

Inspection of Forest Town Primary School

Clipstone Road West, Forest Town, Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG19 0ED

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff know each other well in this friendly school. Pupils say that they like their school. They are safe and happy there. They know there will always be someone who will listen if they have a problem. They say that bullying does not happen very often. If it does, pupils are confident it will be addressed quickly.

Leaders have a clear vision for the character they want pupils to develop. The school's work is underpinned by its values: 'adventurous, responsible, kind, persevere, independent, together'. Pupils who demonstrate these qualities are rewarded with a badge in a weekly assembly. They wear these badges with pride.

Leaders do not have high enough expectations of how pupils should behave. While many pupils behave well and join in with their learning, some do not. Lunchtimes are boisterous. Pupils resort to physical games because there is not enough for them to do. There is some low-level disruption in classes. Teachers deal with this in different ways.

Most parents are positive about their experience with the school. They say that their children love coming to school. Young children enjoy signing 'Incy wincy spider' together.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders know that there is much to be done to improve the school. With the support of the local authority and governing body, they have started to address these issues. A new curriculum is in place. Plans for the whole school set out the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. In most subjects, it is clear how new learning builds on prior learning. Curriculum leaders are knowledgeable about their subjects. They have plans to improve the curriculum further. However, leaders' checks on the progress that the school is making are not always as rigorous as they should be.

The teaching of the curriculum is inconsistent. Some teachers lack the subject expertise they need to explain new learning with clarity. They do not always make good choices about the activities they plan. Teachers know what they want pupils to remember. However, the activities they choose do not always help pupils to build this knowledge. Teachers have not had sufficient training to ensure they have all the skills they need to support all pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders want pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum. However, some teachers do not have a well-developed understanding of how to achieve this. Pupils with SEND do not always get the help they need to learn as well as they could.

Leaders want pupils to love reading. Story time is an important part of every school day. Teachers read to pupils from a range of good-quality texts. Leaders have recently introduced a new programme to teach phonics. Staff follow the scheme closely. Pupils' reading books are well matched to the sounds they know. While

many pupils learn new sounds quickly, pupils who struggle to keep up do not get the help they need in lessons.

Assessment is not well embedded in every subject, particularly in foundation subjects. Where teachers do assess what pupils know and remember, this information is not used well enough to inform future planning. As a result, pupils' misconceptions and gaps in learning remain.

Pupils in the nursery get off to a good start. In this setting, staff have high expectations. Adults interact well with children. They respond to children's questions and take every opportunity to extend children's learning. For example, a nursery child asked how the roof kept the rain from falling on them while they were playing in the outdoor area. The adult explained this clearly using some new vocabulary. The children listened intently. Expectations in the reception class are not as high. Some children in this setting do not show the same positive attitudes to learning.

Leaders have planned a range of opportunities to enrich the curriculum. Pupils in Year 3 have ballet lessons. Year 6 pupils have recently been to The Holocaust Centre linked to their work on the Second World War. Year 5 pupils visited the Yorkshire Sculpture Park to support an art and design topic. Other aspects of personal development are not as well thought out. Pupils do not have a well-developed understanding of other faiths and cultures. They do not know what British Values are or how they are relevant in everyday life.

Leaders work hard to get the balance right between school improvement and considering the workload of staff. A large majority of staff are positive about the support they receive and say they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority. Staff complete regular training so that they know what to do when a pupil may be at risk. They report their concerns to the designated safeguarding lead promptly. All concerns are taken seriously. Leaders take swift and appropriate action. They seek the support of external agencies when it is needed. Thorough checks are made on staff's suitability to work with children.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe both in and outside school. Positive mental health is promoted.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that staff have the subject knowledge that they need. Lessons do not always help all pupils, including those with SEND, secure important knowledge and build on what they learned before. Leaders should

ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to implement the curriculum effectively and consistently for all pupils.

- Teachers do not always use assessment to identify what pupils do not know. This means that gaps in pupils' learning are not routinely addressed. Leaders should develop a systematic approach to assessment that enables teachers to effectively plan lessons that are closely matched to pupils' needs.
- Leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes are not high enough. There is no consistent approach to dealing with poor behaviour. Some pupils do not behave as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that all staff share the same high expectations of how pupils should behave and participate in their learning. They should ensure that there is a common approach to addressing poor behaviour.
- Pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of the protected characteristics, world faiths or fundamental British values. Consequently, they are not as prepared as they need to be for life in modern Britain. Leaders need to review the curriculum so that pupils develop an understanding of equality, world faiths and British values appropriate to their age.
- Leaders do not know well enough what the school needs to do to improve further. Leaders must ensure that they identify where, and what, the school needs to do to improve further and address the areas identified at pace.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	130255
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10227774
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	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alan Moore
Headteacher	Nicola Lomas
Website	www.foresttownprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- A new chair and vice-chair of governors have been appointed in the past year.
- The school runs a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The lead inspector also met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and had a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, science, history and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils from the lessons visited and looked at examples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtime and lunchtime, in assemblies and around the school. They also spoke to pupils about their views of behaviour. Behaviour and attendance records were reviewed.
- Inspectors considered the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed policies and safeguarding records. They also discussed safeguarding arrangements with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text service.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their view of the school and took account of responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	Ofsted Inspector
Shaun Carter	His Majesty's Inspector

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