

Knowleswood Primary School

Knowles Lane, Holme Wood, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD4 9AE

Inspection dates

2–3 July 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	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 have not acted urgently enough to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the most able pupils.
- The progress pupils make across the wider curriculum varies in all year groups. Leaders are still developing curriculum plans across a range of subjects.
- Pupils are having to make up lost ground in English and mathematics following inadequate teaching in previous years. Although they are making stronger progress now, outcomes are not yet good.
- There is inconsistency in the quality of teaching in early years. Although outcomes are improving, too few children are prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- Leaders have used additional funding to try to reduce persistent absence. However, too many pupils are still missing out on their education because they are absent from school too often.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved. Pupils' behaviour is generally good. However, a very small minority of pupils do not behave consistently well.
- The curriculum does not prepare pupils well enough for life in modern Britain. Pupils are not taught about different religions. This limits pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors' recent decision to federate with Cavendish Primary School has significantly boosted the strength of the leadership team. This has rapidly accelerated the rate of school improvement and improved governance.
- The executive headteacher has united the leadership teams across both schools in the federation. They have worked together to ensure that teaching is no longer inadequate.
- The quality of the teaching of reading has improved dramatically. This has already increased the proportion of Year 1 pupils who are successfully learning to read.
- Leaders have used additional funding effectively to employ extra adults. Teachers use teaching assistants well in lessons. This is helping all pupils to catch up quickly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that:
 - teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including the most able
 - pupils' outcomes improve and reach at least the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve the curriculum to ensure that:
 - pupils develop essential knowledge and skills across a range of subjects beyond English and mathematics
 - pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain through a deeper understanding of different faiths and cultures.
- Continue to improve pupils' behaviour, by ensuring that:
 - all pupils behave in line with the recently reviewed behaviour policy
 - pupils' attendance continues to improve, particularly for those pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In recent years, considerable staffing disruption has had a negative effect on the school's ability to maintain a good standard of education. By the end of Year 6, too few pupils have reached the standard of which they are capable.
- While many improvements are now under way, this has not resulted in pupils' sustained good progress over time. The quality of teaching remains variable. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low.
- The leadership of subjects beyond English and mathematics remains underdeveloped.
- Leaders have just purchased new resources to improve the teaching of religious education. Pupils have a very limited knowledge of other faiths and cultures because they have just started using these new resources. This means pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is underdeveloped.
- The executive headteacher is an experienced and successful school leader. When she joined the school in September 2018, she very quickly evaluated the many areas that needed urgent improvement. She took immediate action to start addressing these. The school has improved rapidly under her leadership.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with the recent improvements. Typical comments from parents include, 'I believe Knowleswood has shown a massive improvement over the past year!'
- Teachers told inspectors that they value the increased professional development opportunities that have been provided recently to help them improve the quality of their teaching. They also appreciate the fact that leaders have taken teachers' workload into account when developing new systems and procedures. This has helped to ensure that morale within the staff team is high.
- The local authority has found specialist leaders of education from other schools to offer additional training, coaching and support. This has successfully developed the leadership skills of the subject leaders for English and mathematics, leading to improved outcomes in phonics, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have used some of their additional funding to employ extra staff. Consequently, there are often several additional adults in English and mathematics lessons. Teachers use these teaching assistants very well within lessons to help pupils who are stuck. This is helping all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, catch up quickly.
- Leaders have used the additional physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to employ specialist coaches and increase the range of sports pupils can try. New activities include boxercise and martial arts, and these are successfully engaging pupils' interest in sport.

Governance of the school

- Governors did not hold leaders to account against the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. They did not challenge the information provided to them by leaders or act quickly enough when they realised the school was failing.
- Following her temporary appointment in September 2018, the executive headteacher and the local authority worked with governors to help them improve. As a structural solution to this significant leadership weakness, the school federated with Cavendish Primary School in June 2019.
- In preparation for this federation, governors in both schools undertook a skills audit followed by a rigorous selection process to identify the right group of governors to form a new governing body. This new governing body includes experienced governors and some new appointments.
- The new governing body is a member of the National Governance Association. Governors take advantage of the training opportunities and briefing papers this organisation provides. Governors are now crystal clear on their responsibilities. They have already increased their challenge to school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make all the necessary recruitment checks to make sure that staff are suitable to work with pupils. There is a strong culture of safeguarding.
- The head of school is the designated officer. She is well supported by a team of deputy safeguarding officers. They have a meticulous system of recording safeguarding concerns. All staff are confident that they can identify pupils who may be at risk of harm.
- Leaders help to prevent abuse by teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe, and how to get help and support if they need it. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school.
- Leaders make sure that they make extra checks on pupils who are absent from school without notification from their parents. If leaders cannot contact parents by telephone, staff visit pupils at home to make sure that they are safe. This helps pupils keep safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The legacy of inadequate teaching means that there are gaps in pupils' knowledge across a range of subjects. For example, some pupils struggle to solve problems in mathematics because they have not been taught the prerequisite calculation skills effectively at an earlier age.
- The quality of teaching remains variable. Leaders have prioritised improving the teaching of reading and mathematics. As a result, most teaching of reading and mathematics is now good. However, in writing, some teachers' expectations are not high enough, especially of the most able pupils. Tasks are too easy and they do not engage pupils' interest. This limits the progress that the most able pupils make in

writing.

- Teaching across a wider range of subjects other than English and mathematics is still not strong enough to ensure pupils' good progress across the curriculum. The effective practice seen in some subjects, for example history, is not the norm.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Teachers and teaching assistants have been very well trained, so they have good subject knowledge. They stick consistently to the school's preferred phonics scheme. Teachers have high expectations in phonics lessons. Pupils respond well to these high expectations and make good progress in learning to read.
- Leaders have invested in new reading books that are carefully matched to the sequence of phonics teaching. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 enjoy their new reading books because they can practise reading the letters and sounds they know. This is increasing pupils' confidence and fluency as early readers.
- The teaching of mathematics is also good. Leaders have introduced new methods for teaching the subject and this is working. The calculation policy has been updated so pupils are gaining new strategies to help them solve calculations. Pupils are making good or better progress in mathematics in all year groups.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Weaknesses in the wider curriculum, including religious education, mean that pupils have not been taught well enough about other faiths and cultures. This is not preparing them well for the next stage of education or for life in modern Britain.
- The head of school and special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) have put in a high level of additional support, including counselling, for those pupils who have complex social, emotional and mental health needs. This is helping to improve these pupils' emotional health and well-being and increase their self-confidence.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and they are proud of their school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe, and that they are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils say that there is very little bullying, and that if this does happen, adults work quickly to resolve it.
- Pupils have a good understanding of equality and they recognise that everyone should be treated with respect. Pupils were confident explaining to inspectors what they had been taught about respecting differences in ethnicity or sexuality. Leaders are very quick to challenge the very few incidents of derogatory language used by a very small minority of pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The number of pupils being excluded from school has been high for many years. The executive headteacher has taken a hard line on unacceptable behaviour, including the use of permanent exclusion, and as

a result pupils' behaviour is improving.

- Pupils behave well around the building, showing good manners and respect to visitors. They generally behave well in lessons and on the playground.
- A very small minority of parents raised concerns with inspectors about the poor behaviour of a few pupils. The executive headteacher is determined that the rapidly reducing number of incidents of poor behaviour will continue to fall at the current rate, and this decrease has already begun. Inspectors analysed behaviour records and evaluated leaders' use of exclusion as entirely appropriate and proportionate.
- Parents are supportive of the school's inclusive approach to helping pupils behave well. Leaders work with parents to achieve consistent boundaries and expectations. One parent said, 'This school is responding well to my child's specific academic and behavioural needs. Staff work together for consistency in handling my child.'
- Pupils' attendance rates have been lower than those of pupils at similar schools for many years. Leaders have employed additional staff to help improve pupils' attendance and this is working. Governors are challenging leaders effectively to reduce pupils' persistent absence at a faster rate.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes remain variable across the curriculum, and they are not good enough at the higher standard.
- Outcomes at the end of Year 2 have remained below the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard has risen steadily but remains below the national standard.
- Gaps in pupils' knowledge following weak teaching in previous years mean that outcomes for Year 2 pupils are still not good enough. Where teaching has recently improved, pupils are making better progress now.
- In the past, pupils have achieved results in the Year 1 phonics screening check that were well below the national standard. However, because of the consistently good teaching of phonics since September 2018, Year 1 pupils' results in the 2019 phonics screening check have improved markedly. This year's results match the standard that was achieved by Year 1 pupils nationally in 2018.
- Outcomes in the Year 6 tests have remained well below the national standard in recent years, including at the higher standard. Where teaching has improved in reading and mathematics recently, a higher proportion of key stage 2 pupils are making better progress.
- The 2019 Year 6 writing results have been externally moderated, and they have improved significantly, reaching the 2018 national standard. This is not the case at the higher standard.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Outcomes in Reception have remained below the national average for many years. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen only slightly this year.
- Despite this, the early years leader says children are better prepared for Year 1 now because of the daily reading and phonics sessions that have recently been introduced. Inspectors agreed that children are making good progress in their phonics now.
- Additional funding has been used to purchase new phonics resources and reading books. Additional adults have also been employed to work individually with disadvantaged children. Despite this, the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers is not closing.
- The early years leader from Cavendish came to Knowleswood temporarily for one year starting in September 2018. This made an immediate difference to improving the quality of teaching in Nursery and Reception overall, although some inconsistency remains. Leaders are still embedding the very recent changes they have made.
- The early years leader is already working with the new early years leader for September to ensure that the leadership handover between them is seamless.
- Leaders have developed strong links with pre-school settings to get to know children before they start school. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), pre-school staff are invited to accompany the child for extra visits. All parents are invited to come and visit with their child before starting Nursery or Reception, and home visits are made to all families. This helps to ensure that all children make a smooth transition into school.
- Children's attainment on entry is below that typically found for their age. Leaders make strong links with parents to try to help children make good progress from these very low starting points. Parents are invited to stay and play, and they can log on at home to see records of their child's learning at school.
- Children are very happy and settled in early years, and the high-quality areas of learning are helping children to develop curiosity, independence and creativity. Leaders have very clear expectations of additional adults and this helps teaching assistants to do their jobs well. However, some variation in the quality of teaching in early years remains.
- Adults speak to children about staying safe in circle time. Staff use coloured bands to keep a close eye on the numbers of children playing inside or outside. All staff have the necessary specialist training to make sure that children's care and welfare needs are met.

School details

Unique reference number	132183
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10087553

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	456
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alix Mann
Executive Headteacher	Noreen Dunn
Telephone number	01274 778177
Website	www.knowleswood.co.uk
Email address	office@knowleswood.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2016

Information about this school

- This school federated with Cavendish Primary School in June 2019.
- The executive headteacher of both schools began working with Knowleswood temporarily in September 2018. Since the federation, this appointment is now permanent.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school includes pupils from 11 out of 17 possible ethnic groups. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- There is a higher than average proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups from Nursery to Year 6. Some of these observations were undertaken alongside school leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed children's learning journeys and pupils' written work across the curriculum. Pupils' learning was evaluated alongside subject leaders.
- Inspector held discussions with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed 25 responses to Parent View and talked to several parents before school. Inspectors considered the 47 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the early years leader, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, and the SENCo. A meeting was also held with safeguarding leaders
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed several documents, including minutes of meetings of the governing body and local authority visits, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring and safeguarding records, the pupil premium expenditure plan, and attendance, behaviour and exclusion records.

Inspection team

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