

Gateford Park Primary School

Amherst Rise, Gateford, Worksop S81 7RG

Inspection dates

9–10 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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 good school

- The headteacher, other teachers and the governing body lead and manage the school well. It is an orderly, happy environment and pupils enjoy coming to learn.
- Governors ensure that, while they support senior leaders, they challenge them continually to improve teaching and outcomes.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils and their abilities well and teaching assistants provide good support for learning.
- Pupils make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. They are keen to succeed and do as well as they can.
- A very vibrant curriculum, with exciting topics, makes pupils highly interested in learning new things.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with moral development being particularly effective. Pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved.
- Pupils make good progress in the early years provision because they are well taught and enjoy their learning greatly. The leader of the early years provision is determined that children will leave Reception well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. Staff teach them effectively to protect themselves against a range of risks.
- A very large majority of parents confirm that their children are happy and safe and make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress that pupils make is not yet outstanding because there are minor weaknesses in teaching. Pupils do not always receive clear advice on how to improve and, on occasion, teachers do not ensure that pupils have followed their advice.
- Teachers do not share the best examples of what they do sufficiently.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school website gives parents the information they need.
- Leaders have not fully addressed one of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection, which was giving pupils sufficient first-hand opportunities to learn more about communities beyond their own.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress for pupils to outstanding by making sure that:
 - pupils are consistently given precise feedback about what they need to do next to improve, and that pupils always take note of the advice they are given
 - teachers learn from each other so that the best aspects of teaching and subject knowledge are shared.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders build effective and sustainable links with communities beyond the school, so that the remaining aspect from the previous inspection is addressed thoroughly
 - the school website fully meets statutory requirements.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders have created a united team whose members work hard together for the benefit of pupils. Staff who responded to Ofsted's survey at the time of the inspection were unanimously positive about the school and its leadership. One said, 'It is a brilliant place to work'. Another explained, 'We are a family, we are a team and every child genuinely matters – they are a joy'.
- The headteacher is a caring and effective leader who ensures that everyone has high expectations of the things that pupils can, and should, achieve. She knows the school and its pupils well and she is supported increasingly effectively by the deputy headteacher, who is relatively new to her post.
- Senior leaders have looked closely at what the school does well and have correctly judged it to be good in all aspects. They have drawn up a detailed plan to ensure that they address those areas of minor weaknesses and that the school continues to get even better.
- Middle leaders have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. They ensure that, through writing regular reports and by having meetings with governors, they keep them up to date about pupils' outcomes and what further improvement leaders need to plan.
- Parents express strong support for the school's leadership and all aspects of the school's provision. A very large majority would recommend the school to other parents. One parent who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, summed up views of many others by saying, 'Keep up the good work, Gateford Primary. Cracking school'.
- Leaders ensure that teachers receive good training to help them improve, and those teachers who are new to the profession are effectively supported. The school's system of appraisal is fit for purpose, with teachers given clear targets linked to their classroom performance. The inclusion manager also appraises teaching assistants so that their skills also continue to develop.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. Teachers have assembled an exciting range of themes and topics to engage pupils. These include titles such as 'Bottoms, burps and bogies' in Year 3, where pupils find out about aspects of science such as the digestive organs and tooth decay, and 'Pharaohs' in Year 6, where pupils learn about Ancient Egypt. During the inspection, inspectors saw pupils busily building large pyramids with their parents in the school hall for a competition. Parents who responded to Parent View had particularly warm words for the things that pupils learn. One parent wrote, 'My children come home from school every day telling me about the wonderful day they had'. Another said, 'The range of topics and creative ideas never cease to amaze me.'
- Teachers ensure that they enhance the curriculum and develop pupils' sporting, artistic and other skills well through a wide range of after-school clubs that pupils enjoy attending. These include a school choir, athletics, gardening, cookery and a Makaton signing club.
- Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good, with moral development being particularly strong. Pupils learn to become well behaved, thoughtful, respectful young people who are tolerant towards others and who enjoy taking part in democratic opportunities such as the school's 'pupil parliament'. Opportunities such as 'friendship week' make them aware of the importance of human rights and justice, along with a curiosity about other countries whose citizens do not have such liberties. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have ensured that they use the pupil premium funding effectively so that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. They spend much of this to ensure that every disadvantaged pupil receives direct, additional support from staff to improve their skills where they need to most. Leaders monitor the provision carefully and adjust it if it is not proving effective enough.
- The physical education (PE) and sports premium has been well spent to improve the number of sporting activities that the school provides, and staff have received additional training to support their teaching of PE. Pupils' enjoyment of PE and sport is high.
- Leaders have not yet ensured that they have addressed effectively one of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. In 2011, inspectors recommended that staff give pupils greater opportunities to engage at first-hand with communities beyond the school. Recently, staff have arranged for pupils to visit Barcelona to learn about the similarities and differences between Spanish culture and their own. The pupils who are making this visit told the inspectors how excited they were about the visit and how they are looking forward to telling their classmates about what they saw and whom they met. Leaders agree, however, that they have not yet provided greater opportunities for more pupils to engage with other communities. They are considering how to improve this aspect of the school's provision.

- Leaders have not ensured that the website meets statutory requirements. It does not provide the required information in respect of the governing body, nor shows the impact of the pupil premium or the PE and sports funding.

■ The governance of the school

- The governing body is committed and capable. Governors understand their role in ensuring accountability and in providing strategic direction. The Chair of the Governing Body is a confident and reflective man who ensures that all decisions in the school are made according to the best interests of pupils.
 - While supporting senior leaders effectively, governors challenge them still further. Minutes of the governing body show that governors ask searching questions about pupils' performance and, for example, the impact of the work of particular teachers. Governors are linked to different subjects and classes and teachers give them a good overview of the strengths of provision, as well as any aspects the school does less well.
 - Governors ensure that they manage the school budget effectively and that leaders do not carry forward an excess of funds, or spend unwisely. Governors are also not afraid to make tough decisions on salary increases if staff do not meet their performance management targets.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and there is a clear culture of vigilance. Staff are well trained on a regular basis and know the warning signs of potential harm to children, as well as the need to report any concerns immediately. Recent training has included alerting staff to risks such as radicalisation and child exploitation. Staff pass on any concerns about pupils' safety consistently well using the school's system of reporting. Senior leaders ensure that they then collect these records efficiently so that they can monitor any concerns continually. The designated safeguarding leader makes referrals to external agencies wherever needed, and monitors the care and welfare of all vulnerable pupils closely. Leaders keep parents well informed on matters regarding pupils' safety by, for example, sending them information about the Prevent duty and through useful information and links on the school website to help protect their children when online. Governors have undertaken a recent audit to confirm that all aspects of safeguarding, including the single central register, are fit for purpose.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Pupils respect their teachers greatly and listen to what they are teaching them. Teachers have high expectations and insist that pupils work hard. They know their pupils well and plan the work they give to them carefully to ensure that they meet the needs of different groups of pupils effectively. As a result, all groups of pupils make good progress. Teachers insist that pupils develop determination by not supplying them with the answers too quickly but encouraging them to keep working and finding other ways to solve a problem when they are stuck.
- Teaching assistants support pupils to learn effectively, but do not give them more help than they need. As a result, pupils learn to become independent over time.
- When teaching is best, pupils learn rapidly because teachers ask searching questions that make pupils think hard. Teachers' strong subject knowledge gives pupils confidence to succeed and to learn more. When this happens, pupils are particularly eager. For example, in one lesson that inspectors saw during their visit, pupils were busy learning about different types of triangles and the importance of measuring accurately to check that their initial thoughts were right. Pupils could justify clearly and confidently each of their conclusions and were keen to learn as much as possible.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress and attainment accurately. Led by the headteacher, who moderates work for the local authority, staff have created a new system to record how well pupils are achieving. This is effective because it allows staff to pass on information to senior leaders and governors about the outcomes for pupils in each class, as well as for different groups. Staff can therefore note when any pupils are not making the progress they need to, and put in place support for them so they do not fall further behind.
- Though the quality of teaching is good overall, it is not yet outstanding because teachers do not help each other effectively enough to share good practice and their high levels of subject knowledge. For example, on occasion, teachers do not use the correct learning apparatus for an activity, or make it fully clear what pupils need to learn in a lesson.

- While pupils often receive good-quality advice from teachers as to how they can improve their work, this does not happen regularly enough. While staff tell them how well they have completed a task, they do not consistently give advice to pupils on how to make it better still. Occasionally, teachers do not check thoroughly enough whether pupils have taken note of any advice they have given. When this happens, pupils' learning is not as fast as it should be.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school's 'golden values' teach pupils the importance of trying their best, and persisting even when their work is hard. Pupils learn that making an occasional mistake is not a sign of failure, but a necessary thing that shows them what they need to learn next. Staff begin giving this message to children from when they first arrive in Reception, where they 'keep trying like Mike the Knight', one of a number of cartoon characters whom staff use to promote the school's ethos. Inspectors noted that parents are also involved in reinforcing the 'golden values', placing Post-it notes by the classroom door to show examples such as, 'my child kept on practising until she got her name right'.
- Staff teach pupils the importance of keeping fit. As a result, pupils enjoy their PE and take part in after-school clubs, such as athletics and dance. School dinners are healthy and inspectors noted that most pupils who bring their own packed lunch eat items such as fresh fruit, brown bread and salads. The caring nature of staff means that pupils feel able to approach them to talk about things that worry them at home or in school.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school, and that teachers tell them about a wide range of risks. These include dangers from roads and strangers, as well as how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Older pupils are taught how to prepare themselves for potential dangers at secondary school through the 'Dare' project. This teaches them about appropriate relationships, the risks of gang culture and the importance of resisting pressure from others to do things that make them feel uncomfortable.
- A small minority of parents expressed the view that staff do not always deal effectively with bullying. However, inspectors spoke with a considerable number of pupils during their visit. They were insistent that bullying and name-calling were very rare, and that staff always dealt with these quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school each morning and enter through the gates enthusiastically.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and listen to the things they are being taught. Pupils respect both their teachers and each other, and cooperate well in lessons. They are keen to contribute in lessons and they complete their work with care. Classrooms are well ordered learning environments. Staff manage the small number of pupils who find it difficult to control their own behaviour effectively, and inspectors noted only very brief and minor disruptions to learning during the inspection. Staff dealt with these briskly and effectively.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is particularly good, even when staff are not directly present to supervise them. Pupils hold doors open for each other and for adults, wear their uniform proudly and keep the school clean and tidy. Inspectors noted how older pupils helped younger children to find their way when they were unsure, and stopped their game of football at breaktime so that others could pass safely. Lunchtimes and breaktimes are friendly, social occasions, and pupils enjoy using the variety of outdoor spaces. Pupils respect the school rules and say that staff apply them fairly and consistently.
- Pupils are keen to contribute to the school and to their local community. Accompanied by staff, junior road safety officers make regular patrols near the school entrance to persuade parents to park safely and to highlight any dog fouling. Members of the school's 'pupil parliament' attend meetings of the governing body and other pupils take part in junior council meetings at the town hall to, among other things, make Worksop a better place to live.

- In the previous school year, pupils' attendance fell to below the national average. The proportion of pupils who were persistently absent also grew to levels considerably above the national average. Leaders noticed this and quickly put in place better procedures to work much more effectively with parents whose children were not attending well. They also ensured that staff took greater care to encourage all pupils to attend, celebrating high attendance with class wallcharts and certificates. As a result, attendance has risen and is now in line with the previous year's national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen dramatically and very few pupils are now persistently absent. Leaders are working effectively to ensure that persistent absence does not grow again and that attendance continues to rise.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' attainment at Gateford Park has risen over the last five years, with an increasing difference between the standards attained by pupils there and others nationally. Pupils leave well prepared for secondary school. Last year, for example, pupils left with scores in mathematics almost two terms ahead of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils, including the most able, make good progress from their starting points in both English and mathematics in the early years and in both Key Stages. A slightly higher proportion of pupils than national averages gain a good level of development at the end of Reception and pass the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- Last year, pupils in Year 6 made at least the progress expected of them in all subjects, with a similar proportion to that found nationally making more than this in reading. A much greater proportion than the national average made more than expected progress in mathematics. Though the proportion of this cohort making more than expected progress was below the national average in writing, teachers have improved their teaching of writing and, as a result, pupils are now making good progress in this subject across the school. This is confirmed by a large amount of pupils' work that inspectors looked at during their visit. Pupils' exercise and mathematics books demonstrate that pupils are working well, progress is good and that teachers have very high expectations for what each year group must achieve.
- At the last inspection, inspectors noted that boys and girls attained differently by the end of Year 6 in different subjects. While these differences remain, these vary between subjects and year groups, with no consistent pattern. The progress that boys and girls make while at the school is broadly similar, and the differences in attainment are now no greater than, and in most cases are less than, those found nationally.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good because leaders spend the pupil premium funding wisely. The latest published information shows convincingly that the gaps in attainment between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others both in the school and nationally, is closing over time. Pupils' books show that staff are supporting disadvantaged pupils well and these pupils are making good gains.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability also make good progress. The coordinator for these pupils works closely with parents to review pupils' progress and set new targets so that pupils achieve their potential.
- A very large majority of parents who responded to Parent View believe that, because of good teaching, their child makes good progress.
- In the two previous school years, weak teaching in Year 2 meant that progress slowed at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils were not well prepared for Key Stage 2. Attainment was significantly below the national average. Leaders have addressed this effectively by ensuring that teaching is now solidly good in this year group and by monitoring particularly closely to ensure that pupils are making good progress. Those pupils who did not develop the skills they needed are catching up quickly. They are on track to reach at least the standards expected for their age, with a good many beyond this.

Early years provision

is good

- The leader of early years provision assesses children thoroughly from when they enter Reception onwards. Staff give those children who arrive with skills below those typically found in children of the same age the quick support they need to help them improve. Children make the fastest progress in areas such as writing, where they need to catch up most.

- Staff take care to work closely with parents. Those parents whom inspectors met with during the inspection had particular praise for how staff keep them informed fully by, for example, sending them photographs of moments where their child achieves something new.
- Teaching is good and delivered in a lively way that celebrates children's success and makes them want to learn more. For example, in one lesson, inspectors saw pupils enthused and improving quickly their skills in phonics (the sounds that letters make). Children were keen to come to the front of the class to show their teacher proudly how they could identify the different sounds in the word 'burn'. They were then confident to try writing the word 'turnip', which they had not done before, and most children succeeded.
- Staff ensure that the outdoor area is, like the classroom, an exciting space that is used well and where pupils feel safe. Staff promote all areas of learning there, including reading. As a result, children begin to develop an early love of books as well have exciting opportunities to, for example, use construction model kits to build things together.
- Staff plan carefully the topics that children learn about. For example, they noted that boys were making slightly less progress than girls were. Because of this, staff taught the children about different transport vehicles and went on a visit to the bus station. Boys became even more engaged in their learning and they wanted to talk and write about what they had found out.
- Because of good teaching in the early years provision, all groups of children make good progress from their starting points. This includes those children who have special educational needs or disability. As in other year groups in school, leaders ensure that they use the pupil premium effectively to support the progress of disadvantaged children. Children leave the Reception class well prepared to start in Year 1. However, children do not yet make outstanding progress. Not enough of them leave the early years exceeding the standard expected for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	131722
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	1001109

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	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Hopkinson
Headteacher	Paula Blythe
Telephone number	01909 478681
Website	www.gatefordpark.com
Email address	office@gateford.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2011

Information about this school

- This school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are from service families or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. Most pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is provision for a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each class in the school, and most on more than one occasion. In total, they visited 14 lessons, or parts of lessons, six of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also checked pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtimes and as they moved about the school during the day.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders in the school, including the special educational needs coordinator, the leader of the early years provision, and subject leaders for mathematics and English. Inspectors also met with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with them in lessons, heard pupils read, and met more formally with them in groups to discuss particular aspects of their experiences at the school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documentation, including: the school's improvement plan; the school's information for tracking pupils' attainment and progress; the headteacher's reports to the governing body; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's self-evaluation document; work in pupils' books; individual case studies showing the impact of the school's support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including pupils with special educational needs or disability; anonymised records of the performance management of staff; and school documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors analysed the responses from 26 parents on Parent View (the Ofsted online questionnaire) and spoke informally to a number of parents and carers on the playground as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

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