

Trent Vale Infant School

Trent Road, Beeston Rylands, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG9 1LP

Inspection dates

3–4 April 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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 wasted no time in tackling the shortcomings from the last inspection. They have taken effective steps to secure improvements.
- Senior leaders have high expectations for all pupils. This positive culture is embedded throughout the school.
- Pupils have excellent, mature attitudes to learning. They take great pride in their work, as seen in the quality of their workbooks across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are impressive. They make best use of the time in lessons and are confident, and increasingly independent, learners.
- Pupils show kindness and respect for others. This includes a growing awareness and understanding of a wide range of faiths and cultures.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Strong questioning guides pupils to improve their work.
- Safeguarding is effective. Clear procedures and a caring ethos ensure a culture of safety.
- Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently above the national averages, for at least two years.
- The provision for disadvantaged pupils has improved. Their attainment remains lower than that of other pupils within the school in reading and writing, but progress from their starting points is improving.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, with an appropriate emphasis on early reading and mathematics.
- Children get off to a strong start in the early years. They make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1. However, the outdoor learning environment is not used as effectively as the indoor provision, across all areas of learning.
- Pockets of weaker teaching occasionally limit learning for the most able pupils, notably in the teaching of phonics.
- The work to improve some aspects of middle leadership is in the early stages of development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - strong subject leadership is established across the curriculum
 - the small pockets of weaker teaching are eradicated.
- Make better use of the outdoor learning environment in the early years, so that it is equally effective in promoting pupils' learning and development as the indoor provision.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors responded very positively to the recommendations from the last inspection. Their actions have led to improved teaching, raised expectations for all and improved provision for disadvantaged pupils. Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have improved considerably and have been above the national averages for the past two years.
- The executive headteacher and the two co-heads of the school have a clear and aspirational vision for the school. They lead by example, setting a tone that is strongly focused on providing an education that is 'the best we can offer', particularly for disadvantaged pupils. These aspirations are shared across the staff team.
- The arrangements for monitoring the school's performance are thorough. Leaders and governors carry out a varied programme of checks throughout the year, giving them an accurate, up-to-date overview of the quality of teaching and learning. Internal checks are regularly confirmed and strengthened through the school's links with its external partners, such as the local family of schools and the George Spencer Teaching School Alliance.
- The school's formal collaboration with its neighbouring junior school brings numerous benefits for staff and pupils. The executive headteacher, who has oversight of both schools, has ensured a consistency of approach relating to many joint policies and procedures. Transition arrangements for pupils at the end of key stage 1 are smooth and effective.
- Senior leadership is strong, and subject leadership is beginning to improve. The co-heads of the school, who are the leaders for English and mathematics, have an accurate grasp of standards in their subjects, because they regularly check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Until recently, middle leadership was less well developed. Subject leaders have received support and coaching and are now ready to strengthen their skills and practice as they begin to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- The leader with responsibility for coordinating the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has good oversight of this aspect of the school's work. She ensures that pupils receive effective support for their additional needs, so that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced, with a strong foundation in English and mathematics at its core. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through the curriculum. In discussion, pupils described a range of experiences that help them to develop as future citizens. For example, they understand the importance of rules, saying: 'Rules help us to learn properly', and, 'we do lots of voting in school'. Pupils' mature understanding of the importance of respect supports positive relationships across the school. Pupils receive regular and effective teaching about a range of faiths and cultures, as reflected in the work in their topic books.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong. Governors have an accurate overview of the school's performance. This is because they are regularly involved in the life of the school, both through the monitoring programme and by informal attendance at school events.
- By means of a joint committee, governors work with their counterparts at the junior school to ensure that the strong links between the two schools enhance the educational experience of all pupils.
- Minutes of their meetings show that governors are well informed, asking a range of astute questions to hold leaders to account. Governors monitor the spending of the additional funding for pupils with SEND, the pupil premium and the physical education and sport funding, making sure that this money is used to good effect.
- Governors have a keen regard for the well-being of pupils and staff. They regularly discuss ways to reduce pressures of staff workload.
- Governors undertake regular training, especially relating to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Employment checks are thorough, meeting statutory requirements.
- The executive headteacher has made sure that staff training is complete, and regularly updated. She keeps careful records of any welfare concerns, including a record of actions taken. Staff across the school have a clear awareness of the procedures for raising concerns.
- Leaders have developed a heightened awareness of pupils' welfare among the staff. Staff told inspectors that they are encouraged to make safeguarding a high priority, saying: 'We talk all the time, so we pick up on any worries early.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils in all year groups are very receptive to learning. This is because staff set high expectations for behaviour and attitudes, and for the standard of work they wish to see.
- Teachers use assessment effectively to check pupils' understanding. Careful questioning enables pupils to work with purpose and continually improve their work.
- The quality of work in pupils' books is consistently good in all year groups and across a wide range of subjects. Pupils present their work very well, and the progression of skills and knowledge from Year 1 to Year 2 is clear to see.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. The most able pupils are encouraged to extend their thinking through a series of challenges, and those who need extra support receive pre- and post-lesson teaching of basic skills and concepts. This means that teachers pick up on misconceptions quickly, and pupils make good progress in mathematics.

- The teaching of reading has high priority across the school. Parents who spoke with inspectors praised the school's approach to teaching reading. Leaders have chosen to adopt a book-based, thematic approach to the curriculum, and this strengthens the focus on reading for accuracy, understanding and pleasure. The attractive book areas in each classroom provide inviting spaces where pupils can relax and enjoy reading.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistently strong in all classes. Where it was observed to be weaker, the most able pupils, who already have good phonic knowledge, were not moved on quickly enough to more demanding work. This led to less effective learning for those pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. In all year groups and in a wide range of subjects, pupils carry out their tasks with confidence, perseverance and enjoyment.
- Pupils are proud of their school, describing the teachers as 'kind' and the learning as 'important'. The impressively high standard of work in books, across the curriculum, denotes pupils' pride in their work and a determination to do their best.
- In discussion, pupils could give a clear explanation of what is meant by bullying, relative to their age. They said clearly that they feel safe in the school and are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they said that a worry was: 'like you've got butterflies in your tummy' and that: 'You need to tell someone'.
- Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to learn about how to keep fit and stay healthy. They explained it well, saying that physical exercise: 'helps your body develop and get stronger'.
- There is a clear emphasis around the school on promoting pupils' physical, emotional and mental well-being through a wide range of activities. These include drama, charity fund-raising, environmental and sports-related activities, and the use of the extensive, well-maintained outdoor areas.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' care and consideration for others and their conduct around the school are impressive.
- Pupils show a mature understanding of the importance of class and school rules. For example, typical comments were: 'I know what to do to be good' and 'Rules help us learn properly so we can learn more things.' Pupils are encouraged to manage their own feelings and behaviour effectively. They are not over-reliant on adults but are becoming increasingly self-disciplined in their behaviour in lessons and around the school.

- In lessons, pupils listen attentively and work diligently. Classrooms are calm and productive places where learning flows smoothly. The small proportion of pupils who have potentially challenging behaviours receive effective support that enables them to remain fully included in the life of the school.
- Attendance is high, and above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 have been consistently above the national average in 2017 and 2018, both at the expected standard and at greater depth.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been above the national average for three years.
- Pupils with SEND make increasingly strong progress, because of good teaching and effective support for their additional needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils typically do less well than their peers in the school in reading and writing. As a result of the improved teaching and support provided for them, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress from their starting points than at the time of the last inspection.
- Evidence from observations of learning in lessons and from pupils' workbooks shows that these improved standards are being sustained across the school. Current pupils are making good progress and are in a strong position to meet their targets at the end of this academic year.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years at a stage of development that is broadly typical for their age. Good teaching and effective leadership ensure that children make good progress throughout the early years, including in the Nursery class. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development has been consistently above that found nationally, for the past three years.
- As in the rest of the school, strong relationships in the Nursery and Reception classes enable children to blossom and thrive. Children follow clear routines with confidence and their attitudes to learning are positive.
- Staff adapt the curriculum according to their assessments of children's needs and their stages of development. This was seen to especially good effect in the indoor provision, where staff plan and provide a range of activities across all areas of learning, in line with the school's book-led approach to the curriculum. For example, inspired by the book 'Handa's Surprise', children were observed cooperating well in the role-play area, currently set out as an 'animal sanctuary'. They were also using effective techniques to paint African scenes and write about African animals in a small group activity.
- Children's work shows that they have regular opportunities to practise and develop early writing skills. Staff encourage children to apply their phonics knowledge in

constructing simple sentences related to their topic work. Children of all abilities have made good progress in writing.

- Children read on a daily basis, either by practising their reading books with an adult or through browsing the supply of books available in the classroom. Both activities promote children's enjoyment of reading and their growing understanding of texts.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff receive regular training and are conversant with all of the school's procedures for keeping children safe.
- There are plenty of opportunities for parents and carers to be involved with their children's education in the early years. Parents who spoke with inspectors or who completed the online survey Parent View expressed positive views such as: 'Fantastic progress in her first year at this school', and, 'the school gets a good balance of playing, learning and fun'.
- The outdoor learning environments are well equipped and spacious, in both the Nursery and Reception classes. However, children in the early years spend more time in the classroom than in the outdoor areas. They do not use the outdoor facilities as often as they might, nor is the school's thematic approach to the curriculum evident in the outdoor provision.

School details

Unique reference number	122541
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10087367

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Shepherd
Executive Headteacher	Jackie Moss
Telephone number	0115 917 9224
Website	www.trentvale.notts.sch.uk/
Email address	Office@trentvale.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 December 2016

Information about this school

- Trent Vale Infant School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The school works in partnership with the George Spencer Teaching School Alliance.
- The school is part of a formal collaboration with the neighbouring Beeston Rylands Junior School. The executive headteacher holds her post across both schools. Each school has its own separate governing body, in addition to a joint collaboration committee which oversees the governance of both schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 21 lessons or part-lessons, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at work across an extensive range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils from Year 2 and spoke with pupils informally, in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors observed a whole-school assembly.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the co-heads of the school and leaders with responsibility for mathematics, English, the early years and pupils with SEND. Inspectors met with those responsible for safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, bullying and exclusions, the curriculum, disadvantaged pupils and the sport premium. Inspectors also spoke with a range of other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the vice-chair.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. The inspectors considered the 39 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View, and the responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspectors 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 bullying 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

Andy Lakatos

Ofsted Inspector

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