

# Town Field Primary School

Thorne Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN1 2JS

## Inspection dates

23–24 October 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- In key stages 1 and 2, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable across subjects and year groups. As a result, pupils' progress is not consistently good.
- Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. A third of pupils move on to the next stage of their education without the skills and knowledge they need.
- In mathematics, pupils, particularly the most able, do not receive sufficient challenge. This has led to a decline over the last three years in the proportion of pupils reaching higher standards by the end of key stage 2.
- Despite improvements to the teaching of reading comprehension, pupils do not always receive effective guidance from teachers on how to deepen their understanding of texts.
- Leaders' plans for improvement lack precision and their checks on the quality of teaching are not thorough enough. Consequently, improvements are not rapid.
- Governors' understanding of pupils' outcomes lacks the detail needed to hold leaders to account effectively.
- Improvements to pupils' performance in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, and in their presentation of work, are not as rapid or as consistent as they could be. This is because teachers' expectations in this regard are too variable across subjects.
- Many leaders are new to their roles. They are not checking rigorously on the difference they make to pupils' outcomes. Therefore, their impact is hindered and improvements are slowed.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have been effective in developing a caring ethos, where pupils' social and communication skills are fostered. As a result, pupils are polite, welcoming and considerate of others. Leaders have successfully reduced the rate of fixed-term exclusions.
- The teaching of phonics is good.
- Teaching in the early years is effective and results in children making good progress, often from low starting points.
- Improvements to the teaching of reading and writing are beginning to impact positively on pupils' outcomes.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that they are consistently good or better, and improve pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - pupils consistently receive high-quality explanations, questioning and demonstrations which support their development of a deep mathematical understanding
  - all pupils, particularly the most able, receive work which is sufficiently challenging in mathematics
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' application of English grammar, punctuation and spelling knowledge across all subjects and lessons
  - teachers shape pupils' responses to reading comprehension questions effectively to strengthen pupils' understanding of texts
  - further improvements to pupils' presentation and handwriting are extended across all subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good or better
  - plans for improving the school are precise and focus tightly on gains in pupils' outcomes
  - governors hold leaders to account effectively in relation to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
  - thorough and timely checks on, and evaluation of, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are used to inform leaders' next steps
  - senior and middle leaders receive further professional development to enable them to take responsibility for improvements in teaching, learning and assessment in all subjects.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not been fully effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, therefore, pupils' outcomes are consistently good. Although leaders have tackled the priorities for improvement identified at the last inspection, they have not been fully successful. For example, improvements to the teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling are evident in pupils' writing books. However, teachers' expectations of pupils' application of these skills in other subjects are not high enough. As a result, pupils repeat errors and their progress is not maximised.
- New approaches to the teaching of reading and writing, which leaders have introduced, were successful in raising attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 from a low starting point in 2016 and 2017. However, the quality of teaching of reading comprehension skills, and particularly the effectiveness of guidance that teachers offer to pupils, varies considerably across year groups.
- Leaders have identified that, over time, the quality of teaching in mathematics has not enabled pupils, particularly the most able, to make strong progress and reach the higher standards. This is because the teaching pupils receive does not represent a suitable level of challenge. Leaders introduced a new approach this September, aimed at tackling these issues. However, they are at an early stage of implementing this change and improvement is not currently evident.
- Leaders are accurate in their identification of priorities for improvement. However, their plans aimed at delivering improvements lack precision and are not focused tightly enough on the difference they will make to pupils' outcomes. As a result, leaders and governors are not able to hold colleagues to account with sufficient stringency. Therefore, improvements are not as rapid as they could be.
- Many senior and middle leaders are new to their roles. They show enthusiasm for improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility and have strong subject knowledge. Support from the local authority and from the teaching school alliance has been effective in contributing to this growing leadership capacity. However, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are not frequent or rigorous enough to secure rapid and sustained improvement.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Planning is in place to support pupils in building their knowledge and skills in each subject as they move through the school. Leaders recognise that developing communication and speaking skills is a priority for many pupils. As such, the guidance they provide for teachers on how to promote vocabulary and talk in all subjects has been effective in ensuring that pupils have frequent, structured opportunities for speaking. Pupils also have regular opportunities to apply their English and mathematics skills in other subjects. However, because teachers' expectations are not consistently high, pupils do not always apply their skills with the accuracy of which they are capable.
- Leaders have developed a clear ethos in relation to learning, outlined in the 'Town Field 10', and to behaviour, established through the expectation that pupils will display the '3

Cs: calm, careful and considerate' conduct. The heavy emphasis leaders place on pastoral care and pupils' personal development is reflected by staff across the school who create an atmosphere of warmth. Leaders have ensured that pupils arriving in school who are new to the English language are well supported. Parents show great appreciation for the work of school staff and the vast majority would recommend the school. They praise the school, particularly, for providing workshops which have enabled them to support their children's learning at home.

- Leaders have ensured that provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils benefit from engagement in the arts through a wealth of opportunities for drama, music, dance and singing. They learn about a range of different faiths and cultures, and also partake in community and charity work. Consequently, pupils demonstrate understanding of diversity and respect for others.
- Leaders have effective systems in place to identify and support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Two joint special educational needs coordinators possess a high level of expertise. They use this to good effect to advise teaching staff on how best to support individual pupils. They work closely with external agencies where appropriate and with parents and carers. As a result of their effective leadership, this group of pupils makes good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils are well supported through their spending of pupil premium funding. Additional teaching and support for pupils' emotional and social development is matched to pupils' needs. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils currently in school are making strong progress.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sports funding is used well to provide pupils with effective teaching and learning experiences. The quality of teaching in PE has been improved through the use of specialist teachers to both deliver lessons and to train staff. Pupils appreciate the wide range of sporting opportunities they have through participation in extra-curricular clubs and tournaments.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors do not have a detailed enough understanding of pupils' outcomes. Therefore, they are not able to provide meaningful challenge to leaders to improve this aspect. Additionally, because leaders' plans for improvement do not focus tightly on pupils' outcomes, governors are not able to hold them to account with suitable rigour. As a result, pupils' progress is inconsistent across subjects and year groups.
- Governors are involved in the school and are passionate about providing the best possible education for pupils. They understand some of the priorities for improvement and can describe leaders' actions in addressing these areas. However, they do not evaluate the effectiveness of leaders' actions or whether improvements are sufficiently rapid.
- Governors have a secure understanding of how pupil premium funding is used. They understand the barriers to learning which disadvantaged pupils may face and they check that spending impacts positively on their outcomes.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A well-established safeguarding culture is a strength of the school. Leaders ensure that the staff team receive effective safeguarding training and they check regularly that members of staff understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe. As a result, staff are vigilant to pupils' vulnerabilities and make timely referrals to designated staff where needed. Designated staff are swift to contact external agencies where appropriate and they keep detailed records in relation to child protection.
- Safer recruitment procedures are in place. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of staff working with pupils and their records are well maintained.
- Leaders are far from complacent in their safeguarding work and look for further ways to ensure that systems are effective by requesting evaluation from external specialists.
- Pastoral care of pupils is given high priority and this is reflected in the ethos of the school. The 'Thrive Centre' within the school is effective in supporting the social and emotional development of pupils, with a particular focus on vulnerable pupils. Strong relationships exist between staff and pupils. Consequently, pupils say that they feel safe in school and they have confidence in adults to support them with any issues which may arise.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- In key stages 1 and 2, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good in all year groups and subjects. The quality of teaching in mathematics is particularly variable. Teachers' explanations are not always clear and pupils' misconceptions are not always addressed quickly. Too often, the level of challenge in mathematics is not high enough, particularly for the most able pupils. As a result, pupils' progress in mathematics is hindered.
- The new approach to teaching reading comprehension skills introduced last year has been effective in ensuring that pupils have frequent opportunities to practise a range of comprehension skills, including inference. Pupils also have opportunities to acquire new vocabulary through work on word meaning. However, the effectiveness with which adults steer pupils' learning varies considerably. Outside of upper key stage 2, pupils' incorrect answers, or their responses which lack suitable depth, too often go unchallenged. As a result, some pupils repeat their mistakes and some pupils' learning is not extended.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to practise their writing and editing skills in extended pieces. They are motivated to write because their writing has a clear purpose, which is often linked to their topics in other curriculum subjects. Teachers plan sequences of lessons which are effective in building pupils' vocabulary, their stamina for writing and their understanding of the features of genres. Pupils make good progress in these aspects of writing.
- Pupils' writing books show that they are acquiring age-appropriate knowledge in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, their application of this knowledge when they write in other subjects is variable and adults do not consistently

address their errors. As a result, their progress in this aspect of writing is not as rapid as it could be.

- Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work are not consistent across year groups, subjects or, sometimes, lessons within subjects. Consequently, pupils do not always take pride in their work or develop their handwriting skills efficiently.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in supporting pupils to develop their early reading skills. Teachers frequently assess pupils' phonic knowledge and use this to ensure that the books pupils use to practise reading are well matched to their needs. Pupils who are at risk of not reaching the standard expected for their age receive specialist teaching and additional opportunities to practise reading with an adult. From their starting points, pupils make good progress in this area.
- Pupils are motivated by the topics which form the basis of teaching and learning in wider curriculum subjects. Provision for music and PE is a particular strength, with both subjects often being taught by specialist teachers. Pupils show great enthusiasm for the educational visits, including residential trips, which supplement their learning in the wider curriculum.
- Overall, pupils' learning behaviour is very positive because teachers expect this of them. For example, pupils reflect the 'Town Field 10' in their resilience and positive response to correcting errors. The vast majority of pupils demonstrate conscientious attitudes and a strong work ethic. However, when the level of challenge is unsuitable some pupils find it difficult to maintain focus and their attention drifts.
- Teaching assistants often provide highly effective support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They are skilled in providing an appropriate level of intervention which enables pupils to access lessons, without hampering pupils' independence.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills, such as through taking on the roles of junior leadership team member or sports leader. Pupils often act as a 'buddy' for new pupils arriving at the school. Pupils are proud of their multi-lingual skills and many interpret language for new pupils who speak little or no English. As a result of these opportunities, pupils are confident, mature and responsible.
- Using the 'Town Field 10', pupils are able to articulate the qualities developed by effective learners. Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have to learn new skills through the 'Town Field University' and this supports pupils in building their aspirations.
- Pupils are clear in their view that bullying and the use of derogatory language are very rare. Leaders' records support this. Pupils say that they have faith in members of staff to resolve any issues which may arise. Pupils are taught about different religions and cultures and they recognise the diversity which exists within the school community. Pupils spoken to represented the views of many, saying, 'we are all unique in our own way' and 'everybody is different and we tolerate that'. This illustrates the harmonious

atmosphere which permeates the school.

- Pupils benefit from high-quality PE lessons, as well as participation in a wide range of sporting tournaments and extra-curricular clubs. They understand the importance of exercise in developing a healthy body and a healthy mind. Pupils are also knowledgeable about how to stay safe in a range of contexts, including online.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils recognise that behaviour has improved in the school and they say that this is due to leaders' introduction of a clear reward system. Their behaviour around the school is orderly and they are proud members of their school. Rates of fixed-term exclusion had been above average and rising from 2014 to 2016. Leaders have been successful in reducing this figure so that it is now below average.
- The emphasis which leaders have placed on pupils' social and emotional development ensures that pupils cooperate well with others. For example, initiatives such as 'Welcome to the Week' and 'Roots of Empathy' are effective in teaching pupils the skills of social communication and in promoting their understanding of others.
- The school's attendance rates are broadly in line with the national average. Leaders have developed effective systems to promote pupils' good attendance and to tackle any attendance which falls below their expectations. For example, an educational welfare officer works closely with school leaders and, together, they have been successful in improving the attendance of targeted individuals. As a result of leaders' focused work in this area, pupils value their education and can articulate the importance of attending school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils have attendance rates which fall below 90%. This group of pupils is mainly made up of those who have taken an extended holiday in term time. Last year, leaders referred 68 cases to the local authority for taking such leave. Leaders work with determination to reduce the number of pupils affected by such periods of absence.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Over the last two years, by the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics have been below average. Unvalidated data for 2018 shows that pupils' progress in reading and writing, although remaining below average, has improved. However, in mathematics pupils' progress has declined over the last three years and, with it, the proportion of pupils who reach the higher standards of attainment.
- By the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who exceed the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics is often above average. However, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was below average in 2016 and 2018 for reading and writing, and was below average for the last three years in mathematics. This does not represent good progress from their starting points.
- For pupils currently in school, this inconsistency in outcomes is mirrored across subjects and year groups. An established approach to teaching has ensured that

progress in writing is now improved. In reading, pupils' progress is improving due to the strategies leaders have introduced. However, this is not maximised because of the variability in the quality of teaching and assessment. Pupils' progress in mathematics is inconsistent because the teaching they receive is not always effective. Progress for the most able pupils is hindered, particularly in mathematics, because teaching and learning often lacks suitable challenge.

- Approximately a third of pupils reach the end of each key stage without the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of their education. This is partly due to the above-average proportion of pupils who join the school at times other than usual transitions who often speak little or no English. Pupils who are admitted to the school at earlier points tend to reach higher attainment than those joining during key stage 2.
- Leaders have focused their attention on motivating pupils to read. They have introduced strategies aimed at fostering pupils' enthusiasm, including competitions and frequent opportunities for pupils to enjoy books independently. Pupils also benefit from hearing and discussing carefully chosen, age-appropriate, shared class books. The majority of pupils are keen readers. Pupils who are more reluctant to read value the opportunities they have to engage in stories which are read to them.
- Phonics teaching is effective. However, due to pupils' often below-average starting points, the proportion of pupils that reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below average for the last four years. Pupils who have gaps in their phonic knowledge are given additional support in Year 2. Consequently, the proportion of pupils that develop the necessary phonics knowledge by the end of key stage 1 is broadly average.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because of the targeted teaching they receive.
- Due to the additional teaching they received, the majority of disadvantaged pupils made rapid progress last year. However, over time, the rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils have been variable. Consequently, their attainment at the end of key stage 2 lags behind that of other pupils nationally.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership of the early years is strong and this has ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The early years leader is accurate in identifying priorities for improvement. Through delivering staff training, she is effective in ensuring that adults are well equipped to implement improvements successfully.
- Most children join the early years with knowledge and skills which are below those typical for their age. Many children are learning English as an additional language and a significant number have not attended an educational setting before they enter Reception Class. Overall, children make strong progress and approximately two thirds of children reach the standards expected for their age before they leave the early years.
- Adults make accurate assessments of children's knowledge and skills. They use this information to plan the next steps for each individual and then design teaching to match with this. Teacher-led activities represent a suitable level of challenge and adults



are effective in extending children's learning through questioning and modelling. However, children do not always find the activities available for them to choose, which are aimed at developing their reading and writing skills, enticing. Therefore, opportunities for children to consolidate their learning are not always taken.

- The indoor provision relating to other areas of learning is well thought out. As a result, children show independence and they concentrate on activities for extended periods. Leaders recognise that the outdoor provision is less effective in promoting children's creativity than that which is on offer indoors.
- Adults have strong knowledge of phonics and of how children develop early reading skills. They provide suitable challenge for children, including the most able, in adult-led sessions and children enjoy rising to this level of difficulty.
- Strong relationships exist between adults in the early years and parents. Parents make frequent and valuable contributions to their children's assessment information. Effective transition arrangements are in place for children entering and leaving the early years. As a result, children are quick to settle into routines.
- The welfare of the children is prioritised and all requirements are met. Children are well cared for and they develop firm relationships with adults. Adults have high expectations of children and have ensured that routines are well established. As a result, children conduct themselves well and are happy in their learning.

## School details

Unique reference number	106731
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10052874

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	471
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeremy Johnson
Headteacher	Helena Honeybone
Telephone number	01302 368192
Website	<a href="http://www.townfield.doncaster.sch.uk">www.townfield.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@townfield.doncaster.sch.uk">admin@townfield.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	11–12 November 2014

## Information about this school

- Town Field Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school, which has a Nursery for children from the age of three.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed.
- The school is a member of the Partners in Learning teaching school alliance.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- Thirteen different ethnic groups are represented in the school, with the largest being White British, representing approximately 40% of pupils. Approximately half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Over 40 languages are spoken by children in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than usual transition points is above average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegations were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the school in a range of subjects. Many of these observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, a group of governors, a local authority representative and a group of staff. A telephone conversation was held with an external school improvement partner.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, talked to them about their learning and listened to them read. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors gathered pupils' opinions about the school through formal and informal discussions. They also took account of the 31 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and monitoring records of the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors also evaluated information relating to pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the opinions of parents at the start and end of the school day. They also took account of the views of 43 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 23 free-text responses.
- Inspectors were also informed by the 42 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Karine Hendley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lesley Bowyer	Ofsted Inspector
Jim McGrath	Ofsted Inspector

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