

Tritlington Church of England First School

Tritlington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3DU

Inspection dates

24 to 25 April 2019

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent, particularly in mathematics and writing. Teachers do not plan activities that are sufficiently challenging to enable pupils to make the best possible progress, particularly the most able pupils.
- Pupils' outcomes across the school are too variable, as is the quality of work in pupils' books. Pupils are not studying in sufficient depth to be able to achieve consistently well, particularly at the higher standard.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, planning is not sufficiently precise to ensure that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects beyond English and mathematics are clearly considered to cater for the needs of all pupils.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and are developing their skills. However, the effects of their actions have yet to bring about the desired improvements to pupils' achievement quickly enough.
- Plans to improve the work of the school accurately identify what needs to be done, but targets are not specific or ambitious enough to bring about the required improvements.
- Governors are enthusiastic and committed to bringing about improvements but have not held leaders stringently to account for pupils' achievement.
- Parents have not been kept fully informed. This has resulted in a number of parents expressing concerns over decisions made by the leadership team.

The school has the following strengths

- Support from the local authority and strong leadership from the early years leader has resulted in a highly effective early years provision.
- Children's progress has improved and is now securely good.
- Increasing proportions of children are now exceeding the good level of development expected of them by the time they leave the Reception class.
- Behaviour in school is good. The values of the church are lived out in the relationships that children have with one another. They care about each other and there is a strong family ethos.
- Phonics and the teaching of reading in key stage 1 has improved since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - plans to improve the school include precise and ambitious targets to secure improvements in pupils' outcomes, particularly for the most able pupils
 - governors hold leaders to account for the outcomes of the pupils
 - there are timely checks on the quality of teaching to ensure that teachers' actions are maximising learning
 - subject leaders receive the support needed to take a more strategic view of the impact of their actions on improving pupils' outcomes
 - any changes made by leaders are communicated to parents in a timely and comprehensive way so as to improve the relationship between school and parents.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics by embedding recent improvements in order to develop pupils' skills of reasoning and problem-solving, particularly for the most able.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in reading and writing, particularly for the most able pupils, by making sure teachers:
 - embed current assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress
 - rigorously assess the knowledge, skills and understanding for all pupils, in subjects beyond English and mathematics, to ensure that all pupils are challenged to achieve the best they can.
- Improve pupils' outcomes so that pupils routinely reach age-related expectations and increasing proportions, particularly of the most able pupils, achieve the higher standards by ensuring that:
 - work set is consistently well-matched to pupils' needs and abilities and challenges pupils to think hard about their learning
 - opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding and develop their subject-specific skills are increased.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has plans for improving the work of the school. However, targets set for improvement are either insufficiently challenging or ambitious enough to raise pupils' achievement with the speed that governors desire.
- With support from the diocese, the quality of governance has improved. Even so, governors are still not fully trained in being able to fully hold leaders to account.
- Some parents expressed concerns over a number of aspects of the leadership and management of the school. Leaders recognise that levels of communication with parents require improvement to ensure that issues are addressed and confidence in the leadership returns.
- Rates of progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics require improvement, particularly for the most able. Initiatives introduced to improve outcomes in English and mathematics are still inconsistent and not fully embedded. The strengths in teaching in the Nursery and Reception are not yet evident in the rest of the school.
- Across the school, the wider curriculum is taught through a topic-based approach. Although pupils study different subjects, work in pupils' books shows that they receive insufficient challenge to deepen their understanding, knowledge and skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics. Likewise, in some year groups, the learning activities are not planned using information on what pupils know and can do, and at times they are too challenging. As a result, pupils' skills in subjects across the curriculum are not as strong as they could be.
- Additional funding received for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is spent wisely. It ensures that these pupils receive appropriate adaptations to enable them to access the curriculum. The support they receive is of a high quality, providing a range of support, including social and emotional support to some of the school's most vulnerable pupils.
- The special educational needs coordinator has a clear understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND. Over time, she has established effective relationships with a wide range of professionals and external agencies, who provide support and advice to the school. She manages the teaching assistants effectively, and these teaching assistants provide support to an increasing number of pupils with additional needs. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress from their varying starting points.
- Leaders use the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport effectively in order to provide and promote engagement in sports. Pupils access a wide range of sporting activities and competitions. By using part of the funding to employ a specialist teacher, leaders have ensured that pupils' skills have improved.
- Leaders promote the fundamental British values well. They ensure that such values feature prominently in assemblies and within the strong Christian ethos that exists across the school.
- There is a small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in school. Governors have a clear understanding of how the additional funding provided to support these pupils is spent,

and there are regular checks in place to ensure that the funding is effective.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well served by the school's strong pastoral care and guidance provision.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly motivated and committed to the school and determined to raise pupils' outcomes. They acknowledge that actions to bring about improvements have not been swift enough.
- Recent support from the diocese has empowered governors to begin to undertake their strategic role with greater confidence. This is in its earliest stages, but there is evidence within governing body minutes of the increasing challenge now presented to school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff undertake training to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. The school's record-keeping procedures are effective in ensuring that any concerns are easily identified and swiftly addressed. The school has developed strong relationships with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Induction procedures for new staff include reference to the school's policy and procedures.
- Leaders ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet. Older pupils understand the risks that can come from using social media and the dangers associated with online bullying. The pupils spoken to have a secure understanding of what bullying is and are confident that their teachers would sort out any problems should they occur.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has been too variable, particularly in mathematics and writing. Teaching does not consistently challenge the most able pupils. Sometimes, the tasks do not extend skills from previous learning or they are too easy. Occasionally, pupils do not move on to more complex and demanding work quickly enough.
- The quality of the teaching of mathematics remains inconsistent across the school. Leaders have rightly identified the need to secure pupils' arithmetic skills. However, opportunities for pupils to acquire and practise their reasoning and problem-solving skills are too few. Recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics are not yet fully embedded in all classes. Consequently, not all pupils are sufficiently challenged by the work they are given, particularly the most able pupils.
- New approaches to the teaching of writing are in their earliest stages of implementation. They are not fully established and, as such, are not securing consistently strong progress for all pupils. Occasionally some pupils receive too much support for their writing and this prevents them from developing their independent

writing skills, particularly the most able pupils.

- The quality of the teaching of other subjects is inconsistent. There are too few pupils, particularly the most able pupils, making the progress needed to reach the higher standards of which they are capable. This is because pupils are moved on in their learning too quickly and are not stretched and challenged to think more deeply.
- Strong phonics teaching in key stage 1 underpins the recently improved outcomes in reading seen at the end of key stage 1. However, in key stage 2 pupils are not developing higher order reading skills effectively. Books used by pupils to practise their reading are not well matched to each pupil's reading skills.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop a more consistent approach to assessment. The progress of every pupil is checked each term and an individual target for the end-of-year outcome is used to help leaders monitor progress. However, this is not embedded across the school and, consequently, does not result in strong progress for all pupils, particularly the most able.
- Teaching assistants provide effective additional support to individual pupils and small groups. They relate well to pupils and adjust work accordingly to enable them to access the learning alongside their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' wider personal and emotional well-being, and staff are trained to look out for changes in pupils' behaviour which may indicate that additional support is needed.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are keen to talk about their learning and they take pride in their work. Work presented in books is generally reflective of this.
- Pupils have a strong understanding of their social responsibilities and are encouraged to look after each other. The core Christian values of love, friendship, perseverance, courage, compassion and trust pervade the work of the school.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel very safe in school and know that their teachers will help them with any concerns.
- Pupils learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and taking regular exercise. They are encouraged to take part in a range of sporting activities. Participation in sport has increased and pupils enjoy taking part in competitive activities.
- Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is also in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time and are eager to learn. There are currently no persistently absent pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and well-mannered to each other and to adults.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and told the inspector that, occasionally, when it does happen, they are confident that staff will sort it out. Older pupils know about the dangers of online bullying and say they feel well prepared for their transfer to middle school.
- Playtimes are generally calm, with the vast majority of pupils engaged in purposeful play. Pupils play freely and imaginatively in their games or practise their sporting skills. Transitions between the classroom and playground are smooth and orderly.
- Pupils generally show good attitudes to their learning and are respectful to each other and to staff. However, pupils are not always actively involved in their learning, particularly when curriculum activities are not challenging.
- A small number of pupils have significant behavioural needs. Overall, these pupils are exceptionally well supported and nurtured in order to enable them to manage their own emotions sensibly and maturely. Leaders constantly strive to find new ways of supporting such pupils and to equip them with the skills they need to manage their feelings successfully. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Last year outcomes in key stage 1 were generally in line with national averages in reading and mathematics at the expected and higher standard, which is an improvement from 2017. However, no pupils attained at the greater depth standard in writing. Year groups are small and, consequently, comparisons are unreliable. For the pupils currently in the school, a scrutiny of their work in books indicates that recent changes to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics are having a positive impact on outcomes. Even so, it is too early to measure the full impact and sustainability of this improvement.
- Outcomes across school in mathematics are at the expected standard because pupils have generally secured basic arithmetic skills and are competent in using basic number facts. Pupils' skills of reasoning and problem-solving are less secure as they have been given less opportunities to develop these skills.
- In reading and writing, the most able pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable, with fewer than should be the case reaching the high standards expected of them. This is because pupils are not sufficiently or consistently challenged to think hard about their learning.
- Outcomes in the wider curriculum are not yet good. Although work has been undertaken to ensure coverage of all subjects, the design of the curriculum does not yet support the systematic building of knowledge, skills and understanding of all pupils.
- Pupils' outcomes in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 have improved, and more pupils than nationally reach the required standard. Pupils build on this and acquire the skills to be competent readers by the time they leave key stage 1.

- Outcomes for pupils with SEND are improving. Although their attainment is below that which is expected, pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group makes data analysis of the outcomes of this group of pupils unreliable. Nevertheless, few disadvantaged pupils reach the higher standards.

Early years provision

Good

- Since the last inspection, a new leader has been appointed to early years. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Nursery and Reception and has worked hard to improve the provision. The early years classroom is vibrant, exciting and well resourced. Children working inside the classroom and those working outdoors are engrossed in their learning. This is because curriculum activities are planned to meet children's needs and interests.
- The early years leader is highly skilled and knowledgeable and she has wasted no time in raising expectations of what children can achieve and in securing children's rapid progress. This has resulted in an increase in the number of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception, which is now above national averages.
- Curriculum activities are well matched to children's needs and interests. This is because teaching staff have a good understanding of the learning needs of children and use accurate assessment information to plan effectively. As a result, children make rapid progress from their varied starting points.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, with staff skilled at assessing children's understanding. They are quick to react and change teaching to meet the needs of the children. For example, a mathematics activity involving ordering numbers to 20 was adapted and supported depending on the understanding of the children involved in the activity, and so all made good progress.
- All welfare arrangements are secure, ensuring that all children behave well and are kept safe.
- Work with external partners is a strength of the school, with other professionals on hand to help to support the most vulnerable children.
- Records of children's experiences and progress, known as learning journals, are detailed. Teachers' commentaries capture accurately the seminal moments of every child's achievements throughout the year. The next steps in learning are accurately identified, and include parental comments and support, confirming the strong relationships established with parents.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is strong. The teaching sequence is well structured and promotes children's early reading and early writing skills effectively. This means that children are confident in their attempts to read more demanding texts and to commit their ideas for writing to paper. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	122299
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10087547

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

Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynsey Crofts
Headteacher	Helen Hughes
Telephone number	01670 787 383
Website	www.tritlington.firstschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@tritlington.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 to 25 January 2017

Information about this school

- Tritlington First School is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The headteacher teaches Year 3 and Year 4 (class 3) four mornings a week. She teaches Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 three afternoons a week.
- Nursery and Reception children are taught together in class 1 on a morning. These children join Year 1 pupils in class 2 in the afternoon.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the quality of learning in all classes. She visited a number of shorter sessions where pupils were being taught phonics.
- The inspector looked at the current standard of pupils' work across the school.
- The inspector listened to several pupils read. She spoke to pupils about their learning and experiences at school during lessons and at the school council meeting. She also spoke informally to pupils when they were playing with friends at breaktime.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, early years leader, the chair and four other members of the governing body, and the school council. The inspector also met with two representatives from the local authority and one representative from the diocese of Durham and Newcastle.
- The inspector evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' progress, records of the checks made on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and information on behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke to nine parents during the inspection, reviewed the 36 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to one parent on the telephone. The 18 responses to Ofsted's pupils' questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Lucie Stephenson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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