

# Nassington Primary School

Church Street, Peterborough PE8 6QG

## Inspection dates

24–25 May 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders, including governors, have not ensured that some essential policies reflect the school's priorities and are kept up to date.
- Subject leaders do not exercise sufficient control over the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their areas.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The headteacher carries out regular monitoring. Teachers respond positively to her feedback so that they improve their teaching further.
- From the earliest stages, pupils develop a high level of interdependence. They willingly support each other's learning, being considerate, reflective and respectful.
- Pupils make good progress in most subjects.
- The headteacher ensures that pupils with special educational needs and disability, and disadvantaged pupils, receive the support they need to make good progress.
- Teachers plan and deliver the curriculum well so that pupils boost their reading, writing and mathematical skills across all subjects. The curriculum is enriched with trips and assemblies so that pupils gain a strong foundation of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - leaders produce up-to-date policies so that teachers are clear what is expected of them
  - subject leaders continue to develop their roles so that they take on more responsibility for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their subject areas
  - all governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities, attending appropriate external training as required.
- Improve outcomes in writing by ensuring pupils know how they can improve their work, especially with regard to spelling.
- An external review of governance 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

- Since the last inspection, there has been a period of significant changes including extensive building work associated with the expansion of the school. New staff now occupy most of the teaching posts. The headteacher has nurtured a new staff team that is happy to share good ideas and support one another's work. She has recognised accurately the potential of teachers to take on subject leadership. She supports them well. However, they are in the early stages of developing their roles.
- Leaders have not ensured that all policies are reviewed and updated regularly. In particular, at the start of the inspection, the school's child protection policy did not reflect the most recent requirements. The headteacher addressed this administrative shortfall as a matter of urgency so that an up-to-date policy was in place before the end of the first day of the inspection. Pupils' safety has not been placed at risk because staff training and safeguarding practice in the school have followed current guidelines.
- The headteacher ensures that performance management targets for teachers clearly reflect the priorities for improvement of the school.
- Pupils demonstrate a mature appreciation of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Pupils have important opportunities in lessons, assemblies and trips to learn about cultures and faiths other than their own. The headteacher expects pupils to show good manners, consideration and respect towards each other. This means that the school has a highly inclusive nature and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Sport funding is used well so that more pupils take part in inter-school competitions and appreciate the importance of regular exercise for their health.
- The headteacher and governors plan the expenditure of pupil premium sensitively and effectively so that disadvantaged pupils are supported well and make progress at least at similar rates to others in the school.
- The topic-based curriculum is well planned and effective in enabling pupils to learn about a wide range of subjects. The headteacher ensures that pupils have opportunities throughout their studies to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- The headteacher carries out regular monitoring so that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers are keen to improve their teaching further and so respond promptly to the helpful feedback she provides after her frequent visits to lessons. Her evaluations are accurate and rightly focus on learning and progress. She recognises that teachers' assessments do not focus on the quality of pupils' writing as consistently and routinely as needed to bring about rapid improvements. She is revising the school's assessment policy accordingly.
- The headteacher monitors behaviour records very carefully and acts swiftly when she recognises any patterns, so that pupils are supported promptly and their behaviour improves. Her leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and disability is a real asset to the school. She ensures that teachers and teaching assistants receive the training and guidance they need so that pupils are supported very well.
- The spirit of inclusion permeates all aspects of the school so that all pupils have equal opportunities to thrive. Pupils are understanding and patient with each other and support each other when they find things difficult. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and disability are supported well so that they are able to fulfil their potential.
- The school works with outside agencies and external support to improve different aspects of the school. Subject leaders work regularly and productively with schools in a local cluster. This is helping the development of their leadership skills and ensures their assessments are accurate.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governors are committed to fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. There is, however, a lack of clarity on how they can and should achieve this. Currently, governors are too reliant on the headteacher and external support and are not able to make all their decisions from an informed background. The new chair of governors is highly dedicated and recognises the need for all governors to be better placed to support and challenge the headteacher. This is reflected in the regular training she has attended since taking on the role so that she is well placed to lead the governing body by example.

- Governors have an accurate view of the strengths of the school. With the guidance of the headteacher, they carry out helpful visits to the school, reporting back to the full governing body on what they have seen.
- The chair of governors has worked closely with an external adviser to ensure that the headteacher's performance management review is suitably matched to the school's priorities for improvement. Governors recognise rightly the headteacher's achievements during a demanding time when she has had few opportunities to delegate leadership responsibilities.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** is good

- Teachers know their pupils very well and make sure that they have the right amount of support they need to help them make progress. They provide clear explanations so pupils are confident about what they have to do. Pupils respond enthusiastically to tasks they find more difficult, demonstrating very positive attitudes to the challenges their teachers set them. Teachers create a productive and respectful atmosphere in lessons, so that the most able pupils are appropriately stretched and all pupils persevere, learning from mistakes and helping each other.
- Teaching assistants are experienced and provide valuable support to individual pupils, including those with special educational needs and disability, so that all pupils are as involved as they can be with the class activities.
- Teachers apply their strong subject knowledge very well to everyday situations so that pupils are engaged and interested in their work. This ensures pupils are attentive and helps them make good progress.
- Teachers use topic work creatively so that pupils are able routinely to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across all subject areas. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, taking part in a cookery lesson, demonstrated ably how they used mathematical skills when measuring out ingredients and their literacy skills to read and understand the recipes.
- All classrooms are attractive and inviting, with displays celebrating pupils' achievements. Pupils make regular use of helpful information on the boards, for example adopting key words in their extended writing. They enjoy choosing and reading books provided in each classroom's library collection.
- Teachers set homework that is highly relevant to topics being studied in lessons. Homework tasks are thoughtfully designed to be readily completed at home, encouraging the involvement of parents. Pupils complete home-based project work. For example, pupils have been asked to devise a timeline to illustrate family history alongside technological developments. Parents have been able to support this well because of the guidance they receive from their child's teacher. In the early years, brightly coloured stars are on display on which parents have noted their child's achievements at home. Comments written by parents show that they are familiar with the skills and knowledge their child is developing at school and how they can help them.
- The school is rightly proud of the interdependence teachers nurture in pupils from the earliest opportunity. Pupils interact with each other willingly and sensibly to assess each other's work, sometimes moving around the room to do so, without causing any disruption.
- Assessment in books shows that pupils are highly reflective on their own and other's work and, with the help of verbal and written feedback from their teachers, know what they need to improve. However, pupils are often less clear on how they can achieve this.
- Pupils make steady progress in their use of grammar and punctuation because of the guidance they receive from their teachers. However, improvements in spelling are less evident. The school's assessment policy is under review in order to address explicitly the need for more rapid improvements in pupils' spelling and to ensure that all teachers are clear on, and follow, the headteacher's expectations.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** is good

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the care and guidance they receive from all staff in the school. From the earliest stages, pupils are encouraged to support each other and be considerate and kind. This means that they grow in confidence, knowing that, as one pupil put it, 'teachers are always there to help you'.

- Younger pupils are not intimidated by those in older years, and contribute well to discussions in mixed-aged groups. Older pupils are pleased to take on responsibilities, recognising that they are role models for younger ones, and like looking after them. However, Year 5 pupils have valued times in the past when they have had 'their own space' where, for example, they could eat their lunch. Pupils have very mature and sensible ideas about how to successfully integrate a wider age range of pupils when the primary school extends to Year 6 provision. Pupils have enjoyed being able to contribute to discussions with their teachers to help with planning for this development.
- Pupils are punctual to lessons and settle very quickly to tasks when they arrive in class in the morning and after breaktimes.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, and generally their attendance is good. The attendance of some is low due to their specific circumstances, which the school supports the pupils to overcome. There are clear examples of pupils improving their attendance due to the school's identification of the reasons for their absence and helping to resolve them.
- Pupils have a keen sense of the right and wrong ways to behave. They are knowledgeable about the risks posed by the internet and know about ways to keep safe. They talk about how helpful they have found assemblies and special events on themes such as healthy eating, e-safety and supporting charities. During a whole-school assembly, Year 3 pupils were delighted to tell everyone why they were wearing fancy wigs in order to raise funds for the CLIC Sargent cancer charity. In the same assembly, pupils listened respectfully and appreciatively as some of their friends played brass instruments, and were keen to hear about opportunities to learn to play.
- Pupils value the opportunities they have to go on residential trips and visits. They recognise ways in which these support their studies in class.
- Staff are vigilant to any signs that pupils might need extra help, not only with their learning, but also to improve their behaviour and attendance or to help with any worries they might have. The school works successfully with families, and outside agencies as needed, so that pupils receive appropriate support.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good
- Pupils play and socialise well together. They conduct themselves sensibly around the school and in lessons. The inspector did not see any low-level disruption in lessons during this visit.
- Pupils respond well to the expectations of their teachers. They are keen to be awarded behaviour 'counters', by, for example, persevering with a challenging task or improving their attendance.
- Behaviour records indicate that serious incidents of poor behaviour are rare. This matches pupils' accounts. However, records also show that incidents of poor behaviour mostly happen in the playground at breaktimes. Leaders are aware of this and are considering the ways in which they can reduce the number of these incidents further.
- Pupils are welcoming and keen to talk to visitors about their school and their work. On occasions, this excitement means that pupils talk over each other and do not listen to each other very well. This is more a reflection of over-exuberance than poor manners.

### Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils generally make good progress in most subjects. The school's own assessment information shows that by the end of Year 4 pupils have made better progress than average.
- Teachers have analysed the reasons for the previous drop in standards in writing and addressed them effectively, so that pupils' achievement in writing is catching up with standards in mathematics and reading.
- Similarly, teachers identified the cause of a reduced proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in phonics in 2014 and, consequently, improved these results in 2015.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported well by their teachers so they make progress at similar, and sometimes more rapid, rates compared with other pupils.
- Teachers keep meticulous records of the daily activities and achievements of pupils with special educational needs and disability. These show that pupils make good progress measured against their individual targets.
- Pupils enjoy choosing books about things that interest them. They demonstrate an impressive range of research skills. Pupils refer confidently to non-fiction books and are adept at using information technology

to help them learn new information in lessons. Those who need it receive extra help with reading from their teachers, teaching assistants and an impressive team of experienced volunteers.

## Early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the early years is good and children make good progress.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Teachers routinely promote the use of phonics, number and writing, enriched by the opportunities presented by the whole-school topic-based curriculum. Children can explain how their different activities relate to their topic work. They enjoy looking at, and using, artefacts from the past, such as a scrubbing board, connecting this with a trip to a local museum and displays around the classroom on the theme of 1940s washday.
- The indoor and outdoor areas of the early years provision at the school are a vibrant medley of attractive resources. There is an extensive range of opportunities for pupils to practise and develop new skills and knowledge. Children are proud to show off their writing skills by, for example, using laminated speech bubbles they place around their classroom, or writing sentences on whiteboards to describe models of mini-beasts.
- Teachers' assessments are accurate and regular, documented well in children's learning journeys and demonstrating good rates of progress. When children fall behind, they receive the support they need to catch up.
- Early years staff ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. Parents receive helpful details of their child's learning goals and how they can help them achieve them with relevant activities at home.
- Adults supervise the children well so they are kept safe. They allow children to explore while skilfully directing their activities as appropriate to maintain their attentiveness. This boosts the children's resilience and encourages them to reflect and adapt and so develop their ideas. As a consequence, children respond very productively to challenges set for them. The children explained to the inspector why they were placing sections of guttering together – to make it long enough to carry a ball from one location across to a basket at another. At the end of the lesson, children were keen to share with others how they had met this challenge. Their teacher then thoughtfully developed their thinking by guiding them through ways of using arm spans to estimate how long the guttering had to be, which they achieved with remarkable accuracy.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121847
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001547

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–10
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ann Bainbridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Loraine Allen
<b>Telephone number</b>	01780 782 743
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nassingtonschool.org.uk/">http://www.nassingtonschool.org.uk/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:head@nassington.northants-ecl.gov.uk">head@nassington.northants-ecl.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13–14 October 2010

## Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disability is above the national average.
- Children attend the Reception class part-time for their first few weeks before moving to full-time attendance.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Very few pupils represent minority ethnic groups. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school is currently making the transition from a three-tier to a two-tier system and will have pupils in Year 6 for the first time next academic year. It is therefore not possible to comment on whether or not the school meets the government's floor standards. These standards set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium and governors' information and duties on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher, members of the governing body and members of the teaching staff, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector had a tour of the school, visiting all classes, with the headteacher. She observed seven lessons or parts of lessons, some of these jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector evaluated a wide range of documents including: minutes of meetings of the governing body; school policies; records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching; performance management records; the school's achievement information; the single central record and recruitment documentation.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour out of lessons, including at lunchtime, in the playground and in a whole-school assembly.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils, representing Year 1 to Year 5, and also listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 4 read.
- The inspector looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector took into account the responses to questionnaires completed for the inspection by staff, pupils and parents, including 46 responses to Parent View, the online survey. The inspector also had informal conversations with parents, pupils and staff over the two days of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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