

Lionwood Junior School

Wolfe Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 4HT

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders are highly skilled and effective. They provide outstanding leadership which is rapidly transforming the school. As a result, progress, particularly in English and mathematics, has accelerated.
- Governors provide a very effective balance of support and challenge. They recognise the school’s many strengths and share the headteacher’s ambition to continue to develop the school further.
- Support for pupils’ personal development and welfare is a major strength of the school. The pastoral support team is proactive in identifying barriers to learning in school and outside school. It works effectively with families and outside agencies to help to address and overcome these.
- The school is highly inclusive and all necessary steps are taken to ensure that pupils’ needs are extremely well met. Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is extremely effective so that these pupils make strong progress from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well in the school, but leaders acknowledge that the most able disadvantaged pupils need to make more rapid progress.
- Teaching and learning in some subjects other than English and mathematics, such as history and geography, do not always provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. Consequently these pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of making.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils by:
 - identifying those pupils more swiftly on entry to the school
 - using national research to identify the most effective methods to accelerate progress
 - ensuring that some funding for disadvantaged pupils is specifically targeted at the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Further strengthen teaching and learning in subjects such as history and geography by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan more challenging work for the most able pupils
 - subject leaders using the new systems for tracking pupils' progress to ensure that progress for all pupils is as rapid as in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is a highly skilled and dynamic leader. Since taking on the role of executive headteacher of both the infant and junior schools, she has effectively developed the skills of other leaders and built a cohesive and energetic leadership team that shares her passion and drive for continual improvement. This team, together with governors, demonstrates a relentless focus on ensuring that every pupil achieves the very best at Lionwood Junior School. As a result, teaching has improved further and pupils' progress has rapidly accelerated.
- The collaboration of the infant and junior schools in 2014 has provided a wealth of opportunities for improving teaching and learning and leadership across both schools. This is now being extended through federation with a third school. Staff spoken to during the inspection recognised the many benefits that federation has brought. They appreciate the opportunities for collaboration between staff in the federation and spoke about how this has benefited them professionally and helped to improve the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders are very accurate in their evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This is because it is based on a wealth of evidence collected by leaders through observing teaching, analysis of pupils' progress in their books, discussion with staff, pupils and parents, and analysis of pupils' outcomes.
- Since joining the federation, leaders have quickly taken effective action to make sure that teaching across the school is never less than good. As new teachers have joined the school, leaders have quickly established with these and all staff a shared vision and purpose. Leaders talk about establishing this vision as ensuring that all staff and pupils 'have Lionwood running through their veins'.
- Leaders have established a culture where staff are encouraged to be learners and to develop professionally. For example, a teachers' library features prominently in one of the shared areas where pupils work. This is a resource for teachers to use to develop their practice. It also effectively models for pupils that all adults in the school recognise that they are both teachers and learners. Staff spoke highly of the support for professional development that is provided through access to training courses externally, working towards professional qualifications and by sharing of best practice across the school. All staff welcome and encourage feedback because leaders have created a positive climate. Acknowledging areas for development is encouraged. Teachers are open and honest about their strengths and areas for improvement because they know that leaders will support them. However, alongside this, leaders have successfully established a 'no-excuses' culture, where there are no barriers, only challenges to improvement.
- Leaders are rigorous in their checks on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. They accurately pinpoint strengths and areas for improvement and provide staff with detailed and highly focused feedback to enable them to improve further. For example, one senior leader identified that a teacher needed to improve their responses to pupils' errors or lack of understanding. They recorded their advice as 'run towards a misconception, not away from it'. This sharply focused feedback ensures that teachers are left in no doubt about what they are doing well and what they need to improve further. Leaders use this information, together with information about the progress

pupils have made, as part of their performance management processes to improve teaching and learning further.

- Teachers new to the school and those new to the profession are well supported. Leaders set out very clearly their expectations of all staff. These have ensured that, despite staff changes, teaching is securely good across the school, and often better than this. Leaders recognise that where there are newer staff, there is still more to do to ensure that the excellent systems and practices established are firmly embedded in all classes. They are united in their determination to ensure, through the support and challenge that they provide, that all teaching is of the highest possible standard so that pupils' progress accelerates even further.
- Leaders have ensured that the school is highly inclusive. Staff, pupils and parents all told inspectors that the school is welcoming to all. Pupils who have had difficult experiences elsewhere have their needs recognised quickly and structured support is provided. This enables them to settle into Lionwood extremely quickly. One parent told the inspectors that she was completely delighted with the support that the school had provided since her child had started there. Pupils know about discrimination and stereotyping, and spoke about them with maturity. They know that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. One pupil told the inspectors, 'Racist name-calling? That would go straight to senior leadership, no question.' As a result, pupils have highly positive attitudes to people from different cultures, backgrounds and faiths, and to those with needs different from their own.
- A broad and engaging curriculum is in place which is carefully planned to develop pupils' skills. This is enhanced by enrichment afternoons where pupils learn skills such as archery or take part in Forest School. Trips and performances provide opportunities to expand pupils' horizons. Some pupils do not have access to these experiences outside school. Clubs are many and varied, including sports clubs, musical clubs and drama clubs. Together these ensure that pupils have a wide range of interesting and imaginative opportunities for learning.
- Additional funding the school receives is used well to enhance provision. Analysis of the impact of the extra support provided through the use of the pupil premium shows that disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress. The most able pupils in this group have not been specifically targeted to ensure that they make all the progress they could. The extra funding the school receives to enhance physical education and sports is used effectively to make sure staff have the skills needed to teach pupils effectively and to ensure that pupils have opportunities to participate in competitive events against other schools.
- Parents recognise the many improvements that have taken place at the school. A number of parents spoken to during the inspection spoke highly of the excellent support provided by the school for their child, and some also spoke about the family support provided by the school. A very small proportion of parents responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire. Of these, a few would like more information about the progress their child is making in school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well. Pupils learn about British values, such as tolerance and respect for example, through work about Martin Luther King and discrimination. Pupils learn about different faiths, for example through taking part in Buddhism Day and learning about Judaism in assembly and in lessons. In Forest School and lessons such as Nature Detectives,

pupils develop an understanding of nature and learn about how to protect wildlife and the environment. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work collaboratively and develop their social skills. As a result, pupils are helped to become thoughtful, caring and responsible citizens.

- A senior leader takes responsibility for supporting and developing subject leaders in their roles. Some subject leaders are new to their current roles. This support is ensuring a high degree of consistency of approach among them. Subject leaders know what is expected of them because they have been provided with explicit guidance setting out key tasks and accountabilities. As a result, they know the significant role they play in improving the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils' progress further improves. Subject leaders have worked together to establish clear frameworks for assessing progress which all teachers are now using. These are ensuring that teachers have a clear picture of pupils' achievement in each subject so that they are able to track progress in more detail.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very effective in fulfilling their roles. They know the school well because they visit often, talk with staff and meet frequently to discuss and evaluate all aspects of the school. They know how the school has improved and where there is room for further improvements, and share the headteacher's determination to make the school a beacon of excellence.
- Governors support and trust the leadership team, recognising its expertise and professionalism. However, they also provide a high level of challenge for leaders. For example, governors ask detailed questions about roles and responsibilities and how staff will be held to account. Governors carefully consider how to ensure that there is sufficient capacity across the federation, and how to develop this further through secondments and moving staff between schools. They support leaders in developing partnerships with other schools and supporting them, but carefully check that this does not in any way weaken provision at Lionwood.
- Governors carefully check expenditure, including funding for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They know which aspects of funding are being used most effectively and have most impact because they discuss these matters with leaders regularly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' safety is at the heart of everything that staff do at Lionwood Junior School. Everyone in the school knows the importance of being vigilant about spotting signs that a pupil may be at risk. They know exactly what to do to make sure that their concerns are passed on and acted upon swiftly.
- Meticulous records are kept regarding checks on staff and concerns about pupils, and these ensure that no concerns are overlooked. Governors play their role also. A safeguarding working party meets regularly to check that leaders' training is up to date and that school procedures are robust.
- Leaders work very effectively with external agencies to promote pupils' safety. For example, strong links exist with the local police so that issues that arise outside school that impact on pupils' safety are followed up. The level of partnership working established by the school with other agencies, and with the high school to which most

pupils move on, is highly effective in ensuring that all pupils are kept safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers at Lionwood School take care to ensure that learning is fun. One pupil told inspectors, 'I've never had a boring lesson in this school and I don't think I ever will.' The school's system of daily planning encourages each teacher to reflect on what pupils have learned and what they need to learn next.
- Teachers use questioning in lessons to good effect, encouraging pupils to think more deeply about their learning and to probe misconceptions. They evaluate and use pupils' responses to further learning. For example, during the inspection a pupil told the teacher that you could not divide eight by five, and the teacher provided an opportunity for all pupils to test out whether this was the case.
- Pupils know what they need to do to improve their learning in English and mathematics because they have clear targets that are referred to regularly in lessons. Teachers provide good-quality feedback to pupils in their books, which helps them to know how to improve subsequent work. They also provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own learning. Early morning work is used regularly as an opportunity for pupils to look at the previous day's work and improve those aspects that need to be improved.
- Reading is taught well across the school. Pupils who lack basic phonics knowledge when joining the school are provided with support to enable them to catch up quickly. The most able readers are challenged through guided reading lessons where teachers ask questions that develop sophisticated reading skills such as inference and empathy. Reading has a high profile in every class, with attractive and engaging displays and areas encouraging pupils to read, identify their favourite author and to talk about books. This has had a strong impact on improving the progress of pupils in reading across the school.
- Adults and pupils have very good relationships. Pupils say that they like and respect their teachers. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. They do not accept work that is not well presented and of a high standard, and pupils know this. As a result, pupils' work is neat and demonstrates care.
- Teachers regularly provide pupils with a range of tasks at different levels in English and mathematics, often allowing pupils to choose for themselves the task that they feel is best to extend their learning. Pupils respond to this well, wanting to take on greater challenges when they are ready.
- Resources are well used to promote learning. For example, a wealth of mathematics resources such as bead strings, number cards and number lines, support pupils in exploring mathematical concepts in a concrete way before moving to abstract representation. Resources for science have helped teachers to improve their teaching of science. These resources bring science to life for pupils, and as a result pupils talk enthusiastically about science and investigations they have carried out.
- While time is usually maximised in lessons, occasionally this is not the case. For example, from time to time teachers do not have resources ready or spend too long recapping instructions when pupils are ready and able to start working. This slows the usually rapid pace of learning.

- In some subjects, such as history and geography, the most able pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to extend and deepen their skills. They sometimes are expected to complete the same task as others and so do not make progress at the rate of which they are capable.
- A number of teachers are new to the school and relatively new to the profession. They are provided with excellent support and guidance. However, they are yet to demonstrate the skill and flair shown by others and so pupils' progress in one or two classes is not as consistently rapid as in the majority of classes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes towards others and towards their learning. Adults encourage positive attitudes, for example through their 'Growth Mindset' approach. This is helping pupils to overcome their own emotional and mental barriers. One pupil told inspectors, 'when we say, "I can't do it!", the teachers always say, "you can't do it yet", and we know now that this is true.' As a result of these positive attitudes, pupils are making rapid gains in their learning, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Parents spoken to in the playground were highly complimentary about the school and the support provided for their child and themselves, describing the support as 'awesome' and 'fantastic'. The work that the school does to engage and support parents in promoting learning is a major strength of the school. The pastoral support team identifies pupils and families who will benefit from input, such as workshops, individual meetings to discuss issues, or support with practicalities such as transport to school. Staff also model for parents, for example how to play effectively to promote learning and how to manage behavioural issues. As a result, parents and pupils are helped to overcome some of the barriers to learning which exist outside school.
- Very strong transition programmes are in place both from the infants to the juniors and from the juniors to the high school. For example, at the end of the summer term, pupils spend two full weeks in their new class so that teachers know these pupils well before the start of the new academic year. Teachers are able to identify and plan for their new pupils much more effectively. All pupils' needs, but particularly the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are identified prior to moving schools so that appropriate support is in place from the very first day a pupil arrives in their new school. Pupils who join the school mid-year or mid-key stage are supported so that they quickly settle into 'the Lionwood way'.
- Pupils' safety is taken extremely seriously in all aspects. Pupils say that the school is a safe place and parents agree. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet or other technologies. They know that there is always someone to speak to if they have a concern. Pupils say that bullying is exceptionally rare because everyone understands the implications that this behaviour can have on other's emotional well-being. They are adamant that any problems that do arise in school are always dealt with very swiftly and effectively.
- Pupils are enabled to be very self-assured and confident. They enjoy opportunities to speak with adults or to speak and perform in front of the class, and others are

respectful and listen carefully to them. During the inspection, for example, a group of three pupils sang to the class unaccompanied by instruments. They did so with real pride and a complete lack of self-consciousness. Other pupils listened very well and demonstrated that they clearly were enjoying the performance. Pupils are given opportunities to build their confidence in areas where this is lacking. For example, during the inspection, a group of pupils who had been identified as reluctant to take part in physical activity took part in a sports event with other schools. They were enthusiastic about the experience and keen to repeat it.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In the vast majority of lessons and around the school, pupils behave exceptionally well. They are given many opportunities to develop a high level of independence. For example, they choose whether to play inside or outside at lunchtimes, recognising that there are rules about how many pupils can stay in the 'social zone' at any one time. They take on responsibilities around the school in roles such as play leaders, following in-depth training. Older pupils can earn a 'green top' which demonstrates that they are a role model for others, and this brings the added benefit of access to The Hub and use of the equipment there during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Pupils told inspectors that behaviour was significantly better now than previously: 'We know how many chances we have and that all staff stick to it.' Pupils are keen to progress from 'green' upwards towards 'gold' on the class behaviour charts and proudly tell leaders when they have done so.
- Pupils say that lessons are hardly ever disrupted by poor behaviour. This is because support for pupils with behavioural difficulties is extremely well planned and managed. The headteacher and other senior leaders take time to really get to know any pupil who has difficulties, and to talk with them about how they can help. They work closely with support staff and teachers to ensure that strategies are planned which will quickly address poor behaviour.
- Attendance at the school is above the national average because leaders track attendance rigorously, meeting with parents to discuss declining or lower attendance. Attendance is also high because pupils enjoy school. They like their teachers and want to come to school every day.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the federation began, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 have risen substantially due to the many improvements that have been put in place across the school. In 2016, pupils in Year 6 achieved above the national average in the new national tests in reading and in line with national averages in mathematics.
- The progress of pupils currently in the school is rapid in English and mathematics. This is because leaders have put in place training and support to ensure that teaching in these subjects is very strong.
- Progress in reading has accelerated because there has been a strong focus on promoting the enjoyment of reading, on teaching specific reading skills and on providing greater challenge for the most able readers who are very well catered for in school.

- Leaders have put in place a range of strategies to ensure that progress in mathematics has improved. Pupils' books show that this has been effective and progress is now accelerating. Opportunities for developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills are evident across the school and are enabling pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are very well supported in their learning. Their progress is carefully tracked and the impact of additional support evaluated regularly to make sure that it is having a positive impact on their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that they are now achieving almost as well as, and in some cases better than, others. However, the most able disadvantaged pupils who join the school are not yet achieving as well as they are able to.
- Progress in some subjects, such as art, is very strong because pupils are given opportunities to learn and apply their skills in many contexts and using different mediums. For example, pupils in Year 6, who were exploring the work of different artists, created their own work in that style and evaluated their work. One pupil recorded, 'I would change the position of the mouth to make it more abstract.' This demonstrates a strong understanding of artistic style and shows that pupils are able to relate this understanding to their own work.
- In a few subjects such as history and geography, pupils do not make as rapid progress as in English and mathematics. In particular, the most able pupils are not making as much progress as they are capable of. This is because some tasks do not offer sufficient challenge. Leaders acknowledge that teachers need to expect more of the most able pupils in these subjects and plan for this accordingly.

School details

Unique reference number	120955
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10005674

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.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	274
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Forder and Tim Wood
Headteacher	Selene Sawyer
Telephone number	01603 433014
Website	www.lionwoodjunior.co.uk
Email address	head@lionwoodjunior.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is of average size compared with schools nationally.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs who are supported by the school is above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who are supported by a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is around average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups, and at playtimes and lunchtimes. Observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books, school assessment information, leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning, and a range of school documents.
- Inspectors met with a selection of parents in the playground and with some pupils from Years 5 and 6.
- Inspectors heard a small number of pupils read from Years 3 and 6. Inspectors met with a representative from the local authority and with three members of the governing body.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff and arrangements for e-safety (keeping children safe online when using electronic media).
- The views of 13 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account.

Inspection team

Maria Curry, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lyn Beale	Ofsted Inspector
Annie Hookway	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Harrison	Ofsted Inspector

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