

Carcroft Primary School

Owston Road, Carcroft, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN6 8DR

Inspection dates

12–13 December 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
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' and governors' actions have not secured consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across key stages or subjects.
- Senior leaders have not embedded effective, agreed approaches to the teaching of reading or science across key stages. Pupils' outcomes in these subjects are too variable over time.
- Governors' and senior leaders' use of the pupil premium funding has not been successful. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes are not good.
- Subject leadership is of variable quality. Some key leaders are very new to their posts. It is too soon to see the impact of their actions and work.
- Governors are committed to supporting leaders and staff. Their effectiveness in challenging and holding leaders accountable for pupils' outcomes is, however, less well developed.
- A significant minority of parents expressed concerns about the effectiveness of communication between home and school.
- Not all teachers use assessment effectively to plan tasks and learning that accurately match the needs of pupils. Work is too hard or too easy. This hampers pupils' progress.
- Pupils, particularly in early years and key stage 1, have too few opportunities to read with and/or to adults. Books are not well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge and skills.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not suitably challenged in their learning in reading, writing or science.
- In the early years, provision lacks challenge. Learning opportunities in reading, writing and number are not sufficiently demanding.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has successfully improved the culture and ethos within the school. Her innovative vision for the curriculum is firmly based in research and is beginning to bear fruit.
- Staff feel valued and are proud to work here. They appreciate the training and professional development offered by senior leaders.
- Leaders' actions are leading to strengthening progress for key stage 2 pupils in mathematics.
- Pupils' manners and the respect with which they treat visitors are commendable. Wide smiles and polite 'good mornings' abound.
- Staff develop pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leaders' and governors' effectiveness in raising pupils' outcomes by:
 - securing consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across key stages and subjects, holding leaders at all levels accountable for pupils' progress
 - embedding an effective, shared approach to the teaching of reading in each key stage
 - creating a successful system for the teaching, learning and assessment of science
 - equipping all subject leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to improve outcomes for pupils within their areas of responsibility
 - using the pupil premium funding more skilfully to secure rapid progress for disadvantaged pupils and, in particular, the most able disadvantaged pupils
 - developing positive, productive communication with all parents.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in each key stage by:
 - using assessment information incisively to plan tasks and learning that accurately meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that pupils, and children in the early years, regularly read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge and skills, with adults
 - challenge the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in their work and learning, especially in reading, writing and science
 - ensure that provision within the early years presents greater challenge for children in numbers, reading and writing.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium 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 and governors have not ensured that pupils make good progress from their different starting points. The quality of teaching and learning across key stages and subjects remains too variable.
- Leaders' actions have not secured good outcomes for pupils in science over time. Systems trialled this academic year, whereby teaching assistants as well as teachers delivered science programmes of work, have been ineffective. Leaders have recognised this and have altered their approach to the teaching and learning of science for next term. It is too soon to determine whether the new arrangements will benefit pupils.
- Governors and senior leaders have not evaluated their use of pupil premium funding rigorously. Prior to the inspection, no spending plan for 2018–19 was available on the school's website. Differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally have not diminished over time in subjects such as reading, writing or science. Currently, disadvantaged pupils continue to make inconsistent progress.
- Senior leaders have raised the profile of reading for pleasure. Most teachers now read stories, poems and/or traditional tales aloud to pupils, encouraging an appreciation of literature, modelling vocabulary and developing a love of books among pupils. In Years 2 to 6, daily reading tasks take place four days per week. Nonetheless, leaders have not secured consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in reading across key stages. Adults' expectations, expertise and approaches to the teaching of reading vary, especially in key stage 1 and the early years. For example, not all staff match books closely to pupils' phonics skills. Some pupils have too few opportunities to practise their reading with adults. Teachers' records for tracking and monitoring pupils' reading, and their reading choices, differ widely. In addition, some staff have not been effective in engaging parents as partners in their child's learning journey as a reader. Consequently, current pupils' progress in reading is too variable. Not all pupils and children are well prepared for the demands of the next year or key stage.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic about their roles and are keen to improve outcomes for all pupils within their areas of responsibility. Nevertheless, some are new to post and the effect of their work and actions is not yet evident. In addition, while most subject leaders have a secure understanding of the key stage 1 and key stage 2 curriculum, several are much less confident with the early years curriculum. This makes it tricky for some leaders to fully appreciate pupils' starting points, transition needs and gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Leaders of English, for example, recognised that a better grasp of Nursery and Reception reading and writing requirements may inform and improve the impact of their work in key stage 1.
- While leaders can demonstrate several means by which they make contact with parents, not all parents are confident that communication systems are successful. A significant minority of parents expressed concerns about 'missed opportunities to discuss matters with teachers' or a 'lack in the giving of information'. Such discord means that a few parents hold positive views of the links between home and school.
- Leadership of mathematics is starting to make a positive difference for pupils, particularly in key stage 2. Work in current pupils' books shows that leaders' focus on

developing greater fluency in pupils' basic number skills and calculations is improving pupils' skill and confidence. Pupils calculate with improved accuracy, grapple with mathematical concepts and employ skills of reasoning with increased sophistication.

- Leaders' actions have led to steady improvement in Year 6. Although pupils' outcomes remained lower than the national averages in 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the combined reading, writing and mathematics element rose.
- The headteacher has been tenacious in reducing incidents of poor and challenging behaviour. Staff have been well trained to manage and respond to pupils' personal, emotional and mental health needs appropriately. Consequently, there is a positive ethos: the culture within the school is harmonious and mutually respectful.
- The headteacher's vision for the curriculum is drawn from the most recent research into effective curriculum design. She has carefully considered the needs and interests of Carcroft pupils in its implementation, ensuring that subjects beyond mathematics and English enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils' artwork, in particular, is impressive, demonstrating that pupils' skills of observation and their understanding of perspective, tone and texture are developing apace.
- Despite the spending plan for this academic year not being on the website prior to the inspection, leaders use the primary physical education and sport premium funding effectively. Pupils are benefiting from increased opportunities to compete and engage regularly in sporting activities. As pupils move through the school, their understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and physical fitness is developing well.

Governance of the school

- The school has had some difficulty in recruiting governors over time. Currently, some governors are new or recently appointed. They are still learning what their role entails and so the impact of their work is not yet evident.
- The website prior to inspection was not compliant in terms of governors' information. Little detail was available about dates of appointment or attendance at meetings. Governors' pecuniary interests were not made clear.
- Minutes of governing body meetings show that challenge to leaders is currently lacking. While governors ask questions, they do not probe matters sharply enough. This hampers their effectiveness. Governors' understanding of the impact of leaders' use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, for example, is weak.
- The chair of the governing body is new to post. Alongside the small number of experienced governors and those recently recruited, she is fully committed to improving the effectiveness of governance. Her plans to meet regularly with parents to better understand their viewpoints, for example, are under way. It is too soon, however, to see the effects of her positive intentions.
- Governors visit the school regularly to see for themselves how it feels to be a pupil here. They are very supportive of leaders and staff. Adults value their frequent presence, the interest they show in daily practices and the enthusiasm with which they undertake their visits.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and staff take safeguarding seriously. They work well with external agencies to protect and care for vulnerable pupils and families. The pastoral and administrative teams, for example, have built close links with alternative providers to ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively.
- Staff can articulate clearly their duties and responsibilities in protecting pupils and keeping them free from harm. This is due to the regular training and updates provided by leaders that keep staff up to date about the most recent guidance and information. Although some aspects of the safeguarding policy on the website were outdated prior to the inspection, practices within school are well informed. All staff know how and to whom any concerns must be reported.
- Senior leaders actively promote pupils' welfare and safety, making adjustments to the site and systems where needed. Pupils particularly appreciate the new secure fire doors in corridors, and understand the importance of these in keeping them safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning varies in quality across subjects and key stages. Not all pupils make good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and science in particular.
- Some teachers do not match tasks and learning accurately to pupils' needs. Some pupils struggle to read and/or understand worksheets, task cards or information presented by staff. Other pupils find their work too easy. Not all pupils, therefore, make good or consistent progress.
- Adults' subject knowledge in science is not consistently well developed, especially in physics- and chemistry-related topics. Not all teaching assistants, for example, understand specific terminology or core concepts in these areas of science securely. Currently, pupils' progress in science is too variable.
- Some pupils have infrequent opportunities to read to and with adults. In the early years and key stage 1 especially, books are not consistently well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge and skills. Staff do not typically keep a close eye on pupils' reading choices to ensure that they are reading widely. Such issues hinder pupils' ability to make good progress in their reading.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not consistently well challenged in their work and learning. Some staff do not demand or expect enough of pupils, particularly in reading, writing and science. Pupils undertake work they already know and can do or practise tasks they have previously mastered. Over time, few pupils reach a greater depth of learning across subjects compared with their peers nationally.
- Teaching and learning in mathematics are improving. Teachers' focus on improving pupils' number skills and arithmetic fluency has contributed well to increasing rates of progress among pupils. Current work in key stage 2 pupils' books and the school's own

assessment information confirm this positive picture.

- Staff have become increasingly skilled in the teaching of art. Pupils are benefiting from adults' enhanced subject knowledge. Pupils' artwork and their knowledge about famous artists' styles and techniques are testament to this burgeoning curriculum strength.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils too often lack confidence, resilience and belief in themselves. They are not sure how to challenge themselves further when tasks are too easy or what they could do if they are stuck. Not all have consistently positive attitudes towards tasks and learning. Overall, pupils' understanding of how to be a successful learner is not well developed.
- Inspection evidence shows that any incidents of bullying and challenging behaviour are managed in an increasingly effective, calm and positive manner by staff. Several parents and a small proportion of pupils, however, expressed concerns about bullying and poor behaviour among pupils. Communication has not been successful in bringing about a shared understanding of the school's approach to bullying.
- Leaders' aspirations for pupils are evident in the careers that pupils can discuss. Staff encourage pupils to strive for career goals such as becoming a firefighter, vet, mechanic, artist and more. Consequently, pupils are becoming ambitious for their future.
- Pupils' mental and physical health and well-being are important to staff. Pupils say that staff listen to any small worries that they may have. They say that they feel safe in school because 'teachers look after you'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' learning and progress are too often interrupted by low-level disruption. This is due to variabilities in the quality of teaching and tasks not meeting pupils' needs. Pupils drift off-task while waiting for further direction, support or challenge from adults.
- Leaders' actions are leading to overall improvements in pupils' attendance. Some pupils, including those attending alternative provision, however, remain too frequently absent from school. This hampers their progress.
- The very large majority of pupils are courteous and polite. They show respect and consideration for visitors and their friends. A small proportion of pupils, however, feel that behaviour could be further improved because some pupils 'wind others up' and 'don't look up to the [school] rules'.
- Leaders and staff work well with pupils at lunchtimes, including them in decisions about provision. This has been highly effective in reducing incidents of poor behaviour

and means that the large majority of pupils get along well, having fun and enjoying an exciting range of activities.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because pupils in each key stage do not make consistently good progress in their learning across subjects. Pupils' books and the school's own assessment information show that progress currently remains too variable in subjects such as reading, writing and science.
- Current work in pupils' books shows that some of the most able pupils are not sufficiently well challenged in their learning. The proportion of pupils reaching a greater depth of learning in subjects over time, particularly disadvantaged pupils, is much lower than national averages. Progress for the most able pupils remains inconsistent over time.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading in each key stage vary over time. Pupils' reading records and their reading with inspectors demonstrate that books are not well matched to pupils' phonics abilities. Consequently, pupils' progress is, too often, slow.
- Disadvantaged pupils in each key stage are not making sufficiently rapid progress from their different starting points to catch up with their peers nationally. Differences between disadvantaged pupils and others are not reducing across subjects over time. In 2018, for example, only 38% of pupils in key stage 2 reached the expected standard in reading compared with 75% of pupils nationally. In science, 31% reached the expected standard compared with 82% nationally. Outcomes for this group of pupils are not yet good.
- In 2018, in key stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the combined reading, writing and mathematics element rose. Although still below the national average, this denoted significant improvement from previous years. Nevertheless, key stage 2 pupils' reading progress, alongside their writing and mathematics attainment, has remained in the bottom 20% of all schools nationally for at least two years for all pupils.
- Pupils, particularly those in key stage 2, are beginning to make better progress in mathematics. Pupils' work in books and assessment information confirm this improving picture.
- Pupils' outcomes in art are strong and improving. Their artwork on display and in books is testament to this strength and their increasingly well-developed skills.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years requires improvement because teaching and learning are of variable quality. Currently, not all children make consistently good progress from their different starting points.
- Children are not well challenged in their learning. Areas of provision do not demand or expect enough of children, especially the most able, particularly with regard to reading, writing and number activities. Where their needs are not met, children's interest

wanes; they engage in jobs and play that, while enjoyable, fail to enhance their knowledge or skills.

- Staff in the early years read regularly to children and talk with them about the features of books. Not all children, however, have frequent opportunities to practise or apply their reading skills to and with adults. Children's books are not well matched to their phonics skills and knowledge, which means that, too often, they struggle to develop confidence and fluency. Not all parents have been successfully engaged in their child's reading development. Such issues hamper children's progress and outcomes in reading.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the time they leave Reception class fell in 2018 to 59% overall and 43% for boys. This was well below the 2017 national average of 71%. Boys' outcomes over time are variable and weak in comparison to girls in school and other children nationally. Not all children are well prepared for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.
- Children in Nursery and Reception benefit from the school's work with the local authority to promote literacy; all children receive a book each month to keep and read for enjoyment at home. Reading for pleasure, as in other key stages, is promoted well by staff.
- Children are happy and well looked after by caring staff. Welfare needs are met effectively. Children's personal, social and emotional needs are very well developed. This area of the curriculum is a real strength of the key stage; staff are determined to ensure that each prime area of learning is enhanced effectively. As a result, children are confident to speak with others, will ask questions and talk about their ideas. They take turns and play cooperatively with their friends.
- Children behave with respect for others and for adults. They follow class rules and are sensitive to others' feelings. Children respond promptly to requests or instructions from adults. Consequently, they enjoy their time in school, feel safe and are kept safe by staff.

School details

Unique reference number	106757
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10052876

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Booth
Headteacher	Kirsty Laing
Telephone number	01302722353
Website	www.carcroftprimary.co.uk/
Email address	headteacher@carcroft.doncaster.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2017

Information about this school

- This is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school catering for pupils from three to 11 years old.
- The school day begins at 8.25 am and finishes at 3.10pm on Mondays through to Fridays. On Friday, the school day ends at 1.50pm. Staff run a breakfast club that opens at 7.30am each morning.
- Although reducing over time, the proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- There have been several changes in leadership responsibilities since the previous inspection. One new permanent teacher has been appointed and several others are temporarily covering leave. There is a new chair of governors.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND who receive additional support is broadly similar to

the national average. The proportion of pupils with SEND with an education, health and care plan is slightly higher than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed across each key stage across both days of the inspection. Several observations were undertaken jointly by the lead inspector and the headteacher.
- Inspectors talked with parents face to face during the inspection. The views expressed by 32 parents in the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, were considered and 26 parents' free-text responses were also taken into account.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, scrutinised their work and talked with pupils during lesson observations. The views of 35 pupils who responded to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire were examined. The views of pupils were also considered during more formal discussions.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders and two representatives from the local authority, as well as governors, including the chair of the governing body. A meeting was also held with two representatives of the local authority.
- A wide range of the school's own information and documentation were studied, including the self-evaluation document, improvement plans and records of the checks made on teaching and learning. Information about safeguarding practices was examined, alongside policy documentation.
- The opinions of staff were taken into account via the 10 responses made to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and through formal and informal discussions.

Inspection team

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