline Ryder
Telephone number	01904 798996
Website	<a href="http://www.carrjunior.co.uk">www.carrjunior.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:carrjunior@york.gov.uk">carrjunior@york.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14–15 January 2014

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website for reports relating to the school's use of the primary school physical education and sport funding and the pupil premium funding.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased since the last inspection and the school is now of average size.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6, but falls into the DfE's definition for a coasting school.
- The school is currently within a period of consultation for academy conversion.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning, covering all classes in the school. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors during these observations.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders. Inspectors met three members of the governing body. Inspectors also met with the local authority's school improvement partner and the headteacher of the partner school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes and around the school. Inspectors talked with pupils about their learning, both formally and informally, and listened to them read.
- Inspectors talked with parents at the end of the school day and took account of the 68 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 59 free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors looked at the school's documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Diane Buckle, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ian Clennan	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Turner	Ofsted Inspector

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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](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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