

Concord Junior School

Fife Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S9 1NR

Inspection dates

13–14 June 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Over time, leaders have not used additional funding effectively to rapidly improve academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have not secured consistently good teaching, learning and assessment across all subjects and year groups. As a result, the progress that pupils make is variable.
- Communication with parents and carers is not always timely and effective, particularly when there is a problem. This means that parents don't always have confidence in school leaders.
- Phonics teaching is not targeted precisely enough to fill the gaps for lower-attaining pupils. The work already done to develop language and vocabulary is not enabling enough pupils to read with understanding.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop skills across the curriculum, particularly in science where scientific enquiry is not a strong enough feature of their learning.
- Pupils' progress over time has not been good enough, especially in reading. Currently, the progress of some pupils, especially those who need to catch up, is not rapid enough.
- Although behaviour has shown some improvement recently and the number of days lost to fixed-term exclusions has reduced, it needs to reduce further.
- Pupils' attendance has been below national averages and is not showing sustained improvement for all pupils and for significant groups, therefore it requires improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The opportunities that are provided for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development help to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- The work of the new executive principal has begun to bring about improvement, particularly in the behaviour of pupils at more unstructured times of the day.
- Pupils have opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects. As a result, pupils' writing skills are improving.
- Middle leaders are passionate about the subjects they lead. Their work on developing the curriculum, though still at an early stage, is beginning to show impact.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - additional funding is used more effectively, so that the difference in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally diminishes
 - senior and middle leaders continue to get the support they need to strengthen the impact they can have on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
 - positive partnerships with parents and carers are further developed through effective and timely communication.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good or better and leads to improved attainment and progress for pupils by:
 - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils, with additional barriers to learning, are given further support so that they make the same rate of progress as other pupils nationally
 - ensuring that those pupils who need to catch up in reading get the support they need to read accurately and with understanding
 - giving pupils more opportunities to learn and practise skills related to different subjects across the curriculum, and to develop further their skills of scientific enquiry.
- Improve attainment and progress for all groups of pupils by:
 - increasing less experienced teachers' expectations of all groups of pupils, especially in reading
 - ensuring that more pupils achieve or exceed age-related expectations in reading and mathematics, in line with other pupils nationally, and ensure that those who are behind in their learning are helped to catch up quickly.
- Improve pupils' attendance, and further reduce the lost learning opportunities caused by pupils' absence, by ensuring that:
 - the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is reduced
 - the number of fixed-term exclusions continues to decrease.

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 have used the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well to ensure that all pupils are able to take a full part in school life by subsidising visits and activities. However, the use of additional funding has not helped disadvantaged pupils, particularly those with additional barriers to learning, catch up quickly in reading, writing and mathematics and rates of absence and exclusion for these pupils remain too high.
- Senior leaders accurately identify areas that need to be better; however, improvement plans do not focus precisely on the aspects of teaching and learning that need to improve.
- Over time, the actions taken by leaders have not been effective in ensuring that teaching accelerates the progress of groups of pupils who are not doing well enough, particularly in reading. Intervention for pupils who are new to the school or new to speaking English helps to prepare them to join their peers in the classroom. However, once they are in class, interventions are not frequent or precise enough to help them to build on this good start.
- Subject leaders are keen to do well and are passionate about the areas of the curriculum they lead. However, some are new to their roles and the impact of their work is yet to be realised and measured, particularly in terms of the opportunities pupils have to learn and apply skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Parents' views about the school are mixed. Most are positive about teaching and learning. Others show concern about the behaviour of some pupils and some parents are not confident that their concerns are listened to and dealt with appropriately. Leaders have taken steps to manage poor behaviour by ensuring that a consistent approach is used.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is more than double the national average. More than half of these pupils are identified as having speech and language difficulties. None have an education, health and care plan. Some are recently arrived in school or are new to speaking English. A number of pupils have bespoke interventions. Pupils' workbooks and school assessments show a mixed picture, with progress for pupils with SEND in some year groups much stronger than others.
- The trust has taken steps to put together a cohesive leadership team for the school, including the recent appointment of an executive principal. Coaching from her, and the director of academies primary, for other senior and middle leaders is beginning to have an impact on standards. Improvements in the behaviour system and a change in the school's ethos to help pupils stay in school rather than exclude them are beginning to have a positive impact on behaviour. Although this work is still at an early stage, some improvements are evident.
- The curriculum is taught through cross-curricular themes that give pupils the opportunity to make important links and to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects. The art curriculum is a particular strength of the school and some excellent

examples of pupils' work are displayed around the school. The school has recently achieved the Artsmark Silver Award. There are many initiatives to enhance pupils' wider knowledge and their enjoyment of the curriculum. For example, girls in Years 5 and 6 recently visited a Brigantia Trust secondary school to take part in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) activities and an author visited the school, giving pupils the opportunity to ask questions about being an author.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. The school ensures that pupils experience a range of activities to develop their understanding through a variety of visits and visitors and activities to raise money for charity. Some pupils have had the opportunity to be young entrepreneurs through the 'fiver challenge' where they are given £5 to invest in their own enterprise. Pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of fundamental British values such as democracy and tolerance. Pupils enjoy learning about world religions and cultures. For example, when they learned about Chinese New Year they produced some beautiful artwork to display in school.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and school sport premium well to employ specialist coaches for pupils and to provide professional development for teachers. They have provided additional equipment for pupils to use at break and lunchtimes to provide opportunities for physical activity. Leaders have increased the range of sports available, such as basketball, dance, judo and gymnastics, through involvement in competitions and the provision of after-school clubs.

Governance of the school

- The local academy board has an overview of all primary schools in the group. This is reflected in the minutes of meetings where general issues relating to all primary schools in the trust are discussed, along with some that are pertinent to particular schools. This means that challenge for school leaders at meetings is not as focused on the particular circumstances of the school as it could be. The chair of trustees has recognised this as an issue and the intention is to establish an academy advisory council for each school.
- Trustees are aware of the main issues facing the school. They undertake school visits and have received detailed information from the executive principal. They know that the main priorities are to improve teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve pupils' progress and attainment and to improve attendance and behaviour. Trustees are less clear about the use of the additional funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils and what impact it has had.
- Trustees are passionate about improving the life chances of the children in the school, particularly through making use of the local area and giving pupils opportunities to develop their wider experience, for example through seeing an outdoor Shakespeare performance, being part of a choir and taking part in many sporting activities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding leader works hard to establish a culture of safeguarding in school. Staff have regular safeguarding training, including on the 'Prevent' duty and

child sexual exploitation. They are able to talk about how they apply this training in school, including how to refer concerns. When referrals are made to the designated safeguarding leader, she takes the appropriate action to engage the support of outside agencies.

- Those pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in school. They can explain how the behaviour system works and are mostly confident that it works well. The confidential pupil survey suggests that a significant minority of pupils feel that behaviour is not as good as it could be.
- Pupils benefit from lessons in online safety and are positive that the school helps them to learn how to keep their bodies healthy and encourages them to think about their mental health.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in reading and mathematics, are not consistently high enough. Teaching across year groups and across subjects is variable. Disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up are not given support that is timely and precisely focused to help them make better progress.
- Lower-attaining pupils are not getting regular and effective phonics teaching to help them to develop their reading fluency. The books that they read are not always at an appropriate level for them to practise their phonic skills. Teachers have action plans to identify individuals who need additional support; however, this is not coordinated and consistent enough to rapidly improve the reading skills of those pupils who need to catch up.
- The school has worked hard to establish a culture of reading. However, development of pupils' language and vocabulary has not impacted on standards in reading. Some pupils, though reading with fluency, struggle to make sense of the books they read.
- Pupils who enter the school with little or no English receive intensive support in a language-rich environment when they arrive in school. However, once they have successfully joined a class, intervention and support are more sporadic.
- Following training, modelling and support from the leader of English, teachers have worked hard to develop the language and vocabulary of pupils. This work has resulted in improved standards of writing. In some writing lessons, pupils were keen to share their learning and were proud of their work which was well presented. For example, in Year 6, pupils were writing diary entries in role as a child in the Blitz during the Second World War. They were confident to share examples of sentences they had written.
- Teachers help pupils to develop their knowledge and give them opportunities to write at length across the wider curriculum. This is helping to improve their writing. However, opportunities to learn and develop skills in other areas of the curriculum are not consistent across year groups. For example, in science, in some classes, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan their own investigations and to carry out fair tests.
- In mathematics, pupils work diligently and are excited to move on to higher-level work. However, greater challenge to develop mathematical thinking is not an integral part of

mathematics lessons frequently enough for pupils of all abilities. This means that some pupils are not developing their reasoning and problem-solving skills as well as they should. Physical resources are used well in some classes to support learning. For example, some pupils were using cubes to successfully find fractions of a number and others were using clocks to work out the time duration of different activities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and they are polite and helpful to each other and to visitors.
- Classrooms are welcoming and displays are bright, purposeful and focused on learning, celebrating pupils' impressive art work and writing. Celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes in their achievements, behaviour and attendance.
- Pupils have opportunities to contribute to school life and the wider community, for example by being a play leader or taking part in events to raise money for charity. They talk about the importance of the school council who, they say, talk to people to see what they can change about the school. Pupils say this is an important role because school councillors speak to a lot of people.
- Pupils enjoy the range of activities on offer in after-school clubs and are particularly enthusiastic about 'let's get cooking', football, dance and homework club. Pupils who attend the school's breakfast club are well looked after and have access to a range of activities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some parents, and a significant minority of pupils who shared their opinion in the confidential pupil survey, do not feel behaviour is consistently good. The evidence from inspectors' scrutiny of behaviour logs indicates that these concerns are warranted.
- Pupils' attendance has been below the national average for at least the previous three years. The proportion of pupils who have been persistently absent has also been higher than is the case nationally. Current school data does not indicate that leaders' actions are reducing the high rates of absence, overall and for particular groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, or that there is any sign of marked and sustained improvement.
- Pupils are mostly cooperative with each other and listen to the adults who work with them. As a result, the majority of pupils are developing confidence and resilience in their learning. Many pupils have a mature approach to their learning and are able to confidently share their own ideas and comment reflectively on the efforts of others.
- Pupils appreciate the behaviour system in school and how they can earn rewards for good behaviour. A group of pupils explained how they understand why some pupils do not always behave well.

- The executive principal has worked hard to ensure that staff are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour in school. Consequently, behaviour in classes and at more unstructured times of the day is improving. Work to ensure that pupils who find it difficult to regulate their behaviour are supported well is beginning to bring about an improvement and the number of fixed-term exclusions has dropped dramatically. However, the number of days lost to fixed-term exclusions remains too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress in reading has been well below average for several years. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been in the bottom 20% nationally for at least two years for all pupils and for disadvantaged pupils. While attainment has risen over the last three years, this has not been rapid enough. Not enough pupils are reaching the expected or the higher standard, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading remains a concern. Some lower-attaining pupils are not making as much progress as they could. This means that they fall further behind their peers as they move up through the school.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils, especially in reading. They do not plan precise and focused learning interventions for those pupils who need to develop their phonic knowledge so that they can read fluently. Consequently, some pupils are not catching up quickly enough and so their access to the wider curriculum is limited. Strategies to develop language and vocabulary have helped to improve writing; however, pupils' comprehension skills remain underdeveloped.
- Work in books and evidence from observations of teaching and learning, along with the school's own assessment information, show that progress is improving in writing where pupils have frequent opportunities to write at length about a variety of topics and in different genres. Work in mathematics is helping to develop pupils' fluency; however, not enough pupils are able to apply their mathematical knowledge to problem solving and reasoning.
- A significant minority of pupils join or leave the school at different times of the school year. Many who join during the year speak little or no English. These factors have an effect on standards and many pupils do not reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. However, even allowing for these factors, the proportions of pupils reaching age-related expectations and the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics need to increase rapidly.

School details

Unique reference number	140609
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10087572

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Drayson
Executive Principal	Linda Hoyle
Telephone number	01142 495 050
Website	www.concordschool.net
Email address	enquiries@concordschool.net
Date of previous inspection	24–25 January 2017

Information about this school

- Concord Junior School became part of a multi-academy trust in March 2014; in September 2015, the trust was renamed Brigantia Learning Trust.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is more than double the national average. There are currently no pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- More pupils enter the school at different times of the year than is seen nationally. A number of these pupils are at the earliest stages of speaking English when they join the school.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- A new executive principal took up post in November 2018.
- A breakfast club is available for all pupils every day.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to observe teaching, pupils' learning and behaviour. A number of these visits took place alongside the executive principal and the head of school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work across the curriculum both during lesson observations and in a separate scrutiny of pupils' workbooks. For English and mathematics, this scrutiny took place alongside school leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils of different ages read.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils, spoke with pupils at break and lunchtime and considered the 61 responses to the confidential pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke to parents in the playground, considered the 26 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and took into account the 13 free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with a number of school staff and considered the 13 responses to the confidential staff survey.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive principal, senior leaders, subject leaders, members of the local academy board, including the chair and the chair of trustees, the chief executive officer and the director of academies primary.
- The lead inspector met with an external improvement adviser.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including: the school's website, self-evaluation, action and development plans, assessment information, minutes of meeting of the local academy board, safeguarding records, monitoring information, child protection records and documents relating to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Janet Keefe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Ashworth

Ofsted Inspector

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