

Spennithorne Church of England Primary School

Spennithorne, Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 5PR

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2019

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not been fully effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good in key stage 2.
- Teachers' expectations of key stage 2 pupils are sometimes too low. Standards of pupils' work across all subjects vary in quality and presentation. Pupils are not making enough progress after leaving key stage 1.
- The teaching of mathematics in key stage 2 is inconsistent. Work lacks consistent challenge and does not extend the skills pupils need to learn and deepen their understanding.
- In key stage 2, pupils' redrafted written work does not always result in improvements. Writing often lacks the depth to achieve higher standards of attainment.
- Pupils say that they enjoy reading, and younger children quickly acquire secure early reading skills. However, older pupils are not able to discuss their choice of books and authors' styles. There is insufficient focus on monitoring and guiding pupils' choice of texts so that they read a range of genres.
- The planning of subjects other than English and mathematics does not routinely ensure clear progression to help pupils gain secure knowledge and understanding over time.
- Some subject leaders new to post have not yet acquired the skills to effectively monitor and evaluate their subjects across the federation.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is valued by parents, carers and pupils as an integral part of the local community. It is a caring school. There are good procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Pupils behave well, show good attitudes to learning and enjoy school. Leaders have taken effective steps to improve attendance, and most pupils attend school regularly.
- Leaders use the additional funding they receive for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. These groups of pupils achieve well.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start and are confident in school. A focus on developing children's literacy and mathematical skills means that they are well prepared for Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in key stage 2 by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and planning activities which are well matched to pupils' abilities
 - providing further challenge in mathematics lessons so that pupils explore mathematical investigation in depth
 - ensuring that the presentation of pupils' work is consistently good
 - planning writing lessons which systematically teach pupils the skills to write in depth and at length
 - making certain that when pupils edit their writing, this improves the quality of their redrafted work and standard of spelling
 - monitoring and guiding pupils' choice of reading books so that they read a wider range of genres
 - planning the teaching of science and foundation subjects to provide a clear sequence for progression across the mixed-age classes.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that professional support and monitoring improve the quality of teaching
 - developing the skills and expertise of the new subject leaders and providing opportunities for them to monitor and evaluate the work across the federation
 - revising the curriculum so that subjects are planned with a clear path of progression, particularly in key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a turnover of teaching staff. While leaders and governors have now established stability in staffing, they have not ensured that the quality of teaching is of a good standard throughout the school. Support and professional development which have been provided have not been followed up successfully to ensure that this investment is making the necessary difference. Improvements in the quality of teaching in key stage 2 have not been consistently maintained.
- The development of subject leadership across the federation is in the early stages and has yet to have impact in improving the quality of teaching. Some leaders require further professional support to fulfil their roles effectively.
- The curriculum is carefully mapped out to ensure coverage for the mixed-age classes and is successfully implemented in key stage 1. Topics engage the pupils' interest and they enthusiastically talk about the events and visits that have brought subjects to life. Such examples include dressing up as a Victorian, a visit to Middleham Castle and the science week. However, pupils in key stage 2 cannot recount with accuracy the subject content they should have learned, and this lack of depth in knowledge is evident in the work they produce.
- The headteacher and governors have successfully federated the school with Middleham Church of England Primary School and this has been well received by parents. The headteacher has an accurate view of the school and a clear vision for the federation. Her enthusiasm and energy are valued by pupils. She is highly respected by parents, who refer to the school being 'open and welcoming with a strong place in the community'. Nearly all parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school.
- The school places great emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Representatives from other faiths are regularly invited to the school, so pupils have a good understanding of people from other backgrounds and with different beliefs. Pupils show a genuine respect and tolerance for the rights of others, and this has developed pupils' appreciation of British values.
- The school has a clear process for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and attainment. This means that teachers and leaders have an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing. As a result, actions to provide additional support are well directed. Pupil premium funding has been used to provide additional teaching for disadvantaged pupils as well as specialist support for those who are also pupils with SEND. For these pupils, intervention is well matched to ensure that they make good progress.
- The leadership of SEND is effective. The pupils identified as requiring additional support are well catered for and this is clearly outlined in their individual learning plans. The funding for pupils who have SEND is used effectively to ensure that they receive good support for their welfare and learning needs.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is used well to provide greater opportunities for pupils to access a wide range of sports and enter

competitions, and to develop teachers' skills. The effectiveness of this grant is reflected in pupils' enthusiasm for PE. Scootering and skateboarding have been particularly popular with pupils.

Governance of the school

- A newly formed federation governing body has a keen focus and commitment to sustaining the future viability of Spennithorne Church of England School, with the demands of financial constraints. Governors have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in holding the school to account, but have not been successful in securing consistently good teaching throughout the school.
- Governors regularly carry out monitoring visits to see the work of the school for themselves. Governors have an overview of the quality of teaching and learning and understand that while teaching is more stable, it is not yet good enough in key stage 2.
- Governors are prepared to challenge the headteacher, but have so far not been fully effective in speeding up the rate of improvements in the quality of teaching so that pupils achieve as well as they should.
- There are a small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school, some of whom have additional needs. Governors have directed funding to provide well-matched support with additional teaching in smaller teaching groups and/or specialist provision, including pastoral care. Overall, this has had a positive impact on the progress of these particular pupils.
- Governors are fully conversant with their legal duties for safeguarding, ensuring that staff are recruited with careful consideration.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school places great emphasis on safeguarding its pupils and where necessary has taken action to protect some of its most vulnerable pupils and involve external agencies. Leaders are vigilant in checking up that procedures are implemented to protect pupils. As a result, the school has created a strong culture of safety. Pupils who spoke with inspectors and those who completed the online survey said that they feel safe in school and nearly all parents agree.
- The school follows up absences, including those pupils who take extended holidays during term time. This has had a positive impact on reducing absences.
- Staff and pupils understand their obligations for safeguarding. This is emphasised throughout the school's work, as well as in lessons. Pupils talked to inspectors about how the work they had done in school on e-safety helped them understand how to stay safe online.
- All members of staff are checked for their suitability to work with children. The school ensures that all training for safeguarding and keeping pupils safe is accurate and up to date. Records of these checks are accurate and maintained.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching across the school is inconsistent. There is high-quality teaching in the early years and key stage 1, but in key stage 2 the quality of teaching requires improvement.
- In key stage 2, assessment is not always used effectively to ensure that activities are well matched to what pupils need to learn. Often, pupils are not engaged in clearly focused tasks designed to improve their progress at a good rate. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils could achieve.
- Additional teaching in smaller groups is provided for pupils in key stage 2. This is helping to support those who are falling behind and is having a positive impact on improving their progress, particularly in mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics is good and ensures that pupils grasp the basic sounds that letters represent. All adults delivering phonics show a high level of expertise. Reading books are well matched to pupils' abilities for pupils in key stage 1 and younger pupils in key stage 2, so they are able to read fluently and with confidence.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are encouraged to read books from home, and this ensures that they enjoy what they are reading. However, these texts are not always well monitored to check that pupils are developing an understanding of the styles of different authors. Older pupils are insufficiently challenged to extend their range of genres and they receive limited guidance on what they need to do to improve and develop as readers.
- There is now a clearer focus and approach to the teaching of mathematics, and this is helping pupils make better progress. Apparatus is effectively used to help pupils understand mathematical concepts. Pupils in key stage 2 have lots of opportunities to become fluent and master aspects of mathematics. Learning for these pupils does not consistently move on quickly enough to provide real challenge and deepen understanding and thus achieve higher standards.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality of writing across the school are inconsistent. In key stage 1, good teaching ensures that pupils' work is well presented. There are high levels of productivity even from the youngest pupils, who employ the techniques they have been taught. In key stage 2, these high standards are not maintained and as a result pupils' progress is erratic. Pupils do not routinely receive clear guidance on how their writing can be improved, and redrafted work does not necessarily produce higher-quality pieces of writing.
- The teaching of other subjects, such as science and some of the foundation subjects, is not thorough enough in key stage 2 to ensure that there is clear progression of skills and knowledge. This hinders pupils in developing secure understanding of some of the subjects over time. By contrast, teaching of these subjects in key stage 1 ensures that pupils use specific and technical vocabulary in their explanations and recounts. As a result of these high expectations, younger pupils achieve well across the curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND are well integrated into the life of the school because their needs are well met. Teaching support is particularly effective when clearly directed by the teacher and when work is planned carefully. This supports these pupils in making good progress.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Spennithorne is a caring school and is an integral part of the local community. Staff know the pupils and their families well. As a result, the school responds quickly to their needs, whether of a pastoral or practical nature. This ensures that pupils are well supported in school.
- The school's emphasis on pupils' physical and mental well-being ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Pupils understand how to manage risk, can explain about fire safety and also showed the inspector some effective strategies they have used to cope with stress. They understand the importance of physical exercise and healthy eating, and this is reflected in their enthusiasm for PE. They understand the risks of using the internet and told the inspector that they must never share passwords.
- Pupils say that there is little or no bullying in school and are confident that it would be sorted out quickly. For their age, pupils have a good understanding of what can constitute bullying, including racism, and 'homophobia' is a term they confidently use.
- The school's ethos promotes effective reflection on faith, culture and personal choices. Pupils are well informed about how people might choose to lead different lifestyles. Pupils have a good understanding of British values and are accepting and welcoming of people's differences. These attributes prepare them well to be good citizens in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about what they have learned. They are happy to help each other and they cooperate effectively when engaged in learning activities. In lessons, they focus on their work and rise to a challenge when it is presented.
- Pupils say that behaviour is usually good. They show respect for the school rules and have a thorough understanding of the school's behaviour policy with its consequences and sanctions. They play cooperatively in the playground and move around the school in an orderly way.
- Pupils embrace responsibility, for example as a librarian or on the eco council. They conduct themselves well in and around school and are friendly, chatty and welcoming to visitors. They listen well to adults and their peers and show respect for the views of others.
- The attendance of pupils has improved this year as a result of concerted action by the school. While rates of attendance overall are broadly in line with the national average, some pupils do take unauthorised holidays during term time and this disrupts their education.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The proportion of pupils reaching expected standards at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 varies from year to year due to the small cohorts. The small number of pupils in each year group means that each pupil's performance has a marked effect on the school's overall figures when making comparisons to the national average. In addition, a higher-than-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. This can affect the school's published test and assessment results.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and Year 1 is good, and as a result achievement in phonics in both Year 1 and Year 2 has been consistently above the national average. The youngest pupils read with enthusiasm, sounding out words using their phonic skills and anticipating what is coming next in a story.
- Pupils in key stage 2 say that they enjoy reading, and some older pupils bring in their own books from home. Pupils share their interest in the subject matter of their reading choice. They are less confident in discussing how reading helps them with their writing, and this is because they do not have a secure understanding of authors' styles or a range of genres.
- Key stage 1 pupils' books show good achievement in writing, where pupils are effectively using correct grammar and attempting new and adventurous vocabulary in their work. Young pupils soon develop a neat handwriting style, and the presentation of their work is of a high standard.
- This high standard is not replicated in the writing books of pupils in key stage 2. Pupils' writing often lacks depth. Pupils are inconsistent in writing in the correct style for the audience or employing grammar and suitable vocabulary to write for effect. Pupils' editing of their work does not always produce an improved piece of writing and correction of spelling mistakes, and work is sometimes untidy.
- In mathematics in both key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils show a fluency in the basic rules and these are well practised and applied in a range of contexts. During the inspection, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils were enthusiastically measuring the playground and working out the perimeter, debating how this could be accurately calculated.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6, when presented with mathematics work which challenges their thinking, rise to the occasion with resilience, for example accurately drawing reflected polygons. However, their work shows that there are too few opportunities for them to deepen their mathematical knowledge through mathematical investigations. This is reflected in their minimal use of mathematical vocabulary when explaining their answers.
- The few disadvantaged pupils make good progress because their learning is well supported and because they have equal opportunities to participate in out-of-school activities.
- The achievement of pupils with SEND is good. Work is planned specifically to meet the needs of these pupils, who are well supported by teaching assistants.
- Pupils in both key stages talk about their enjoyment of the various topics they have studied and the science week that was held. During the inspection, pupils in key stage

1 recorded their views comparing different works by the artist Andy Goldsworthy and then designed a sculpture in the style of his work, paying careful attention to the artist's techniques and methods.

- The topic and science work of pupils in key stage 2 is often scant and lacks any real depth. Although pupils were enthusiastic about the activity which introduced the topic, this did not necessarily give them a grasp of the facts or provide them with a secure understanding of a subject. The ability of older pupils to recount what they have learned, using appropriate vocabulary both verbally and written in their work, is limited.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical for their age. They quickly adapt to a mixed-age class and are happy, motivated and ready to learn. Children have good relationships with adults as well as with each other. Over time, children leaving the Reception Year have consistently achieved a good level of development, equipping them well for key stage 1.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Children learn the basic skills of reading and apply the sounds they have learned to their spelling. Pupils use these skills to write lists and simple instructions. During the inspection, children were practising writing simple sentences in their phonics session, taking care to form their letters correctly.
- Children respond well to the stimulating activities, both in the classrooms and outside, which are carefully planned to meet their varying needs. Every opportunity is provided for children to learn outside. During the inspection, pupils showed an understanding of money as they charged for the sale of plants in their garden centre.
- Children behave well both in the classroom and the outside area. Pupils cooperate well and engage in lively chatter as they work and play, sharing their ideas with each other. Following input from the teacher, using a high-quality text, 'The Little Gardener', a small group of children were intent on building a tractor for him out of tyres and crates. They sustained focus and concentration, resolving the problems of constructing their vehicle with various materials and resources.
- Transition arrangements are good. The welfare and safety requirements in the early years are met. Children's personal needs and health and safety requirements are taken into account. The Reception class provides a safe place for children.

School details

Unique reference number	121517
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10088966

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Sweeting
Headteacher	Lindsay Evans
Telephone number	01969 623474
Website	www.spennithorne.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@spennithorne.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 April 2015

Information about this school

- Spennithorne Church of England Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and is part of a federation with Middleham Church of England Primary School.
- There are two classes. Children in the early years are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are also taught together. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding is below average. The proportion of pupils with SEND is also below average, but numbers of these groups can vary from year to year because of the small cohorts of pupils.
- Over time, the proportion of pupils who join and leave the school outside the normal times is higher than average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in both classrooms, and some observations were shared with the headteacher. In addition, she observed the teaching of small groups of pupils.
- The inspector scrutinised a selection of pupils' work and listened to some pupils read. She spoke with a number of pupils about their views of school and their opinions of behaviour and safety. There were 35 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and governors and considered a wide range of school documents. These included the school's self-evaluation report, the development plan, behaviour and attendance records, governing body documents and documents relating to safeguarding and the monitoring of teachers' performance.
- The inspector took into account the 10 responses of parents who submitted their views to the inspection team, as well as the 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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