

Normanton Common Primary School

Castleford Road, Normanton, West Yorkshire, WF6 1QU

Inspection dates 9–10 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. By the end of Year 6 in 2013, it was above average in mathematics, closely followed by writing. Year 6 pupils and Year 2 pupils made good progress in 2013, from their different starting points.
- The most able do well and reached very high levels of attainment in 2012 and 2013.
- Children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is good. Standards have improved well in the last two years.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language receive effective support and learn well.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is rising and is close to average.
- Pupils are safe and secure. They say that they feel safe and staff and parents agree.
- The headteacher relentlessly pursues improvements in teaching. As a result, pupils' achievement has improved well. The school is well placed to continue to develop.
- Middle leaders make a highly effective contribution to raising standards for pupils' learning through well-thought-out strategies, such as very clear marking and focussed support for teachers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in reading in Year 6 by the end of 2013 was not as high as it should be. Recent results show that it has rapidly improved.
- In 2013, gaps in achievement widened between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others in the school. Results show these gaps are quickly closing and have closed in mathematics.
- At times, pupils do not move quickly enough onto the next task. They sometimes wait too long and make slower progress in their learning.
- Governors and senior leaders gather extensive information on the school's performance but do not have good systems to scrutinise it well enough to plan the best improvements for the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons and parts of lessons, one jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also visited an assembly, observed lunch and break times and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2, staff, school leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. A meeting with the local authority representative also took place.
- Inspectors took account of the results of the school’s own surveys of parents’ views and 22 responses to the inspection staff questionnaires. There were 78 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents in the playground and read an email and a letter from them.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils’ progress, school improvement plans and records of the governing body meetings. The work in pupils’ books and records relating to the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jonathan Woodyatt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elaine Maloney	Additional Inspector
Christine Addison	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger in size compared to other primary schools.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- There is a similar proportion, compared to other schools, of pupils who speak English as an additional language; although very few of these are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below that found in other schools. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to other schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is similar to other schools. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- There is a breakfast club run by the school on the site.
- The school is part of the Altofts and Normanton Family of Schools, a partnership of local schools.
- The school is supported by a specialist sports coach as part of a recent arrangement involving the additional funding for primary school sport.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding in order to boost pupils' achievement, especially in reading in Key Stage 2, and particularly for those known to be eligible for free school meals, by:
 - sharing more widely the skills of the best teachers in the school in order to further develop the skills of other teachers
 - making sure that pupils move more swiftly onto the next task as soon as they understand what to do.
- Ensure senior leaders and governors develop clear and effective systems for evaluating the data gathered to provide the best information to help make decisions to secure more rapid improvements.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typically below those expected for their age. Their skills in communication, language, literacy and personal development are even lower. They make good progress because the quality of teaching is good and they are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- In 2013, attainment in Year 2 was average and has been rising year on year. Pupils are now making even better progress in Key Stage 1 from their different starting points than before.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2013, pupils' attainment was above average in mathematics and writing. Although attainment in reading was not quite as high compared to other schools, standards in these subjects have risen well in the last three years. Good teaching has rapidly improved the attainment in reading recently.
- The proportions of pupils making average and above-average progress improved since 2012, and by 2013 was above that found in other schools, which represents good achievement.
- The very few most able pupils make very good progress because they can flourish in the school and reach their full potential. Test results in 2013 showed more success than in other schools in reaching the very high Level 6 in mathematics and writing.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do better than those in other schools nationally. Some pupils with less severe learning difficulties did less well than others in 2013, although recent evidence shows that effective support for their varied needs is ensuring they progress well from their different starting points.
- Pupils who need additional help to learn English receive well-targeted, effective support that enables them to continue to learn alongside their peers in the classrooms. This clearly demonstrates the school's commitment to tackling discrimination and providing equal opportunities.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2013, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were broadly three terms behind others in the school in mathematics and two terms behind in English. This gap had grown markedly since the previous year. However, evidence shows that the gap is well on its way to closing, having already done so in mathematics and pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress.
- In 2013, the national screening check of pupils' phonics skills (the knowledge of letters and the sounds they make) carried out in Year 1, showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the levels expected for their age was close to that in other schools and had improved on the figure for 2012. Inspectors heard pupils in different years fluently reading out-loud from their books demonstrating their quickly improving reading skills.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The standard of teaching is good. Weaker teaching is almost eradicated and year after year more teaching is outstanding. Evidence from inspectors' observations of the learning in classrooms, school records and by scrutinising pupils' work in their books confirms this view.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is improving as a result of training, together with the close scrutiny of performance data and the quality of teaching by middle leaders. Leaders have introduced agreed ways of working for all teachers, for example, the systematic learning of mathematical facts and questioning at different levels to accurately check pupils' levels of reading skills.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage focuses on developing the necessary skills so children can benefit well from the exciting range of activities and resources provided. For example, children chose to make play dough hot cross buns as they explored the theme of Easter. Staff welcomed children and used sign language to reinforce communication and language development.

- Learning is effective, for example, when groups of pupils move between Years 5 and 6 so that pupils with different needs can work on activities which match their skills and abilities. A group of the most able pupils in a Year 6 mathematics lesson worked outstandingly well when they were given well-prepared tasks that challenged them at the highest levels.
- The agreed system for marking pupils' work is rigorously applied by all teachers. Pupils receive detailed feedback from teachers through the notes provided in their books. Pupils clearly explained to inspectors what the different annotations meant and showed them what they had been practising in order to help them securely improve their work.
- There are good learning opportunities provided for pupils who need extra support, such as those who have fallen behind with their reading or those who have less skills in speaking English.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' skills are regularly enhanced by purposeful and targeted support from the senior, and especially middle leaders. This ensures that gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, identified through routine checking, can be quickly closed. However, there are opportunities to raise standards of teaching even further by sharing more widely the skills of the best teachers in the school.
- At times, pupils' progress can slow down when they are ready to move to the next activity but do not do so quickly enough. In a literacy lesson, for example, pupils completed their tasks and then had to wait too long for the teacher to provide the next ones. This wasted valuable learning time. While this is not the norm, it still happens more than it should.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are friendly to each other at all times of the school day. They show respect for others when playing outside during break and lunchtimes.
- Pupils work well together during lessons. They have many opportunities to discuss and share their ideas with partners or in groups. Pupils' good behaviour is reflected in the responsible manner in which they take part in discussions. As a result this enhances their learning.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and so attend more regularly than they used to and, as a result, attendance is rising and is now broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who repeatedly miss school was too high in 2013, but has reduced significantly this year and is now much closer to that in other schools due to the school leaders' actions. For example, the learning mentor provides helpful support for families and at the breakfast club.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff, parents and pupils agree with this judgement. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and staff keep a close lookout for pupils during breaks and lunch and at the start and end of the day.
- Pupils mentioned to inspectors that they know when they need to tell teachers about things and that teachers are good at dealing with their issues. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, such as racist or homophobic, and say that bullying of any kind rarely happens because they do not call each other names. Staff and parents agree that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- There have been no permanent exclusions in the last three years. The very few fixed-term exclusions have been used as a last resort for pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour well enough.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is instrumental in driving the improvements to raise achievement. He ensures that staff joining the school can quickly take on the responsibility for improving different aspects, such as numeracy or literacy. He has increased the support for teachers to improve their skills

through training and from other teachers and senior leaders, though there is more scope for them to learn from the very best teachers. He has clearly focussed on the recommendations from the last inspection report. Together these actions have ensured that performance overall is the best it has been in a number of years.

- The appointment of middle leaders has significantly boosted the strength of the leadership in the school, particularly in mathematics, reading and writing. Effective training opportunities give middle leaders the chance to visit other schools, such as those in the partnership, in order to improve their leadership skills. In conversation with middle leaders, it was clear that they knew what needed to be done to raise achievement in their areas.
- Leaders have set more challenging targets for teachers in order to drive up standards, which have included a focus on ensuring that the most able pupils are provided with harder work and on speeding up the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals.
- The effective curriculum increasingly meets the different needs of pupils. Quickly well-targeted individual support from skilled staff and the grouping of pupils ensures that their basic skills are boosted in the key subjects if they fall behind or are moving well ahead. Leaders organised for pupils to return to school one evening in their pyjamas, accompanied by their parents, for a bedtime story-telling event led by an author as part of their work to improve reading.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. For example, there are opportunities for pupils to work together in lessons, which builds their self-confidence. Pupils learn about different faiths in regular assemblies. Pupils told inspectors about their understanding of different cultures. Many displays around the school illustrate and celebrate different beliefs.
- The governing body, senior and middle leaders frequently use the wide range of information that they gather about the performance of pupils, for example, to identify any individual who falls behind. However, the information is not always presented clearly enough for them to identify differences in performance between groups of pupils so that actions can be sharply focused on implementing the best improvements.
- The primary school sport funding is being used well. Leaders have employed a specialist sports coach to develop staff skills in teaching physical education and to increase pupils' involvement in different sports. They plan to provide more opportunities for pupils to take part in competitions through developing links with local clubs.
- The school takes part in the local authority's highly effective improvement programme, receiving a minimum of 10 days support per year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body are clearly aware of the school's strengths and know what it needs to do to keep improving. They make the most of the wealth of information that they receive from the school leaders on the school's performance, though this could be presented more clearly for them. They regularly visit the school in order to see improvements for themselves. They set the headteacher very challenging targets and link these to his salary. They know about the quality of teaching and expect the headteacher to set staff rigorous performance targets for improvement linked to their pay, which he does.
 - The governors manage the finances well so that the school can provide additional staffing and resources to support the variety of needs of pupils, such as those who have fewer skills in English. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to give those who are eligible a good chance to improve their skills. Governors spend the additional sport funding well. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	108147
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	431651

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephanie Talbot
Headteacher	Glyn Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	18 September 2012
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