

Parnwell Primary School

Saltersgate, Parnwell, Peterborough PE1 4YH

Inspection dates

12–13 July 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Standards are not high enough. In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards.
- The outcomes for children in the early years are too low. They did not improve in 2016.
- Because of many changes to the teaching staff, teaching is not consistently good. There is too much variation in the quality of provision between classes and subjects.
- There is particular unevenness in how well staff teach subjects other than English and mathematics, such as science.
- The most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should because on occasions they are not given enough challenge to deepen their learning.
- The teaching of writing is not strong. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do vary, especially when practising their writing skills in other subjects.
- The presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting is too untidy.
- Middle leaders do not have enough opportunities to check the quality of provision in their areas.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher form a strong team and have begun a momentum of improvement across the school.
- In 2016, progress was good for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, and this was reflected in improved outcomes for these pupils.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils are outstanding. The pastoral team is highly effective at supporting vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Governance has improved. Governors know the school well and provide increasing challenge.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to accelerate learning and raise standards by making sure that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of work in subjects other than English and mathematics, including science
 - the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged to attain as well they can.
- Improve outcomes in writing, including in the early years, by:
 - adopting a consistent approach to the teaching of writing across the school
 - improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work
 - giving pupils more opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - securing capacity for the new leadership team to increase the momentum of improvement
 - ensuring that middle leaders have sufficient opportunity to check the quality of provision in their areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have been successful in changing the culture of the school so that there is a much greater emphasis on pupils' academic progress. For example, they have increased the number of occasions that they meet with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and these are more rigorous. They hold teachers more fully to account for how well their pupils are doing.
- While a momentum of improvement has begun, the many staffing changes have impeded the rate of progress in some year groups.
- Leaders and governors have been effective in pulling together a motivated staff team that is keen to improve. They have benefited from support both within school and outside from the local authority. Leaders acknowledge that some inconsistencies in teaching remain, mainly as a result of the high turnover of staff.
- Leaders have rightly focused on developing pupils' basic skills so that English and mathematics are stronger elements of the curriculum. Other subjects have not been such a priority and this means that expectations have varied and work has been inconsistent. The school enriches the curriculum well through a good range of clubs, visits and visitors.
- Several middle leaders are relatively new to their posts. At the time of the inspection, there was a vacancy for a mathematics leader. Middle leaders are getting to grips with their areas but have not had sufficient opportunities to check on the quality of provision.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. The curriculum develops a sense of enjoyment in learning for pupils about the world, themselves and others. They celebrate their diversity and different cultures and backgrounds. For example, pupils from all backgrounds celebrated the end of Ramadan with their Muslim neighbours. Relationships in school are strong, creating a harmonious community.
- Pupils are tolerant and accepting of differences, whether from a religious point of view or from pupils' range of needs.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand about British values such as democracy, fairness and listening to others. Pupils have visited the Houses of Parliament to find out more about the rule of law and democracy in action.
- The school sports premium is spent effectively on coaching for pupils and a wide range of sports clubs. These have included street dance. Pupils have had the opportunity to take part in tournaments. Participation has increased in sports. This has improved pupils' health and well-being.
- The impact of the pupil premium spending on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils has improved this year. While there were considerable gaps between these pupils and others in school and nationally in 2015, they have closed this year. In some year groups, disadvantaged pupils are doing better than their peers. A restructuring of support staff has meant that staff are better qualified to support these pupils. The school's highly skilled pastoral support has also had a very positive impact on preparing pupils for learning.
- Parents and carers are positive about the work of the school, especially in the way the staff support them and their children. The lead inspector received several letters praising different aspects of the school's work and saying how much parents appreciate all staff do for them.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The effectiveness of governance is improving. Governors are clear about the importance of their role in holding leaders to account for the school's success. They are very aware of what still needs to be done to move it to good. Governors have made recruiting high-quality staff their priority and have adopted innovative approaches to attracting staff. As a result of their hard work, the school is fully staffed for September. However, the governing body has yet to appoint a permanent headteacher for next year.
 - Governors bring a range of skills to their work and are committed to becoming even more effective. They access regular training and evaluate how well they are doing. Governors have produced their own action plan that has appropriate priorities and timescales for achieving their aims.
 - Governors keep a close eye on how well the school is doing. They do not shy away from taking difficult decisions to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils. As part of their oversight of provision, they sit in on pupils' progress meetings. This gives them insight into how school leaders hold teachers to account for the performance of their pupils.

- Safeguarding arrangements are highly effective. The school keeps meticulous records of any concerns. The members of staff who take responsibility for safeguarding are extremely experienced and have considerable expertise. They manage their large caseload very efficiently and are always available to provide support to vulnerable families. They also hold other agencies to account robustly. As a result, children are happy and safe in school and extremely well cared for. Parents are delighted with the support they receive.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there are too many inconsistencies in provision between classes and subjects. At times, teachers do not set work that takes account of pupils' different needs. For example, in some classes, all pupils were given the same sheet to do in mathematics, which was too easy for some and too difficult for others.
- Books show that teachers' expectations vary, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics. While there is evidence that pupils make good progress over time in Year 6, this is not the case in some other year groups. The number of changes to teaching staff means that there has been some instability over the year, especially in Year 3 and Year 5.
- Most-able pupils do not reach the higher standards they should because at times they are not sufficiently challenged. In mathematics, they are sometimes given work to do that is too easy for them, resulting in them getting everything correct. In topic work, they are given the same work as least-able pupils to do, which does not extend them or make them think. For example, in several classes, the most able pupils were asked to cut out and paste some pre-printed sentences in the correct order.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement in some classes because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve vary. The presentation of pupils' work is uneven across the school and handwriting can be untidy. At times, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects and this slows their progress.
- Most teachers follow the agreed marking and feedback policy, and this helps pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve their work.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that they make expected progress like their peers. Inspectors saw some good examples of learning support assistants being effective in supporting pupils. However, the quality of the support in some cases was better than in others. The support staff show pupils respect and are good role models.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They like to visit the school's new library and talk about their books. They use their emerging phonics skills (the sounds that letters represent) when tackling new words.
- In some classes, the impact of teaching on learning is stronger. In one class, for example, the teacher was careful to give pupils tasks that took account of their current skills in writing so that they could build on them well. Pupils were given interesting texts to read to support their writing, including the autobiographies of famous athletes.
- Questioning of pupils by teachers has become more probing following training. There has also been a focus on pupils asking interesting questions about their learning, which motivates them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils said, 'The teachers listen to us and care about us.' They feel very safe in school. They know that there is somebody they can go to if they have a concern.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Even though many have had to face a variety of difficulties, or come to the school speaking very little English, they are very keen to learn.
- Pupils have a heightened understanding of how to stay safe, including on the internet. They say that bullying is no longer a problem at the school, and they are very confident that staff will deal with any issues that arise.
- The excellent pastoral team helps to create the conditions where pupils are ready to learn. They support the well-being of families collectively as well as the individual pupils. Their willingness to do all they can

to help families through difficult times is greatly appreciated by parents.

- The breakfast club and after-school club are popular. Pupils are well looked after and enjoy eating healthy meals and socialising.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy and can talk about how they feel their behaviour has improved over the past 18 months. Adults are good role models for the pupils and ensure that there is a culture of tolerance and respect.
- There is very little low-level disruption in classes because staff take a consistent approach to managing behaviour and pupils enjoy learning.
- The school environment is clean and attractive. Interesting displays celebrate pupils' work.
- Attendance is broadly average for most groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The attendance of Traveller children has improved this year and, while below, is moving towards the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Evidence of good progress is starting to be seen in some areas of the school's work. However, it is not consistently strong across the school or across a wide range of subjects.
- The focus on teaching basic skills in English and mathematics has meant that the provision in other subjects has been inconsistent. The quality of work in these subjects is often not as strong as it is in English and mathematics. Outcomes in science, for example, vary considerably.
- This year, no children joined Reception with skills that were typical for their age. Most were below what was typical and just over a third were well below.
- From their different starting points, most pupils make at least expected progress. Some pupils make good progress. The published historical performance information portrays a more negative picture which does not represent the actual position. This is because large numbers of pupils join the school outside normal times, often speaking no English, or having no experience of school. Other pupils, who have been doing well, leave the school before their performance is formally recognised at the end of a key stage. This means that the full impact of the school's work is not represented in the end-of-year data.
- Standards historically have been well below the national average. This year, the proportions of pupils at the expected standard were broadly in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress for this group of pupils over key stage 1. However, in other year groups, progress has been more sporadic due to numerous changes in staff. The attainment of pupils in key stage 2, for example, varies from year to year.
- By the end of key stage 2 in 2016, the proportions of pupils at the expected standard were broadly in line with the national average in reading and mathematics, but they were well below average in writing. For this group of pupils, there was a legacy of underachievement in writing. While pupils made good progress in Year 6 from their starting points at the beginning of the year, this was not enough to bring their attainment up to the national standard by the end of the year.
- The large proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language generally make expected progress, and some do better than this. The school caters well for new arrivals who often join speaking little or no English, and may have had no experience of education. Pupils are soon integrated into mainstream classes and teachers adapt learning to suit them. However, because the quality of teaching is inconsistent, there are times when the provision is not as strong as it should be.
- Outcomes for the most able pupils are not as strong as they should be because sometimes they do not receive the challenge they need to succeed. For example, the proportions of pupils with attainment at greater depth by the end of key stage 1 were well below average in writing and mathematics. No pupils reached the higher standards in writing by the end of key stage 2.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make expected progress from their different starting points in line with their peers. They receive a good level of care, and support is targeted to meet their needs.
- The provision for disadvantaged pupils is improving in its effectiveness. More of them made accelerated progress this year and this meant that previous gaps in attainment with other pupils closed. This was as a

result of effective teaching and high-quality pastoral support for these pupils.

- Outcomes for pupils from the Traveller community are similar to those of other pupils. While most make expected progress, some do not make the progress they should because of some inconsistencies in teaching and attendance.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Early years provision has seen considerable change this year. The leader of the early years left at Christmas. Another leader left at Easter. The current leader is leaving at the end of the summer term. This has not helped to promote continuity, particularly in maintaining a consistently high quality of provision.
- Outcomes for children declined in 2016 and were very low compared with the national average. This means that children are not as ready as they should be for Year 1. Teaching staff work hard to help children make expected progress from often very low starting points. Some children make good progress but too few children make the accelerated progress necessary to close the gap in attainment with the national average. There are some missed opportunities for the most able children to write at length and deepen their understanding.
- Staff keep careful records of children's progress and their 'learning journals' are detailed and attractive for parents and children to enjoy. However, it is sometimes not easy to see the progress that children have made over time through the learning journals.
- Staff plan learning challenges carefully to ignite children's excitement. For example, during the inspection, children were enjoying a 'pirate day' which culminated in a feast outside. They had made 'number-bond biscuits' to eat for the occasion. They also 'walked the plank' as part of their physical activity. A pirate ship in the role-play area helped children to practise a variety of skills.
- Staff plan activities across all areas of learning with a clear focus, especially helping children to develop their language skills, which are often very poor when they first join Reception.
- Relationships between children and adults are good. The children behave well and know what is expected of them. Classroom routines are well established.
- The early years meets all welfare and safeguarding requirements. Parents are very happy with the level of care their children receive and say that they settle in quickly.

School details

Unique reference number	110764
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10011808

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	284
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ronnie Lyons
Headteacher	Janice Butterworth
Telephone number	01733 349182
Website	www.parnwellschool.co.uk
Email address	jbutterworth@parnwellschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 May 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in 11 classes. Some of these consist of pupils from two year groups.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language is high. Pupils from the Traveller community form a significant group on the school's roll.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or children looked after by the local authority) is high.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, including those who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- A large number of pupils join the school late each year from abroad or leave the school before the end of Year 6.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school club.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- There have been many changes of staff since the previous inspection, including at a senior level. At the time of the inspection, four classes were being taught by temporary teachers. The headteacher is leaving at the end of the academic year and there are interim proposals to cover the headship for the autumn term.
- There are plans for the school to become an academy sponsored by the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust in 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in 28 parts of lessons, many of them jointly with the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- An inspector heard pupils read. Inspectors looked closely at samples of pupils' work with the headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of the school's documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports and safeguarding records. They considered evidence of the school's partnership work and the information provided for families.
- A meeting was held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff on a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements and their professional development. The lead inspector talked to the chair of the governing body and three other governors, and met with a representative from the local authority.
- A telephone conversation was held with the chief executive officer of the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust.
- An inspector observed a whole-school assembly.
- The inspection team considered nine responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 10 free-text comments and five letters. They also looked at the school's own survey of parents' views. An inspector spoke informally to some parents in the playground. The inspection team considered 17 responses to the staff questionnaire and 56 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Kissane	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Hackett	Ofsted Inspector

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