

# The National Church of England Junior School, Grantham

Castlegate, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6SR

## Inspection dates

12–13 June 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	Good
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

- Although school leaders are bringing about many improvements to the school, teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Over time, senior leaders have not addressed effectively all of the weaknesses found at the time of the last inspection.
- The overall progress of those pupils who need to catch up, or who are disadvantaged, is not sufficiently rapid for them to attain well enough by the time they leave the school.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged in their work across subjects. They are not regularly given enough hard work that makes them think sufficiently.
- After pupils have done work, teachers do not regularly give them sufficiently clear information about their work and what they need to improve next.
- Pupils are not consistently told when they have made a mistake in their work. As a result, some pupils continue to make errors because they do not know that they have made them.
- Teachers do not expect all pupils to present their work as neatly as they can. Some of the work pupils hand in is messy and hurried.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strength of the school. The school's ethos means that pupils become highly reflective, thoughtful, caring young people who cooperate with others very well.
- Staff teach pupils fundamental British values consistently well. Pupils feel listened to, they are very respectful of others and understand the need to follow the school's rules.
- Pupils' overall behaviour is good. In lessons, they listen carefully to staff and try their best. They walk around school sensibly, play safely together and are very polite to visitors.
- The school's provision for teaching music is of high quality. As a result, a large proportion of pupils learn a musical instrument, as well as take part in groups such as the school choir and orchestra.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, and thereby pupils' outcomes, to consistently good by ensuring that:
  - teachers give pupils who are of lower ability, or who are disadvantaged, work that closely meets their needs so that they can make rapid progress and catch up with their peers nationally
  - the most able pupils are consistently challenged in their work across subjects by being given work that makes them think hard
  - all pupils receive clear and accurate guidance, in line with the school's policy, so that they know how well they have done and what they need to improve next
  - teachers ensure that they correct pupils' misconceptions effectively
  - teachers have high expectations of all pupils to present their work neatly and, where pupils do not do this, teachers notice and act promptly to secure improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Though the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher, along with subject leaders, are driving up the quality of teaching across the school, it is not yet consistently good. Leaders over time have not secured teaching that sufficiently meets the needs of different pupils and allows them to make consistently strong progress across a wide range of subjects. Too many pupils have left the school without secure knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Over time, senior leaders have not ensured that all the weaknesses from the last inspection have been addressed effectively. In 2014, inspectors found a number of areas that needed to be improved. These included, for example, pupils being given feedback from teachers so that they understood the next steps in their learning, as well as ensuring that pupils set out their work neatly. Inspectors found that these continued to be among the weaknesses they saw.
- Current senior leaders are improving the school, and these improvements are being implemented thoroughly. Senior leaders ensured that all staff were trained to understand and use, for example, the school's new behaviour system. As a result, this approach is now embedded well across all year groups and classes. Teachers are receiving training and support as the school introduces, for instance, its new system for teaching mathematics.
- Leaders are monitoring increasingly effectively. This is helping teachers to see their own effectiveness and to improve where they need to. The school's system of performance management holds staff to account for the achievement of pupils in their class.
- The curriculum is thoughtfully designed to be both broad and balanced, and to be interesting for pupils. Pupils in Year 4 learn about, for example, the Anglo Saxons and Vikings in 'Life – how it was and is now', while those in Year 6 study coastal habitats and Cubism in 'Bread of Life'. Staff consider the knowledge that they want pupils to learn over time so that they can build on what they have taught pupils previously. For example, pupils in Year 3 learn the names of different parts of a plant. In Year 5, pupils return to this to study the functions of each part in much greater detail. This helps pupils to know and remember more. The curriculum is enhanced by many interesting activities and trips, including, for the eldest pupils, an extended residential visit to France. There is a good variety of extra-curricular clubs that pupils enjoy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The school's values, promoted continually in assemblies and in lessons, reflect its caring ethos and the emphasis on the development of 'the whole child'. As a result, pupils are highly reflective, and are able to consider questions such as, 'What would it look like if you thought of peace?' Their character is developed well so that they want to help others and 'do the right thing'. They have a good understanding of a range of other cultures and, for example, sponsor a child in the Gambia so that they can attend school each day.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils are insistent that it is

important to value and respect everyone, regardless of their appearance, beliefs, culture, ability, country of origin or individual needs. They firmly believe that everyone is equal and are proud to be part of a school where staff listen to them and take their views into account. They follow the rules they have helped to create because they understand that they keep everyone happy and safe.

- Leaders spend the additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities well. The extra support these pupils receive helps them to improve their knowledge and skills over time.
- Despite the school's core provision for disadvantaged pupils not consistently meeting their academic needs well enough, the additional pupil premium funding is used well. Leaders use a portion of it on counselling to improve pupil's well-being and to ensure that they are ready to learn, as well as on measures to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils who do not come to school regularly enough. A good deal of the funding is spent on small group work to help disadvantaged pupils to learn and to catch up with their learning.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used well to help improve pupils' enjoyment and participation in sport. Leaders complete a detailed annual audit to ensure that it is having the impact that they intend. Pupils take part in many sporting competitions in the local area, as well as extra-curricular opportunities such as cricket and gymnastics.
- A large majority of parents who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to others. A very large majority stated that their child was safe, happy and well looked after.

## **Governance of the school**

- The board of trustees is increasingly holding senior leaders to account for the achievement of pupils. This is because the current senior leadership team is giving the trustees more detailed information about the gains pupils are making, and about the quality of teaching across the school. Trustees keep a close strategic eye on spending so that staffing is appropriate and that sensible, prudent decisions are made in order to prevent either a potential overspend, or an undue financial surplus being built up.
- Trustees check that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They make sure that, for example, the school's single central register of staff is complete, that risk assessments are conducted where needed and that, for example, new staff are quickly given a good understanding of safeguarding procedures.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are well trained in safeguarding so that they can identify the many indicators of potential harm to a child.
- There is a clear culture of vigilance in the school from all staff. All adults recognise the importance of their responsibility to help keep pupils safe, and to report quickly any

safeguarding concerns they have to leaders, however slight these concerns may be.

- Leaders make prompt and effective referrals to external agencies where this is needed. They work well with parents and carers, including the creation of a dedicated page on the school's website with useful information about how parents can keep their child safe while using the internet.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. While some pupils do well, teachers do not ensure that others learn as well as they could do.
- Teachers do not consistently give those pupils who are disadvantaged, or who have lower ability, work that matches their needs. Although inspectors saw a good number of instances where the work teachers are setting is appropriate for them, there are too many occasions when these pupils do not understand it sufficiently. When this happens, the progress for these pupils slows.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge the most able pupils across a wide range of different subjects. For example, in history and geography, inspectors saw repeated instances of these pupils being given work that was almost the same as, or was identical to, that given not only to pupils of typical ability, but to the least able too.
- Teachers do not regularly tell pupils well enough how to improve. Pupils do not understand sufficiently clearly what they have got right, and what particular skill they need to focus upon learning next. Inspectors saw instances where pupils had marked their own work, but the teacher had not checked that this was accurate. As a result, pupils thought they had understood something, but they had not. On other occasions, teachers mark work but do not consistently address pupils' errors. As a result, pupils continue to make the same errors in subsequent pieces of work.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation are not consistently high enough. Pupils are keen to show their work, but this can result in some of them hurrying it and not presenting it carefully. Teachers do not regularly insist that all pupils should write as neatly as they can or show them sufficiently well how to do this.
- During class discussions, teachers explain things using the technical language of a subject to pupils in a way that most pupils can grasp. Inspectors saw how teachers in Year 5 helped pupils gain a good understanding of the Islamic faith by explaining to them the significance of, for example, the washing of hands. On another occasion, teachers in Year 3 were teaching pupils effectively the meaning of the word 'perpendicular' and showing how this could help them to explain particular angles between two straight lines.
- Staff are friendly and approachable and are good role models for pupils. Pupils see that both teachers and teaching assistants are respectful towards them and are interested in their opinions. Pupils say that staff help them to understand the importance of working hard, listening carefully and contributing in class. Pupils say that teachers make work interesting for them.
- Staff give good support to pupils who speak English as an additional language. This

helps them to make good gains over time. Inspectors saw how staff engaged these pupils with, for instance, guided reading about the football World Cup. Pupils were keen to read more to find out as much as possible.

- Teachers design their lessons so that, as well as pupils working independently, pupils can collaborate with a wide range of their peers in groups of different sizes. Pupils whom inspectors met with told them how they regularly worked in pairs with different classmates, small and large teams, and as a whole class.
- Staff have a good knowledge about the needs and achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. These pupils are well taught overall. Teaching assistants play a valuable part in helping these pupils to become more independent over time.
- Pupils are keen to read widely and often. They use an online system that records precisely how many words they have read in their reading books. Pupils are very keen to see which class can read the most. At the time of the inspection, one of the Year 5 classes had read 4,960,812 words between them.
- Teachers set homework that is both useful to pupils and interesting to them. Pupils were particularly keen to tell inspectors how much they enjoy taking part in the 'research projects' that they are asked to complete over a number of weeks. Pupils like this very much because it gives them an opportunity to show what they have learned while giving them a wide choice on how they can do so. Pupils in Year 5, for example, explained to inspectors how, as part of their history work, they had made digital presentations about Henry VIII and the food and drink people consumed during the period, and had made detailed model Tudor villages.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff are caring and are always mindful of the need to promote pupils' well-being. They model positive attitudes to learning and to life and this helps pupils to learn resilience and builds their confidence. A dedicated mentor provides valuable support to those pupils who need additional emotional help.
- Pupils do not mind making mistakes. This is because staff show them that making occasional errors is useful in helping everyone to learn. Inspectors saw teachers discussing what lessons can be drawn from the 'marvellous mistakes' that adults and children can make.
- Staff give pupils a good understanding of how to stay safe. Pupils are taught, in an age-appropriate way, about a variety of potential risks to themselves, such as busy roads and strangers. Pupils are also taught well about the internet. They could tell inspectors how staff teach them not to give their details online and to report immediately, to an adult they trust, if they see or receive an image or message that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They understand the need to eat a balanced diet and how they should take plenty of exercise. They are keen to take

part in the many opportunities staff provide for sport and games.

- Pupils have a strong understanding of the rights of all children to, for example, protection from harm, and privacy. Each class has a 'UNICEF Rights Respecting Leader' member who regularly helps remind his or her peers of everyone's responsibilities to promote these. This helps pupils be aware of when someone might be being unkind, either to themselves or to someone they know.
- Although a small minority of parents expressed concerns over the level of bullying in the school, and questioned the effectiveness of staff's response to this, the large number of pupils whom inspectors met throughout the inspection consistently explained how bullying was actually very rare. They were keen to tell inspectors how it, and any infrequent name-calling which takes place, are consistently dealt with promptly, fairly and effectively by staff. Pupils were insistent that they feel safe in school, and that they can talk to staff if they are ever worried.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils explained to inspectors how, earlier this academic year, they wanted to improve behaviour in the school. In particular, they wanted to reduce the number of times someone was hurt in the playgrounds. Through the school council, they worked with leaders to rewrite the school's approach to managing behaviour. They told inspectors how implementing this had resulted in big improvements. They are especially pleased that everyone can now play together safely.
- Pupils behave well in class. They pay attention to staff, follow instructions and are keen to answer the questions they are asked.
- Pupils value their school. They wear their uniform smartly and do not drop litter. They move around the school in a calm manner. They are consistently polite to visitors.
- Staff are working very effectively with the small number of pupils who find it difficult to control their own behaviour. As a result, the behaviour of these pupils improves considerably over time.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn. Leaders and staff ensure that they celebrate when pupils attend well with certificates and awards of 'the attendance cup'. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving and is in line with the national average. The level of persistent absence, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is reducing. Leaders are working well to improve the attendance of the small number of families whose children do not come to school regularly enough.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Published figures indicate that pupils over time have not made enough academic progress. Since the last inspection, the progress that successive Year 6 cohorts have

made during their time at the school has been below, and often well below, the national average.

- For the past four years, pupils' overall attainment has been below, or significantly below, the national average. For instance, apart from in writing in 2016, lower proportions than the national averages have attained the expected standard in all subjects in the past two years.
- The progress that disadvantaged pupils make from their starting points is not rapid enough for them to catch up with others nationally by the time they leave. In both of the last two years, only around three in ten of these pupils in the Year 6 cohorts attained the combined expected standard. Not enough of these pupils enter secondary school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.
- The progress that lower-ability pupils make overall is similar to that of disadvantaged pupils. Not enough of them make substantial enough progress for them to attain well.
- The most able pupils in the school do not make the rapid progress that they are capable of in subjects other than in English and mathematics.
- During the inspection, the school produced data and information that indicated that pupils' current achievement was much more positive than that shown in published results. Inspectors tested this rigorously by undertaking a very extensive scrutiny of pupils' exercise books alongside senior and subject leaders. This included English and mathematics and work in other subjects, in all year groups and from all abilities, as well as from disadvantaged pupils. This showed conclusively that the pupils' overall progress is not yet consistently good. Though the gains that pupils are making have been considerably better from the start of this term, progress is not sufficiently strong across year groups and subjects, nor has this improvement been sufficiently embedded in order to demonstrate enduring impact.
- Pupils make good progress and attain well in science. The proportion of pupils in successive Year 6 cohorts who have met the standard expected for their age has been in line with the national average.
- Pupils make strong progress in music. They become competent singers from a young age and are skilled in composing music using instruments such as the glockenspiel. A high proportion of pupils sing in the school choir or perform in the school orchestra. Large numbers learn to play instruments, for example the flute, clarinet, violin or cello. Pupils regularly take part in performances and music festivals.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good overall progress in their learning. Many of these pupils have particularly complex needs but are nevertheless making sufficiently effective gains overall in their learning.



## School details

Unique reference number	138282
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10041600

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Darren Thorpe
Headteacher	Anne Platt (Executive Headteacher)
Telephone number	01476 563 895
Website	<a href="http://www.nationaljuniorschool.com">www.nationaljuniorschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@national.lincs.sch.uk">enquiries@national.lincs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	23–24 January 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average school compared to others of the same type.
- It is part of a small trust of two schools called the Harrowby/National Academies Trust. A good proportion of the pupils transfer from the other school in the trust, Harrowby Church of England Infant School. The two schools share the same board of trustees and the same executive headteacher.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based

on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015–2017.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes. Five of the observations took place accompanied by the executive headteacher or deputy headteacher. In total, 26 lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed. The inspectors also scrutinised many examples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team held meetings with the senior leaders, subject leaders, representatives of the board of trustees and pupils. They analysed 102 responses on the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, looked at the free-text comments submitted by those parents, and spoke with parents at the beginning of the day. The inspectors also scrutinised the views of those who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, policies and records related to safeguarding, records of pupils' behaviour, the school's information about pupils' outcomes and attendance, and records of meetings of the board of trustees.

## Inspection team

Roary Pownall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Stevens	Her Majesty's Inspector
Karen Slack	Ofsted Inspector
Kelly Lee	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

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).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2018