

# Neston Primary School

Church Rise, Neston, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9SX

## Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- This school is well led by a strong headteacher who is supported by a knowledgeable deputy and committed middle leaders.
- Governors know the school well. They challenge school leaders effectively on the quality of the curriculum and teaching, and how well pupils are progressing.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons across a wide and balanced curriculum. As a result, pupils usually engage well with their learning. Teachers monitor the progress of their pupils and ensure that any who fall behind are given help to catch up.
- In reading and writing, teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. However, in mathematics, teachers do not challenge the most able pupils consistently to reach the highest standards they are capable of.
- Following a dip in results in 2016, there has been rapid improvement and pupils are now making faster progress and attaining higher standards in all subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive excellent support that is tailored to their individual needs. As a result, they make good progress.
- The arrangements for children to start school are good. They enjoy learning from well-planned activities in the Reception class and are successfully prepared to move to Year 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-planned support from dedicated staff. They make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils are polite to adults and each other. They have good attitudes to learning and nearly always behave well in class and around the school.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils say they feel safe and are confident that the adults in school will look after them. They know what to do and whom to speak to if they have concerns.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress in mathematics so that it is as fast as in reading and writing by:
  - teachers making sure that there is a sufficient level of challenge for the higher-attaining pupils.
- Ensure that teaching continues to be consistently good and moves towards outstanding throughout the school by:
  - middle leaders modelling good practice to their colleagues, and teachers having the opportunity to share good practice with each other
  - senior leaders holding teachers to account for their pupils' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, with the deputy headteacher and middle leaders, is leading the school very effectively. The headteacher ensures that leadership roles are widely shared and, as a result, a large proportion of staff take responsibility for improving different areas of school performance. Leadership responsibilities go even further in this school, because pupils vote for the children's leadership team which has a genuine input into school decision-making.
- The headteacher has high expectations of staff and pupils. As a result, staff are proud of the school and committed to its success. Pupils told the inspectors that they think this is 'the best school', and that they are expected to work hard and behave well.
- The headteacher closely monitors all aspects of teaching and learning and has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses. Where leaders identify areas of relative weakness, they take action. For example, detailed plans to raise standards in spelling and mathematics are having a positive effect. Leaders keep plans under constant review to evaluate success.
- Leaders, including governors, regularly check the work in pupils' books to ensure that good progress is being maintained. They observe teaching and talk to pupils about their learning.
- Although the school has a strong focus on the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics, pupils receive a wide and balanced curriculum. The national curriculum is taught through topics which pupils enjoy. For example, pupils in Year 1 are very knowledgeable about what creatures live in the sea, and could talk about the difference between factual information and stories and films set under the sea. Pupils studying Greek myths were enthusiastically using challenging and adventurous vocabulary when writing their own stories.
- The pupil premium is spent well to support disadvantaged pupils. The headteacher ensures that the money is closely targeted to ensure good progress academically, and that pupils have access to all activities.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are extremely well supported. The SEN coordinator understands their needs well. Working closely with teachers and support staff ensures that pupils receive the correct provision. Pupils spoke very positively about the support staff who help them with their learning.
- Staff use the sport premium funding effectively to give pupils access to a wide range of sporting activities. There is a high level of engagement, and the school monitors pupils' participation. Pupils who would not usually choose to take part in sports are specially invited and encouraged to participate. The school engages in a wide variety of competitive events facilitated by the local secondary school.
- The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. School assemblies are used well to promote thinking and discussion. For example, during the inspection, pupils were highly engaged by an assembly based on a Bible

story, from which they explored the idea of personal resilience. Pupils' social responsibility is also developed through activities like the beach clean-up.

- The headteacher also uses assemblies to tackle difficult subjects in a safe environment, for example teaching pupils about Brexit and the Manchester bombing. This helps pupils to understand British values and prepares them for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about democracy by voting for the school council and the sports council, and about different faiths through religious education lessons. Pupils are currently learning about life and culture in a variety of Spanish-speaking countries linked to their study of Spanish as a modern foreign language.
- The school receives effective support from the local authority in the form of visits from a successful local headteacher who discusses planning and other issues. The school finds this support beneficial.
- External expertise is used well to improve provision for children and to develop staff expertise, for example by employing a specialist gymnastic coach and a foreign language teacher.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance of the school is effective. Governors know the school well. They visit regularly and understand the school's data. They have a good understanding of how well the school is doing in comparison to other schools, and use this information to hold the headteacher to account.
- The governors and headteacher have correctly identified the priorities for the school. Together they plan for further improvement and monitor the success of the plan.
- Governors understand their statutory duties. All have undertaken training to help them fulfil their roles, including for safeguarding, SEN and/or disabilities and safer recruitment.
- Governors ensure that government funding, including the pupil premium grant and sport premium, is spent effectively.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has a very well-developed culture of safeguarding. Parents are confident that their children are kept safe. Pupils know how to get help, and are sure that they would be listened to.
- All adults in school, including governors, understand their safeguarding responsibilities and have undertaken the appropriate training. All adults spoken to know what to do if they have any concerns.
- Record-keeping is thorough. There are comprehensive systems in place for checking that everybody who works with children is suitable to do so.
- Vulnerable children are well supported, and record-keeping and liaison with outside bodies are well documented.
- There is a good level of supervision at playtimes and lunchtimes. If an accident should occur, a large proportion of the staff are trained to administer first aid.

- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe online, for example they were able to tell an inspector why they should not divulge personal information. They are also taught to stay safe on the road, and about 'stranger danger'.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers plan interesting lessons that stimulate and engage pupils' interest. Teachers have good subject knowledge. For example, when teaching Greek myths, they were able to 'set the scene' and answer pupils' questions which helped engage pupils in their learning.
- Work is assessed regularly, so that teachers know how well their pupils are progressing. Teachers give pupils effective feedback. Pupils told the inspectors that teachers help them to improve their work.
- Teachers know their pupils well. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities receive additional help that is planned to meet their individual needs. The headteacher, SEN coordinator, class teachers and teaching assistants work together to ensure that the support is closely matched to their pupils' needs. This enables these pupils to make good progress. Pupils commented positively on the help they receive from support staff.
- The teaching of phonics is well planned and taught. This enables pupils to get off to a good start with their reading.
- Pupils read to adults regularly in school, and the school makes good use of enthusiastic adults, called the 'reading army', who come in regularly to read with pupils. Once pupils have mastered basic reading skills, they are encouraged to read widely and tackle challenging books.
- The teaching of writing is a strength of the school. This is evident from work in pupils' books and in assessments where they show a good understanding of grammar and make adventurous vocabulary choices. Teachers encourage pupils to use dictionaries and thesauruses, which help to improve the quality of their work. They teach pupils a correct pencil grip and letter formation early in the Reception class. However, due to gaps in teaching in the past, there are still a few of the older pupils who are printing instead of using joined writing.
- Although pupils' work is generally pitched at an appropriate level, some teachers do not consistently plan work which stretches the most able pupils in mathematics. This means they do not progress quite as far or as fast as they are capable of.
- Spelling has been a weakness across the school. This has been effectively addressed through a whole-school strategy which has included the implementation of a structured spelling scheme. Timetabled spelling lessons, a focus on correct spelling in pupils' writing and spelling homework combine to support the rapid improvement in pupils' spelling.
- Teachers' management of behaviour is good in most classes, although occasionally pupils become disengaged and lose focus.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they enjoy coming to school. They take turns and share equipment well. They have good attitudes to learning, and listen to their teachers and each other during group discussions.
- Staff look after the pupils very well and keep them safe. Pupils said that they feel safe and are confident to speak to an adult if they have any worries. Parents also told the inspectors that they are confident that their children are looked after and kept safe.
- Systems for protecting pupils are clear and if there are any concerns they are quickly acted on. Record-keeping is thorough, and incidents are followed up and reported to governors.
- Pupils who require extra help told the inspector that they quickly receive extra help if they need it. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged, have SEN and/or disabilities or are new to the school.
- Pupils were adamant that there is no bullying in the school, nor any homophobic or racist name-calling. The school's records show that bullying does occur but is rare. A very small minority of parents had concerns about bullying. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that when bullying does occur it is followed up and dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles through the school council and by becoming junior leaders.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff are polite, friendly and helpful to pupils and, as a result, pupils show these attitudes to each other. Older pupils are helpful to younger pupils.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly and wait for each other and for adults to go through doors and narrow spaces. Pupils walked into and out from assembly very well, and sat and listened attentively.
- Pupils understand what behaviour is expected of them, and the consequences of poor behaviour.
- In most lessons, pupils pay attention well and have good attitudes to learning. However, occasionally pupils find it difficult to concentrate unless they are being directly addressed by the teacher.
- Attendance is higher than the national figure. There are no groups for whom attendance is a concern. The school follows up the few individual pupils with poor attendance assiduously.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children generally start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age. They make good progress and by the time they leave the Reception class they are working at a similar level to most children nationally and are well prepared to join Year 1. In 2017 girls performed much better than boys. This was not the case in previous years, nor is it in the current year, so does not form part of a pattern. There are no disadvantaged pupils in the year group.
- Year 1 pupils attained extremely well in the 2017 phonics screening check with nearly all pupils reaching the expected standard. Standards in phonics have been high for several years and current standards remain high.
- At the end of key stage 1 in 2017, the proportion of pupils who reached both the expected level and greater depth in reading was similar to the national figure. However, the school achieved better than national figures for writing and mathematics both for the proportion reaching the expected level and for those reaching greater depth.
- In 2016, the results for pupils taking assessments at the end of key stage 2 dipped, but were back on track in 2017. Pupils made more progress in reading and writing than was found in most schools nationally. However, they made slightly less progress in mathematics. Pupils' attainment in writing was particularly strong, with more than a third of pupils reaching the higher standard.
- The improvements have continued, and pupils currently in Year 6 are working at a high standard. This was seen by the inspectors in the work in pupils' books, by observing in lessons and by talking with pupils. These pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The most able pupils are making good progress across the school. However, progress has historically been slower in mathematics than in reading and writing. The school is working to ensure that the most able pupils are challenged to reach the highest standards in mathematics, but this is not yet consistent across the school.
- The school's analysis showed that poor spelling was holding pupils back. A renewed focus on teaching spelling is starting to have an impact with improvements in spelling seen in pupils' books.
- School leaders spend the pupil premium funding well and, as a result of closely targeted support, the small number of disadvantaged pupils are making fast progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This enables them to diminish the differences in attainment with other pupils.
- Pupils from service families are making good progress and attaining well, in line with the other pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress. This includes pupils who have complex needs or significant learning disabilities.
- Pupils who have fallen behind and need to catch up quickly are well supported to make good progress. Their progress is closely monitored and extra help is given according to their various needs.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The teacher and other Reception staff know the children very well. Children are thoroughly assessed when they join the school. This enables the teacher to plan learning activities which are closely matched to children's needs.
- Pupils make good progress in the Reception class physically, socially and emotionally as well as academically. The well-planned activities are enjoyed by children and result in a high level of engagement.
- Adults and children have very positive relationships. Adults engage children in conversation well, encouraging them to expand on their responses, thus promoting language development.
- Arrangements for children to join the school are good, enabling staff, parents and children to get to know each other. Parents spoke warmly about the staff's approachability, and they feel they are kept well informed.
- The Reception class is well led, resulting in well-planned purposeful activities. Record-keeping is good.
- Children's behaviour is good. They know the routines well and they are good at listening to each other and to adults. Children are able to take turns and share equipment. The Reception class is a calm cheerful environment.
- In 2017, girls' attainment was much higher than boys'. However, this is not a consistent picture across time. Activities are chosen and planned to appeal to boys and girls alike.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective and in line with the rest of the school.

## School details

Unique reference number	126186
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10042696

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gillian Pratt
Headteacher	Pamela Evans
Telephone number	01225 810 478
Website	<a href="http://www.nestonprimary.co.uk">www.nestonprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@neston.wilts.sch.uk">admin@neston.wilts.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6–7 March 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than most primary schools.
- Pupils are taught in single year group classes.
- A very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with just a few pupils coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Approximately an eighth of pupils have parents serving in the armed forces.
- A much smaller proportion of pupils are disadvantaged than found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities who are in need of support is similar to that found in most schools. However, the proportion who have more significant needs requiring a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is much higher than in most schools.
- Fewer pupils than average join or leave the school within the school year.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors undertook a variety of activities including observations of teaching and learning. They interviewed pupils formally and spoke with them informally during lessons, lunchtime and playtimes to ascertain their views. One inspector undertook a learning walk with pupils to find out more about their views and the breadth of the curriculum.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to them read.
- Inspectors interviewed parents in the playground before school and gauged parents' views from the 83 responses submitted to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Meetings were held with governors and senior and middle leaders. A telephone interview was conducted with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including the school's self-evaluation and plan for improvement. They looked at evidence of tracking pupils' progress throughout the school.
- A variety of evidence relating to safeguarding was examined.

## Inspection team

Janet Maul, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Clair Harrington-Wilcox

Ofsted Inspector

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