

Nassington Primary School

Church Street, Nassington, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE8 6QG

Inspection dates

12–13 June 2018

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have successfully addressed the actions from the last inspection. They have ensured that the standard of education at the school is securely good.
- The governing body has undergone significant improvement. Governors provide effective challenge and support for leaders.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Parents and carers appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for their children.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers provide thought-provoking activities which are well matched to pupils' interests and abilities.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils say that they feel safe at the school and have confidence in staff to look after them.
- Standards of attainment and rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics have improved in almost all year groups. Progress is especially strong in the current Year 6.
- The teaching of phonics has improved recently. An increasing proportion of pupils is on track to achieve at the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- The presentation of pupils' work in their books, and their standards of handwriting, are not consistently good.
- The leadership and teaching in early years are securely good. Some of the outdoor resources are becoming worn and part of the area cannot currently be accessed by the children.
- Leaders' plans for school improvement are not sufficiently precise. It is not clear how and when the plans are reviewed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management and continue to raise standards by ensuring that:
 - the plans for improvement contain precise and regularly reviewed actions that are clearly linked to the outcomes of monitoring checks and the areas for improvement in the self-evaluation summary
 - standards of attainment and rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics are equally strong across all year groups.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' work and the standard of their handwriting are consistently high across the school
 - the recent improvements to the teaching of phonics are sustained so that the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard at the end of Year 1 is consistently at least in line with the national average.
- Improve the quality of some of the resources in the early years outdoor provision, so that the whole area can be accessed by the children to support their learning and development.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for the school. They have established a positive culture based on their school values of 'pride, self-confidence, nurturing and commitment'. The school has a strong reputation in the local community and is popular with parents and carers.
- Leaders and governors have responded effectively to the recommended actions from the last inspection. The standard of education at the school is securely good.
- Leaders and governors have a strong focus on continuous school improvement. They carry out a wide range of checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The headteacher gathers assessment information from teachers regularly and carries out a detailed analysis of pupils' attainment and progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The resulting information is used effectively to plan pupils' next steps in their learning. Consequently, standards are improving rapidly in almost all year groups, especially in mathematics.
- There is a higher than average proportion of pupils at the school who have SEN and/or disabilities, with complex additional needs. The headteacher shares the role of special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) with another member of staff. Together, they make sure that the school offers a highly inclusive experience for these pupils and their parents. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive effective support for their learning and welfare needs. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers plan a range of activities which capture pupils' interests, harness their enthusiasm and inspire them to learn and progress. Pupils with whom I spoke recalled with pride memorable topics such as 'The Titanic' and 'Antarctica'. Many also expressed enthusiasm for mathematics. During the inspection, a number of classes were immersed in a topic about 'Space' which had inspired them to produce impressive work across many aspects of the curriculum. Parents who completed the online survey say that they value the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to their children.
- The school's provision for music is especially strong. The middle leader with responsibility for music provides strong leadership of her subject. Through her initiative, members of the school choir have showcased their skills at the Albert Hall in London, as part of the national Music for Youth Schools Prom. Others attended a composition workshop in Oundle. Pupils from the school join others from nine local schools to form a primary orchestra.
- Leaders effectively promote pupils' understanding of British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils have taken part in activities such as a royal wedding 'street party' and St George's Day celebrations. Pupils learn about democracy through mock elections and through their elected school council. Pupils' cultural appreciation is enhanced by theatre trips and by taking part in

music, drama and sports festivals. The school's assembly programme and the religious education scheme of work contribute effectively to pupils' appreciation of a range of cultures and beliefs. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders' and governors' plans for school improvement are not as clear as they might be. There are inconsistencies between the priorities identified in the self-evaluation summary and the school's main plan for improvement. Planned actions are not precise enough, and nor is it clear when and how the impact of actions are reviewed and evaluated.

Governance of the school

- The governing body responded quickly and decisively to the recommendations from the external review of governance which was requested at the previous inspection. Consequently, there have been significant improvements in governance.
- Governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and perform their functions efficiently. Evidence from minutes of their meetings shows that governors provide rigorous challenge and informed support for leaders. They hold the headteacher effectively to account for the school's performance.
- Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. For example, they attend school events and the chair of governors, who is also a local church minister, leads a weekly school assembly. On other occasions, individual governors join leaders in carrying out checks on the quality of teaching and learning. This informs their awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Governors are provided with regular reports about how the school spends its additional physical education and sport premium and pupil premium funding. They are aware that, currently, disadvantaged pupils are making equal progress as their peers in school, in reading, writing and mathematics.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All parents, staff and pupils who responded to the Ofsted surveys stated clearly that the school is safe. Pupils with whom I spoke told me that they feel well cared for. They would be happy to approach any adult in school in the case of a worry or concern.
- During the inspection, a range of teaching and support staff confirmed that they receive regular safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable about the school's procedures for raising any welfare or child protection concerns.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership of safeguarding. She keeps clear and detailed records of events, works effectively with a range of outside agencies and is tenacious in ensuring positive outcomes for vulnerable pupils and families. She has established a strong culture of vigilance throughout the school.
- All of the school's employment checks are in place, in line with statutory requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils are keen learners. As a result of effective teaching, activities are well matched to pupils' abilities and enable them to learn and progress well.
- Pupils use their time in lessons productively, showing perseverance in completing their work. For example, pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class worked effectively in small groups to complete a number of challenging problem-solving tasks during an outdoor 'active maths' session. On another occasion, pupils in the Years 3 and 4 class showed resilience in completing a meticulous art activity based on 'minibeasts'.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They respond quickly and calmly to teachers' expectations and follow routines well, so that lessons typically flow smoothly and without fuss.
- Teachers use their sound subject knowledge and good assessment skills to consolidate and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects. They persist with their questioning, taking time to challenge pupils' misconceptions and gently push them forward in their learning.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide skilled and effective support for pupils. This was seen during the inspection both generally, in lessons, and in the support provided for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- A new approach to the teaching of mathematics was implemented during this academic year. As a result of this effective work, standards in mathematics have improved across the school. Pupils say that they enjoy the new approach and the work in their books provides strong evidence of increased opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical reasoning skills, though problem-solving activities.
- Pupils with whom I met were confident readers who clearly enjoy books and are well supported in their reading, both in school and at home. The texts were suitable for their ages and abilities. Younger pupils used phonic strategies successfully to read unknown, tricky words. Year 6 pupils showed me examples of their weekly reading homework, through which they are challenged to look for examples of ambitious vocabulary and write a precis of each book chosen.
- The teaching of phonics has recently improved. It is especially strong in the early years foundation stage. As a result, an increased proportion of pupils are on track to achieve the expected standard at the end of Year 1.
- Teachers' expectations for the presentation of pupils' work, and the quality of their handwriting, are not consistently high across the school. The work in pupils' books, in some year groups, is not well presented. The pupils with whom I met acknowledge this weakness. They told me they would like more guidance from teachers on how to improve their handwriting.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Those who spoke with me used words such as 'friendly', 'kind' and 'fun' to describe their daily experiences. Parents and staff agree. In their responses to the online survey, staff were unanimous in their praise for the school's work to motivate and support its pupils and staff. Parents expressed views such as, 'my children are happy and confident in school' and another described 'a happy school environment where the children are offered a first-class teaching experience'.
- Teachers effectively encourage pupils to have positive attitudes to learning, which enables them to learn and progress well.
- Pupils say that they receive regular teaching about how to stay safe, both within school and beyond, including online. They understand what to do if they have any concerns about bullying, although they say this is rare and is handled effectively by staff. The school extends its support to parents, for example by organising a parent workshop on the theme of e-safety, in conjunction with the police community support officer.
- Pupils' pride in their work is less positive, as seen in the poor standards of presentation in some of their workbooks.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons and around school was observed to be consistently calm and orderly, at all times of the day. Pupils are naturally kind and courteous towards each other and to adults. They follow routines smoothly and naturally. Older pupils, in particular, show maturity in their ability to organise their own learning. They are eager to take on roles of responsibility, for example by acting as members of the 'playground crew'.
- The school playground and its 'garden' area are especially well resourced. This means that pupils have a wide range of activities to enjoy at playtimes and lunchtimes. Adult supervisors say that behaviour issues are rare, but if problems occur they feel well supported by teachers and leaders.
- The school's rates of absence and persistent absence have been above the national average over time. Current attendance figures to date show that absence and persistent absence have increased further. Close analysis shows that the majority of absences are linked to pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs, or who have SEN and/or disabilities, attending medical appointments or receiving treatment. This impacts significantly on the school's attendance figures.

- Attendance is otherwise good. The headteacher monitors patterns of absence regularly, taking appropriate action and working with outside agencies where necessary.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school had its first cohort of Year 6 pupils in 2017. Although standards of attainment at the end of key stage 2 were above the national average in 2017, rates of progress in writing and mathematics were well below average. Leaders' latest assessment information shows that the current Year 6 pupils have made much better progress this year in reading, writing and mathematics as well as sustaining the high standards of attainment in all three subjects. This was confirmed during the inspection by checking work in pupils' books and by talking with staff and pupils.
- Pupils in almost all other year groups are making equally strong progress. This applies equally to disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities typically make good progress from their starting points.
- In a school of this size, cohorts can vary from year to year and are often small. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is typically very small. Leaders rightly analyse attainment and progress on an individual pupil basis as well as by overall percentages, to avoid drawing false conclusions. Nevertheless, leaders' analysis shows a clear picture of improvement across the school. Observations of learning in lessons and from pupils' work are testament to the current improvements, especially in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been typically below the national average for at least three years. The teaching of phonics has recently improved and a much greater proportion of pupils in Year 1 are currently on track to reach the expected standard.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership and teaching in early years are securely good. Staff know the children, and their needs, very well. This enables them to assess children's progress and adapt the teaching and curriculum precisely, in order to cater for children's needs and stages of development. As a result, all children are currently making good progress from their starting points.
- The work in children's books is well presented and shows particularly strong evidence of their progress across many areas of learning. Children's writing skills are especially well promoted, and almost all are writing with increasing confidence and accuracy. Their letter formation and spelling are increasingly accurate, as a result of clear guidance and expectations from staff.
- The home learning books contain copious examples of parents' contributions to their children's learning, as well as celebrations of achievements outside school, such as swimming lessons or learning to ride a bike. It is clear that school staff liaise effectively and often with parents.

- Staff take many opportunities to promote children’s language skills. For example, during the inspection, children were observed to be conversing excitedly with each other to create ‘glitter potions’ in the outdoor area. Others supported each other thoughtfully to complete an activity in the indoor ‘sensory area’ as they wrote simple word descriptions of the items on the sensory table.
- Teaching and support staff work seamlessly together as an effective team in the mixed-age early years class, whether it be guiding a group of most-able Reception children in a phonics activity, or supporting Year 1 pupils to complete a writing task.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective, as in the rest of the school. Staff are familiar with procedures for raising concerns, the provision is safe and secure and all of the relevant training is up to date.
- Staff plan and provide an appropriate range of activities which flow seamlessly across the indoor and outdoor provision. Some of the outdoor equipment is becoming rather worn, however, and a portion of the outdoor area is currently inaccessible to children. This limits the provision available to promote children’s physical and gross motor development.

School details

Unique reference number	121847
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10047993

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Tailby
Headteacher	Lorraine Allen
Telephone number	01780 782743
Website	www.nassingtonschool.org.uk
Email address	bursar@nassington.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 May 2016

Information about this school

- Nassington Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The numbers of pupils in each year group can vary widely from year to year and some cohorts of pupils are very small.
- Until the end of 2015, pupils left the school at the end of Year 4. The school had its first cohort of Year 6 pupils during the academic year 2016/17.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in seven lessons or part lessons, across all classes, some jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at work in an extensive range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- The inspector visited the school library, listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of reading.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, leaders with responsibility for English, mathematics, early years and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The inspector held discussions with leaders regarding attendance, behaviour, bullying and exclusions, disadvantaged pupils and the physical education and sport premium. She also met with other teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with four members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils and spoke informally with pupils during lessons, lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. She also considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's current information on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance records, behaviour and exclusion logs, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records, and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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