

Normanton-on-Soar Primary School

Main Street, Normanton-on-Soar, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 5HB

Inspection dates

14–15 May 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils in all year groups make strong progress.
- The drive for improvement is too heavily reliant on the interim headteacher, who is not receiving support from subject leaders because they are new to the role.
- In some classes, teachers' expectations are too low and they do not insist that pupils take pride in their work. This can be seen in the poor quality and presentation of the work in pupils' books in these instances.
- Subjects other than English and mathematics are not always covered in sufficient depth.
- The progress of current pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is not consistently strong in all year groups.
- Some aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are less well promoted in school. Pupils have a limited awareness of the range of the faiths and cultures represented in modern Britain.
- The quality of leadership, teaching and learning is not consistently strong across the early years provision. On occasion, the work set is too easy for some children. The early years curriculum is not fully applied across both the indoor and outdoor learning areas for the Reception children.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteacher has prioritised clearly those areas requiring improvement, based on her regular and accurate checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Behaviour is good and relationships across the school are strong. Pupils, parents and carers value highly the school's warm family atmosphere. Attendance is consistently high.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding is effective.
- Although pupils are not making strong progress this year, progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 has in previous years been consistently strong.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils in key stage 1 use their phonics knowledge skilfully in their reading and writing.
- Nursery children get off to a strong start because of effective teaching and care.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - strong middle and subject leadership is established
 - pupils are supported to gain a stronger awareness of British values and a broad appreciation of a range of faiths and cultures.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make strong progress by ensuring that:
 - an effective and stable staff team is in place throughout the school
 - teachers have consistently high expectations for the quality of work in pupils' books
 - effective teaching develops and deepens pupils' knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Improve leadership and teaching in the early years so that:
 - teaching is as strong in the Reception Year as it is in the Nursery Year
 - the work set is closely matched to children's needs and abilities
 - the curriculum is carefully planned to promote pupils' learning and development across both the indoor and outdoor learning areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, there has been significant disruption to staffing. An interim headteacher has been appointed but other staffing issues remain.
- The interim headteacher is trying to tackle too many weaknesses because middle leadership is not good enough to make sure that the teaching is good and the curriculum exciting. Consequently, where steps have been taken to make improvements, they are yet to lead to better teaching and stronger progress for pupils.
- Leaders' design for the curriculum states that it is based on a 'creative curriculum' through a topic-based approach to learning across a range of subjects. This is intended to underpin the stated 'essential components' of reading, writing, mathematics and communication skills. However, evidence from work in pupils' books shows that topics and themes are sometimes taught in a disjointed sequence and not in sufficient depth to thoroughly embed the learning for pupils in all subjects.
- The interim headteacher is ambitious for the school and its pupils. She has used the information collected from frequent checks on the quality of teaching to identify the areas in need of urgent improvement.
- This academic year, the school has had an unusually high intake of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils are in the early stages of assessment in order to secure the appropriate support for their additional needs. Parents who spoke to the inspector and who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were positive about the teaching and support provided for their children with SEND.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as sports, music, gardening and the forest club. The school has links with Loughborough Grammar School and Loughborough Schools Foundation for activities such as science, mathematics, music and a debating challenge. These activities broaden pupils' experiences.
- Most aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well through the curriculum. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and a clear respect for adults and one another. In discussion, pupils told the inspector that they enjoy taking on responsibilities to support the school community, such as librarians and lunchtime monitors. However, pupils have not had specific teaching about the fundamental British values and they have a limited awareness of the range of faiths and cultures found in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governors regularly review the skills across their membership to ensure that they are best placed to provide support and challenge for the school. The minutes of their meetings show that governors ask a range of probing questions to hold leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Governors carry out regular visits to monitor the effectiveness of the school's work,

alongside the interim headteacher. This provides them with a direct and accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision for pupils.

- Governors ensure that the additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to support these pupils' learning.
- Over recent times, governors have faced up to the challenges of a very small school and its viability. They have successfully promoted the school within and beyond the locality so that pupil numbers are now increasing.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties in regard to safeguarding. The designated safeguarding governor is experienced and knowledgeable and ensures that governors are up to date in their training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated senior leader for safeguarding keeps thorough and careful records. She has made sure that all of the school's employment checks are in place, in line with statutory requirements.
- There are strong systems in place for raising and recording any concerns relating to pupils' welfare. Staff from a range of roles across the school spoke confidently about the training they had received and their knowledge of what to do if they had the slightest concern about a pupil. There is a strong culture of care for pupils' safety and well-being.
- All of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey said that their children are safe at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There are weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Too often, activities are not closely matched to the needs and abilities of pupils. Tasks are undemanding and do not enable pupils to demonstrate and extend their skills and abilities.
- Teachers do not insist on a consistently high standard of presentation. The work in some pupils' books is untidy or unfinished, particularly in their topic and literacy books. The school's handwriting policy is not consistently applied across all classes. Sometimes, the feedback given to pupils does not help them to correct errors.
- In some instances, the work in topic books shows that pupils do not receive in-depth and carefully sequenced teaching across the range of subjects. For example, within a sequence of history lessons, work on the Stone Age was interspersed with learning about the First World War. As a result, pupils do not consistently develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
- In most cases, the work in pupils' mathematics books is stronger than in their topic and literacy books. Pupils have opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning through problem-solving, and most pupils complete their work carefully and accurately. In some instances, pupils do not use equipment, such as rulers, as precisely as they should.

- Where teaching is stronger, adults use questioning and assessment effectively to move pupils on in their learning. In these cases, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. This was seen to good effect in the teaching of phonics and in the teaching of English in upper key stage 2.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is effective. Pupils show a clear enjoyment of reading and can explain how they are encouraged to read often, at home and at school. Pupils are supported to make sensible book choices. The younger pupils use their phonics knowledge successfully when reading unfamiliar words.
- Pupils are given time to refine and improve their writing through the school's approach to editing. Where this is done effectively, pupils are becoming increasingly independent and skilled writers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school, saying, for example, 'It's small, everybody's friendly and the staff are kind and helpful.' Many parents express positive views about the school. Typical comments are 'a really inclusive school, very approachable staff, always happy to assist' and 'There is a real family feel to the school and a sense of community.'
- Relationships are strong throughout the school. This enables pupils to thrive in a caring and supportive atmosphere. Pupils, in turn, show kindness towards each other, especially in the way the older pupils support and provide positive role models for the younger ones during the lunchtime 'family dining' and in the consideration shown for pupils with SEND.
- In discussion, pupils showed a mature understanding of bullying in its various forms. They know that staff will step in quickly if any problems arise. Pupils also show a natural understanding of equalities, saying, for instance, 'It's about what's on the inside that matters.'
- The work in pupils' books sometimes denotes a lack of pride and care.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. During the inspection, pupils were calm and their conduct around school and also outside at breaktimes was sensible.
- During lessons, pupils typically listen carefully to instructions and follow routines sensibly and politely. They are attentive and keen learners.
- Lunchtimes flow smoothly and happily, both in the dining hall and in the outside areas. Pupils have a range of activities available to support their play and physical fitness, such as the trim trail and mini climbing wall. Thanks to their good behaviour, pupils make positive use of the activities through cooperation and teamwork. Adults provide effective supervision and say that behaviour is typically 'very good'.
- Rates of attendance are high and persistent absence is below average and reducing

over time. There have been no fixed-term exclusions or any recorded behaviour or bullying incidents since the last inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The school is much smaller than the average primary school. Cohorts are typically very small and can vary widely from year to year.
- Evidence from observations of learning and from work in pupils' books shows that, as a result of low expectations, current pupils are not making consistently strong progress across all year groups and in a wide range of subjects.
- Historically, pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have been strong when compared to the national average.
- In 2018, standards of attainment at the end of key stage 2 remained above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard. However, attainment at the higher standard dropped in reading and dropped to below average at the higher standard in mathematics. This decline coincided with a period of staffing changes and the resulting instability.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 improved in 2018 from being well below average in 2017 to being well above average, both at the expected standard and at greater depth.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been consistently in line with, or above, average for the last four years.
- Pupils with SEND make increasingly strong progress from their starting points as a result of the school's thorough processes for assessing and identifying their needs.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years class consists of Nursery, Reception and Year 1 children, sharing a combined area. Leadership and teaching are not consistently good across all aspects of the provision.
- An experienced, effective member of staff is deployed to work directly with the Nursery children within the mixed-age class. As a result, these children receive strong teaching and support that enable them to thrive. The quality of teaching and support for the Reception children is less strong.
- Children join the early years with skills and abilities that are at least in line with those which are typical for their age, and often above. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years is consistently above that found nationally.
- Because the early years leader has not analysed the specific patterns of strengths and weaknesses on entry to Reception, this limits the extent to which the curriculum is adapted to cater for children's needs. As a result, activities are sometimes

undemanding, and children repeat things they already know and can do, especially in mathematics.

- The spacious indoor and outdoor learning areas are well equipped. However, staff do not make best use of the space available to promote children's development across all areas of learning. For example, the outdoor environment is not designed to promote key aspects, such as children's language and mathematical development, as effectively as that found indoors. The Reception children do not use the outdoor area as often as the Nursery children, and this hinders their learning experience.
- Children across the early years have positive attitudes to learning. They play and cooperate well with each other, following well-established routines.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is effective. Children are supported skilfully to develop secure skills and to apply them confidently in their reading and spelling.
- Children get off to a positive start in learning to write. Staff provide regular opportunities for children to begin to form letters accurately, in line with the school's approach to using a joined-up handwriting style.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff training is up to date and procedures are followed in line with school policy.
- Parents are encouraged to be supportive of their children's learning. This can happen through the exchange of 'wow moments', attending occasional workshops or day-to-day interaction with staff.

School details

Unique reference number	122661
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10087280

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	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Armstrong
Interim headteacher	Clare Maddock
Telephone number	01509 842 326
Website	www.normantononsoarprimary.co.uk/
Email address	office@normanton-on-soar.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2018

Information about this school

- Normanton-on-Soar Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school currently consists of three classes: class 1 contains Nursery, Reception and Year 1 children; class 2 contains Years 2 and 3 pupils; class 3 contains Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils. The organisation of classes can vary from year to year depending on pupil numbers.
- There is one full-time newly qualified teacher in class 2 and one temporary part-time teacher who shares the teaching of class 3 with the interim headteacher.
- There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection in July 2018. The substantive headteacher left the school at the end of the summer term 2018. Governors appointed an interim headteacher from within the school. She continues to have a part-time teaching commitment alongside her role as interim headteacher. Governors are in the process of recruiting a substantive headteacher.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are of White British heritage is in line with the national average.
- The school works informally with the local family of schools and with the Rushcliffe Teaching Schools Alliance for the purposes of staff training and moderation of work.

Information about this inspection

- I observed learning in seven lessons or parts of lessons, some jointly with the interim headteacher.
- I looked at work across an extensive range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- I listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading.
- I met with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6 and spoke with pupils informally in lessons and around school.
- I met with the interim headteacher and the early years leader and I considered information provided by the coordinator for pupils with SEND, who was unable to meet with me. I met with those responsible for safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, bullying and exclusions, the curriculum, disadvantaged pupils and the sport premium. I also spoke with a range of other teachers and support staff.
- I met with a group of governors, including the vice-chair.
- I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- I met with parents at the start of the school day and I considered the 36 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. There were no responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.
- I considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's current information on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance records, behaviour and bullying logs, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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